



# Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

<b>MEETING</b>	Overview and Audit Committee
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	17 July 2019
<b>OFFICER</b>	Graham Britten, Director Legal and Governance
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	
<b>SUBJECT OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>Compliments and Complaints</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<p>This purpose of this report is to advise of complaints made and, following investigation, any that were upheld. It includes details of the corrective action taken to reduce or remove the problem and improve public perception of the services we provide. It also serves to note public satisfaction and, where new good practice is identified, to improve standard operating procedures.</p> <p>As the numbers of compliments and complaints is relatively low, data from the annual satisfaction survey "After the Incident" is included to capture the perceptions of those experiencing an incident in the home or in non-domestic premises. In 2016/17 surveys were completed for 316 non-domestic and 377 domestic incidents. For 2017/18 this had dropped to 160 non-domestic and 148 domestic incidents. In 2018/19 we received surveys for 62 non-domestic and 54 domestic incidents. The sharp decline in 2018/19 was, at least in part, owing to no survey documents been distributed for the first six months whilst work to implement a new computer system was undertaken.</p> <p>No complaints arising from an information security incident were notified and no complaints were investigated by the Local Government &amp; Social Care Ombudsman (LG&amp;SCO) or the Information Commissioner, during this reporting period.</p>
<b>ACTION</b>	Noting
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	That the report be noted.
<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>	<p>The public are encouraged to raise concerns/make complaints and, if required, are given assistance to do so.</p> <p>There are a number of investigating officers trained in complaints handling to ensure that complaints are rigorously investigated, resolved as quickly as possible and, wherever possible, to the satisfaction of the</p>

	<p>complainant.</p> <p>To protect the privacy of the complainant, all personal data is removed when no longer needed to support the investigation.</p> <p>If a complaint is upheld and actions to prevent a similar incident occurring cannot be put in place immediately, the need for a risk treatment will be recorded in a projector department risk register and may even be escalated to the corporate risk register. These risk registers are reviewed frequently.</p>
<b>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</b>	<p>Whilst there are costs associated with investigating complaints, the cost associated with corrective action continues to be small as issues of liability are thoroughly investigated and, if appropriate, referred to our insurance.</p> <p>A contingency budget and reserves are held in the event of a serious incident occurring.</p>
<b>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</b>	<p>Actual or potential legal implications are considered during the investigation of a complaint. To proactively avoid complaints, projects, policies, processes and procedures are reviewed when changes in legislation or good practice occur.</p>
<b>CONSISTENCY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DUTY TO COLLABORATE</b>	<p>The <a href="#">Policing and Crime Act 2017</a> requires the Authority to keep opportunities for collaboration with the police and ambulance services under review. The Authority has committed to a default position of collaboration with Thames Valley FRAs unless a clear business case favours an alternative collaborative option.</p> <p>Complaints could arise from any of a number of business projects, processes or procedures. Many of these have been developed in collaboration with other Fire and Rescue Services or other partner agencies.</p> <p>During development and through to implementation, these are risk and impact assessed to reduce incidents that may lead to complaints arising.</p>
<b>HEALTH AND SAFETY</b>	<p>Any actual or potential health and safety issues are considered during the investigation of a complaint.</p>
<b>EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY</b>	<p>Any actual or potential equality and diversity issues are considered during the investigation of a complaint.</p>
<b>USE OF RESOURCES</b>	<p>Buckinghamshire &amp; Milton Keynes Fire Authority is a public authority, complaints against which may be subject to investigation by the LG&amp;SCO. The LG&amp;SCO will usually decline investigation until the public authority's internal complaints procedure has been exhausted. It is therefore important that there is a complaints procedure in place that is understood by users and the Authority, so that complaints are not</p>

Compliments and Complaints

	escalated.
<b>PROVENANCE SECTION &amp; BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>	<p>The last report was made to the Overview &amp; Audit committee on <a href="#">7 March 2018</a></p> <p><a href="#">The Data Protection (Monetary Penalties) (Maximum Penalty and Notices) Regulations 2010</a></p> <p>"After the incident" reports for 2016/17 and 2017/18.</p> <p>O&amp;A meeting 14/11/18 <a href="#">Item 17 Annual Performance Monitoring 2017/18</a></p>
<b>APPENDICES</b>	Appendix A
<b>TIME REQUIRED</b>	5 minutes
<b>REPORT ORIGINATOR AND CONTACT</b>	<p>Gerry Barry</p> <p><a href="mailto:gbarry@bucksfire.gov.uk">gbarry@bucksfire.gov.uk</a></p> <p>01296 744442</p>

## Appendix A

### Compliments, concerns and complaints received 2016/17 – 2018/19

#### 1. Purpose

This purpose of this report is to compare complaints data across the three years 2016/17; 2017/18 and 2018/19, advise of any corrective action taken to reduce or remove the problem that led to a complaint being made, and identify opportunities to improve public perception of the services the Authority provides. It also serves to note public satisfaction and record compliments received and if a compliment represent a new good practice, to identify measures taken to ensure that this becomes standard practice.

#### 2. Scope

As the numbers of compliments and complaints is relatively low, data from the annual satisfaction survey "After the Incident" is included to capture the perceptions of those experiencing an incident in the home or in non-domestic premises.

#### 3. Concerns and complaints

No complaints arising from an information security incident were notified and no complaints were investigated by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LG&SCO) or Information Commissioner during this reporting period.

**2016/2017** 14 concerns/ complaints were received. The 2018 report gave details of the four complaints which were upheld:

- Freedom of Information request
- Miscellaneous - Key given to neighbour following a forced entry.
- Miscellaneous - Overgrown foliage
- Miscellaneous - Parking in a disabled bay

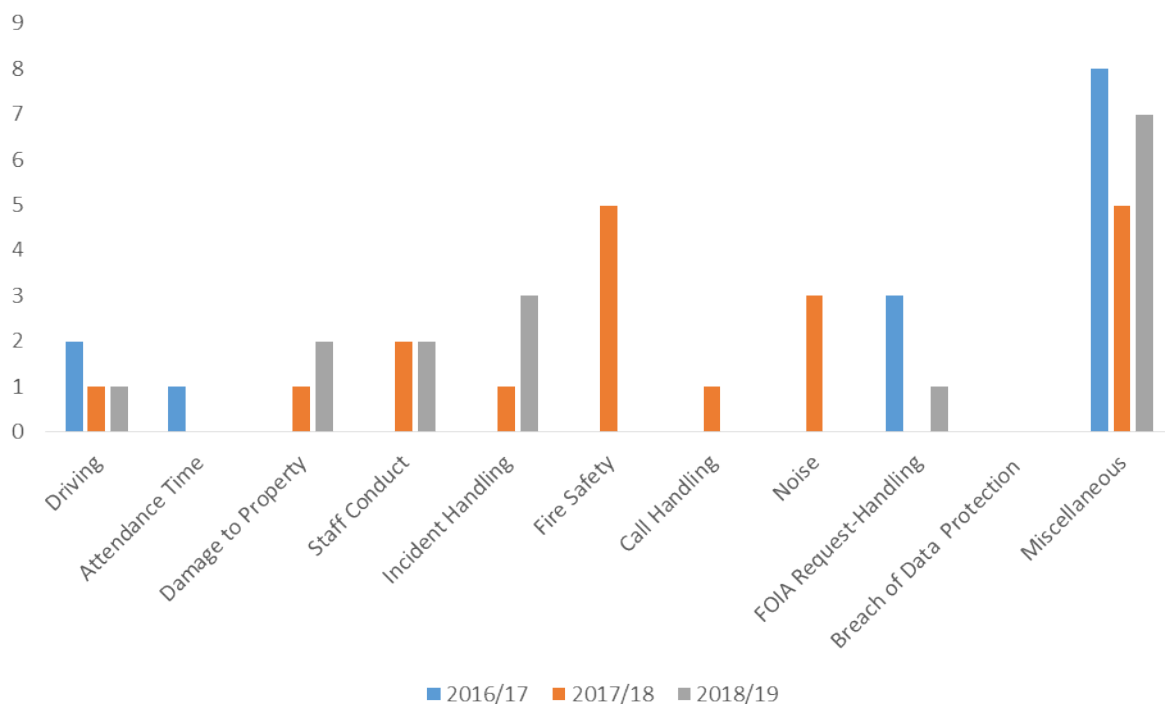
**2017/2018** Although the number of concerns/ complaints went up to 19 only three were upheld:

- Fire appliance going through the village with lights and sirens at 9:15 pm and woke children. – This was in the run-up to Christmas and collections were being made for charity. Crews were reminded that the use of lights and sirens is restricted for emergency response.
- "Bleeping" from boiler room at Haddenham. – This was caused through an electrical fault which was corrected as soon as the maintenance engineer arrived.
- Pager messages sending updates after an incident has been "stood down" - disturbing the family sleep. – This has been corrected with the move from pagers to the new mobilising App.

**2018/2019** The numbers of complaints/concerns decreased to 16, six of which were upheld:

- During training dirty water from a hose was sprayed onto a neighbour’s window. – Crews were advised to be cautious in considering wind direction when using water hoses in exercises.
- Someone walked on a freshly painted fire hydrant and got paint on their shoes. - This is an ongoing problem where it is unsafe to put anything around the painted area and, in most instances, the paint has dried before the technician has left.
- The report of an incident, on the “latest incidents” on the website, was considered inaccurate. – The householders felt that the incident was misreported and a correction was made.
- An Authority driver pulled out into the path of a car. – The driver was distracted and admitted liability. The driver was referred for refresher training.
- The reporting of an arson finding with regard to a vehicle fire was delayed. – The incident commander did not notify the change in incident cause. As a consequence Thames Valley Police did not allocate a crime number immediately. The procedures have been reviewed to ensure that the correct actions are taken as soon as possible.
- The message explaining that the switchboard was closed over Christmas did not function. – The message had been checked and was thought to be working. Additional checks will be made for future.

Complaints 2016/17; 2017/18; 2018/19



### After the incident - Customer satisfaction report 2016/17 - 2018/19

The Authority continues to subscribe to the annual confidential survey which measures the satisfaction of members of the public who have experienced an incident in the home or in a non-domestic dwelling. The questionnaires are returned to Opinion Research Services (ORS) who analyse the returns and publish the results annually.

These surveys have been a good indication of how well the community is served when an incident occurs, and a useful supplement to the compliments, concerns and complaints, received from other sources, to provide a broader range of feedback. Whilst we have not identified the decline in receipts of survey documents from 2016/17 to 2017/18 the further decline to 2018/19 was, at least in part, owing to no survey documents been distributed for the first six months whilst work to implement a new computer system was undertaken.

<b>Domestic</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>
Respondents	366	148	52
Very Satisfied	92%	89%	92%
Fairly Satisfied	5%	6%	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>97%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>98%</b>
<b>Non-Domestic</b>			
	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>
Respondents	309	160	64
Very Satisfied	88%	94%	90%
Fairly Satisfied	8%	6%	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### 4. Compliments

There is no pattern of written compliments. We had previously noted a downward trend and encouraged all departments to ensure that compliments were recorded. This may have led to the increase in the number of written compliments received in 2016/17 but there appears to be no correlation between customer satisfaction and the number of compliments received as in 2017/18 there was a 67% drop followed by a 100% increase in 2018/19.

