

Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority



MEETING	Overview and Audit Committee
DATE OF MEETING	17 July 2019
OFFICER	Julian Parsons, Head of Service Development
LEAD MEMBER	
SUBJECT OF THE REPORT	Operational Assurance Improvement Plan
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>The purpose of this report is to provide an update on current progress towards the delivery of the Service's approved Operational Assurance Improvement Plan (OAIP).</p> <p>The OAIP is a dynamic document, used to enhance our ability to capture, scrutinise and respond to operational learning originating from events such as our own operational debriefs, assurance visits and external reviews.</p> <p>A fundamental part of the external review process is the Authority's three year contractual agreement with Operational Assurance Limited (OAL). This agreement ensures the Service's risk critical operations are subject to regular independent scrutiny, thereby strengthening the Authority's ability to deliver the best possible public service and improve the safety of Firefighters by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving our performance at incidents; • Cope with future changes in the operational environment; • Drive development and innovation. <p>The first of what will be two reviews conducted by OAL during a 12 month period, took place during November 2018, focusing on the following key topic areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of site-specific risk information • Operational discretion • The refined Operational Assurance model <p>The timeframe between the dates of when the review took place to when the final report was received, regrettably was longer than expected.</p> <p>In their final report OAL identified 26 improvement recommendations, all of which are in the process of being progressed. However, instead of adding each</p>

	<p>recommendation to the OAIP, it was agreed and considered better if only the three key topic areas were included as overarching headlines within the improvement plan.</p>
ACTION	Noting.
RECOMMENDATIONS	It is recommended that the progress made against each improvement recommendation detailed within the updated OAIP is noted.
RISK MANAGEMENT	<p>Delivery of the OAIP will contribute toward ensuring the Service's operational safe systems of work are continuously improved to conform to the latest safety standards and are efficient, effective and responsive to significant changes in the external or internal environments.</p> <p>Failure to deliver the OAIP could expose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Service, its personnel and the public to operational, health and safety risks; • Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority (BMKFA) to reputational and / or financial risks. <p>The OAIP will inform the ongoing development of our workforce plan particularly in relation to areas such as maintenance of operational skills, acquisition training and assessment.</p> <p>Equally, the OAIP does not appear to raise any immediate privacy issues.</p>
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	Whilst there are no negative, financial implications associated with this report. It is nevertheless important to be reminded of the previously approved £50,000 per annum investment that has resulted in a contractual three year programme of assurance visits, intended to drive continual service improvement.
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	There are no negative legal implications associated with this report.
CONSISTENCY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DUTY TO COLLABORATE	Although the Authority has committed to a default position of collaboration with Thames Valley Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs), the OAIP relates specifically to BFRS activities, however any opportunity to collaborate will be explored.
HEALTH AND SAFETY	There are no negative implications on health and safety associated with this report. The delivery of the OAIP will continue to promote and enhance the existing health and safety culture within the Service.
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY	No immediate issues identified in relation to the OAIP, however, IIAs will be completed for any changes that result from any subsequent activities, where there is

<p>USE OF RESOURCES</p>	<p>potential for equality and / or diversity issues to arise.</p> <p>Communication with stakeholders</p> <p>Learning from operational activity or recommendations, following assurance visits are routinely published and communicated to all staff, utilising either the I:Drive or Operational Assurance newsletter. This approach is intended to ensure there is a clear understanding and appreciation of the collective responsibility there is toward continuous improvement.</p> <p>The system of internal control</p> <p>From a monitoring and reporting perspective, the Head of Service Development leads on the improvement plan and chair of the OAG.</p> <p>The Head of Operational Training and Assurance has responsibility for delivering the OAIP in conjunction with the OA team.</p> <p>The medium term financial strategy</p> <p>It is highly likely, due to the repeated frustrations and challenges experienced with developing the E-safety application into a functional active monitoring system, a growth bid for the financial period 2020\21 will now need to be submitted.</p> <p>The balance between spending and resources</p> <p>No immediate funding requirements have been identified. Adaption of the already procured and purchased E-safety application is no longer a sustainable option, therefore investment will be required in order to realise the introduction of an active monitoring system.</p> <p>Preliminary work has already commenced that will result in the information held on the OAIP, within its current spreadsheet type format, being transferred onto 'Viper'. This is intended to make it easier to both interpret and report on the progress relating to the various improvement recommendations, however the other work commitments involving the Senior Business Intelligence Analyst has caused a delay.</p> <p>The management of the asset base</p> <p>There are currently no identified impacts on the asset base.</p> <p>The arrangements to promote and ensure probity and propriety</p> <p>Delivery of the OAIP is expected to have a positive impact against these criteria by creating a more vigorous and transparent operational assurance environment within the Service.</p> <p>Environmental</p>
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Operational Assurance Improvement Plan

	Delivery of the OAIP will enhance the Service's ability to identify and manage potential environmental hazards in both the internal and external environments.
PROVENANCE SECTION & BACKGROUND PAPERS	Background Overview and Audit Committee: 14 November 2018
APPENDICES	Appendix A: Operational Assurance Improvement Plan Appendix B: Review of Operational Assurance Arrangements, OAL, November 2018
TIME REQUIRED	10 minutes
REPORT ORIGINATOR AND CONTACT	Steve Wells, Head of Operational Training and Assurance swells@bucksfire.gov.uk 01296 744426