

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Director of Legal & Governance, Graham Britten
Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service
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Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive

Jason Thelwell

To: The Chairman and Members of Buckinghamshire
And Milton Keynes Fire Authority

7 December 2015

Dear Councillor

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the **BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY** to be held in Meeting Room 1, Fire and Rescue Headquarters, Stocklake, Aylesbury on **WEDNESDAY 16 DECEMBER 2015 at 11.00 am** when the business set out overleaf will be transacted.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Graham Britten'.

Graham Britten
Director of Legal and Governance

Chairman: Councillor Busby
Councillors Bendyshe-Brown, Clarke OBE, Dransfield, Exon, Glover, Gomm, Huxley,
Lambert, Mallen, Marland, Morris, Reed, Schofield, Vigor-Hedderly, Watson
and Wilson



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COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY - TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. To appoint the Authority's Standing Committees and Lead Members.
2. To determine the following issues after considering recommendations from the Executive Committee, or in the case of 2(a) and 2(e) below, after considering recommendations from the Overview and Audit Committee:
 - (a) variations to Standing Orders and Financial Regulations;
 - (b) the medium-term financial plans including:
 - (i) the Revenue Budget;
 - (ii) the Capital Programme;
 - (iii) the level of borrowing under the Local Government Act 2003 in accordance with the Prudential Code produced by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy; and
 - (c) a Precept and all decisions legally required to set a balanced budget each financial year;
 - (d) the Prudential Indicators in accordance with the Prudential Code;
 - (e) the Treasury Strategy;
 - (f) the Scheme of Members' Allowances;
 - (g) the Integrated Risk Management Plan and Action Plan;
 - (h) the Annual Report.
3. To determine the Code of Conduct for Members on recommendation from the Overview and Audit Committee.
4. To determine all other matters reserved by law or otherwise, whether delegated to a committee or not.
5. To determine the terms of appointment or dismissal of the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive, and deputy to the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive, or equivalent.
6. To approve the Authority's statutory pay policy statement.

AGENDA

Item No:

1. Apologies

2. Minutes

To approve, and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Fire Authority held on 14 October 2015 (Item 2) **(Pages 5 - 10)**

3. Disclosure of Interests

Members to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests they may have in any matter being considered which are not entered onto the Authority's Register, and officers to disclose any interests they may have in any contract to be considered.

4. Chairman's Announcements

To receive the Chairman's announcements (if any).

5. Petitions

To receive petitions under Standing Order SOA6.

6. Questions

To receive questions in accordance with Standing Order SOA7.

7. Recommendations from Committees:

Executive Committee – 18 November 2015

Members' Allowances

"That the Authority be recommended to adopt the Scheme for Members Allowances for 2016/17."

The report considered by the Executive Committee is attached at item 7 **(Pages 11 - 44)**

8. Pay Policy Principles and Statement 2016/17

To consider item 8 **(Pages 45 - 68)**

9. The Blue Light Pledge

To consider item 9 **(Pages 69 - 86)**

10. Global Corporate Challenge Employee Health, Wellbeing and Engagement Programme

To consider item 10 **(Pages 87 - 90)**

11. Health and Safety Annual Report

To consider item 11 (**Pages 91 - 112**)

12. RoSPA Health and Safety audit results

To receive a presentation

13. Incident No. 25197: 22 November 2015, 10 Old Watery Lane, Wooburn Green

To receive a presentation

14. Date of next meeting

To note that the next meeting of the Fire Authority will be held on Wednesday 10 February 2016 at 11am.

If you have any enquiries about this agenda please contact: Katie Nellist (Democratic Services Officer) – Tel: (01296) 744633 email: knellist@bucksfire.gov.uk

Minutes of the meeting of the BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY held on WEDNESDAY 14 October 2015 at 10.00 am

Present Councillors Bendyshe-Brown, Busby (Chairman), Dransfield, Exon, Glover, Gomm (part), Lambert, Marland (part), Morris, Reed, Schofield, Watson, and Wilson

Officers: J Thelwell (Chief Fire Officer), M Osborne (Deputy Chief Fire Officer), G Britten (Director of Legal and Governance), L Swift (Director of People and Organisational Development) M Hemming (Deputy Finance Director), G Smith (Head of Service Delivery), J Parsons (Head of Service Development), P Holland (Head of Service Transformation), R Priest (Group Commander, Prevention and Protection Policy), J Williams (On-Call Station Commander North), K Nellist (Democratic Services Officer), F Pearson (Communication and Consultation Manager), E Andrews (Executive Assistant to Chief Fire Officer), G Barry (Information, Governance and Compliance Manager) and Anne-Marie Carter (BASI Project Manager)

Three members of the public

Apologies: Councillors Clarke OBE, Huxley, Mallen and Vigor-Hedderly

FA18 MINUTES

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Fire Authority held on 10 June 2015, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

FA19 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed Ann-Marie Scott, Director of People and Organisational Development at Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service to the meeting.

The Chairman's announcements are appended to these minutes.

Members congratulated the Director of People and Organisational Development on her recent 'Best in Fire' award from CFOA.

FA20 COMMITTEE MATTERS

RESOLVED -

That the amendment of Lead Member Responsibilities be approved.

FA21 COMMUNITY SAFETY UPDATE

The Lead Member for Community Protection introduced the report and advised Members that the service was working well both outside its boundaries and with other organisations to support the most vulnerable in the community.

Group Commander Richard Priest advised Members that the Authority was looking at different ways of working with partners and how this could create reciprocal arrangements that would be beneficial to all.

Fire deaths and fire injuries had been reduced to a level where underlying causes such as social isolation, smoking and alcohol were identified. Working with partners the service could offer a lot of data on vulnerabilities. The service had the capacity that whilst staff were carrying out home fire risk checks they could also be undertaking safe and well visits.

The Authority was also looking at its resources and how fire stations could be used as community hubs.

Buckingham Fire Station crews had already undertaken dementia training and the crews were also involved in creating activity classes for local school children to improve health and fitness.

High Wycombe Fire Station crews had been trained to improve their knowledge and understanding of those members of the public with Asperger's and Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

The appendix to the report had been given to all partners to ensure that a consistent message was given to all and the service was working with Buckinghamshire County Council and Milton Keynes Council.

Members requested that this information was passed down to community level, Local Area Forums in Buckinghamshire and Parish and Town Councils in Milton Keynes.

A Member also requested that the information was shared with the Local Government Association.

RESOLVED –

That the content of the report be noted.

FA22

EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT – THE INSTITUTION OF FIRE ENGINEERS

The Lead Member for Human Resources and Equality and Diversity introduced the report advising Members that it was a recent example of the Authority's commitment to the development of its people.

The Director of People and Organisational Development wanted to remind Members that they had approved the Authority's approach to a strategic integrated employee training and development programme back in March 2015 and this report showed that it had moved a significant way forward to making it happen.

There were three parts to the overall skills and development process for operational staff, the first one being skill enhancement and knowledge. A quality assured assessment takes place on station and was undertaken by supervisory managers who had been through development centres.

The second part was attendance of crews at the Fire Service College for external validation for practicable ability, assessment of incident command and breathing apparatus. Members would be visiting the Fire Service College on Wednesday 28 October 2015 to see this in progress.

This paper focuses on the third element. Operational staff go through a development centre process for promotion and qualification and the second stage of this was enhancing technical knowledge and the Authority was now undertaking this through the Institute of Fire Engineers (IFE).

This was piloted in November 2014 and from March 2015 the IFE qualification was introduced. There had been a significant level of interest from firefighters and crew managers and within the past six months the Authority had put 65 candidates through these exams.

In July 2015 it was rolled out to on-call supervisors and in the future may be rolled out to below supervisory level for on-call firefighters. The Authority had asked IFE to look at a certificate for on-call firefighters that would link to the firefighter role maps and national standards so as to be externally validated and benchmarked.

Thanks to the work of the Learning and Development Manager, the Authority had now been awarded by the IFE, Examination Centre status for the County and in spring 2016 the Authority was already collaborating with Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service to hold a joint examination centre.

Lastly, the Authority was also exploring possible ways to use the IFE qualification when the Apprenticeship programme begins next year.

RESOLVED –

That the report was noted.

(Cllr Gomm joined the meeting)

FA23

TREASURY MANAGEMENT GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENT

The Chairman advised Members that there was an amendment to the Officer's recommendation that was then circulated to Members. It was explained to members that if the recommendation were to be approved, there would be a change to the Authority's Terms of Reference to reflect that recommendations regarding the Treasury Management would in future come from the Overview and Audit Committee and not the Executive Committee.

The Chairman of the Overview and Audit Committee advised Members that if there was a particular area of the Authority's business they would like scrutinised to let him know.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That future Treasury Management monitoring reports be received by the Overview and Audit Committee.
- 2) That the Overview and Audit Committee's terms of reference be amended so that it shall 'consider and make recommendations to the Authority on the Annual Treasury Management Strategy'.

FA24

DRAFT AUTHORITY RESPONSE TO HM GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON CLOSER WORKING BETWEEN THE EMERGENCY SERVICES'

The Government was consulting on a series of measures designed to transform the delivery of local fire and police services and drive greater collaboration between the police, fire and rescue and NHS ambulance services.

Members were all in agreement that they did not think that proposals to enable Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) to take on the duties and responsibilities of fire and rescue authorities, was suitable for Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority. Members were not against the idea in areas where there was a local desire to do it.

The Chief Fire Officer reiterated that the Authority was broadly supportive of the process; however, the trigger should be the failure of the existing governance arrangements. The Fire Authority model worked well in Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes. Members asked the Chairman and Chief Fire Officer to strengthen the approach by including cross party consensus.

A Member asked if this consultation was only available for fire authorities to respond to. It was advised that the consultation was open to the public, so anyone could respond. Information and assistance would be given to Milton Keynes Council to respond independently.

RESOLVED –

That Members delegate authority to the Chief Fire Officer to finalise the response in consultation with the Chairman for submission to HM Government on behalf of the Authority.

FA25

MILTON KEYNES TRANSFORMATION UPDATE

The Chairman proposed a motion to adjourn the meeting to hear the views of the Fire Brigades Union representative who had expressed a wish to speak on the Milton Keynes Transformation project. Councillor Lambert seconded the motion.

RESOLVED – that the Authority does now adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 11.51; and reconvened at 11.57.

The Lead Member for Community Protection advised Members that the Milton Keynes Transformation was the first of five area reviews that would be delivered as part of the Authority's Corporate Plan 2015-20.

The Head of Service Transformation advised Members that a full staff and public consultation into the proposal to centralise the resources at Great Holm and Bletchley fire stations into a new Blue Light Hub at West Ashland started on the 14 September 2015 and would run for eight weeks up to the 9 November 2015.

During the consultation period three focus groups had been facilitated by Opinion Research Services (ORS), one in the Bletchley area, one in the Great Holm area and one involving a wider audience across Milton Keynes.

On each of those evenings there was a three hour presentation provided by an independent facilitator giving the attendees information that's already in the public domain and within the Authority's public safety plan, to allow them to make an informed decision on the proposals that are being put forward. The feedback had been very positive. As the Authority was part way through the consultation, the report had not yet been received from Opinion Research Services.

There was also an online questionnaire and 151 submissions to the site (in four weeks) had already been received.

If the consultation period was extended it would have an impact on the plan. There was a realistic time frame for delivering the project; however, a four week delay created by the consultation process would have a knock on effect on a number of key milestones. One of which was discussions with Milton Keynes Development Partnership about being in a position to purchase the land.

(Councillor Marland left the meeting having declared an interest in the Milton Keynes Development Partnership).

The Milton Keynes Development Partnership was very keen that the land was purchased before the end of the current financial year; otherwise they had other interested parties wanting the land.

Every six months a progress report of the transformation bid was given to DCLG regarding receiving the funds. If there was a delay to the project it could put in jeopardy the funds the Authority would receive.

Also, if the consultation period was extended the start date for the actual build itself would be affected. Delays would affect all aspects of the project.

Councillor Wilson moved the following recommendation which was seconded by Councillor Exon:

“That the Authority extend the current consultation period for the Milton Keynes Transformation project to the 31 December 2015”

On being put to the vote the recommendation was declared lost.

RESOLVED –

That the contents of the report be noted.

FA26

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Authority noted that the next meeting of the Fire Authority was to be held on Wednesday 16 December 2015 at 11.00am.

THE CHAIRMAN CLOSED THE MEETING AT 12.20PM

DRAFT

Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority



MEETING	Executive Committee
DATE OF MEETING	18 November 2015
OFFICER	Graham Britten, Director of Legal and Governance
LEAD MEMBER	Councillor Adrian Busby (Chairman)
SUBJECT OF THE REPORT	Members' Allowances
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>The Authority is required to adopt a Scheme of Members' Allowances before 1 April each year and, in so doing, have due regard to the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panels of the constituent authorities when considering its own Scheme of Members' Allowances and confirm that it has done so when it gives public notice of the Scheme of Allowances.</p> <p>Buckinghamshire County Council's terms of reference require a review of the Scheme of Members' Allowances to be undertaken every four years and this was carried out in January 2015 following a part review which was undertaken in 2013. The review carried out in January 2015 is attached at Appendix A.</p> <p>The Independent Remuneration Panel of the scheme for Milton Keynes Council undertook a review in March 2014 and this is attached at Appendix B.</p> <p>Previously the Authority agreed at its meeting on 14 December 2011 that the index linking for the period 2012/13 to 2014/15 – for basic and special responsibility (and co-optee) allowances – be the pay award for the Authority's staff on National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Authorities' Fire and Rescue Services, Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book).</p> <p>It is recommended that the Authority continue this for the period 2016/17.</p> <p>The NJC agreed an increase of 1% with effect from 1 July 2015 for 'Grey Book' staff for 2015/16.</p> <p>There are also some minor terminology changes to the Scheme of Members' Allowances which are shown by deletion and <u>insertion</u>.</p>
ACTION	Decision.

RECOMMENDATIONS	That the Authority be recommended to adopt the Scheme for Members' Allowances for 2016/17.
RISK MANAGEMENT	The recommendation will have no adverse effect on the Authority's business.
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	<p>The current budget for Members' Allowances (Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances) is £72,780, including National Insurance.</p> <p>Costs will be incurred in publishing a notice that the Authority has made a Scheme of Members' Allowances in a newspaper circulating in its area. The additional cost is estimated to be in the region of £800.</p>
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	Set out above.
CONSISTENCY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF COLLABORATION	Not applicable.
HEALTH AND SAFETY	Not applicable.
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY	<p>The Authority's Scheme of Members' Allowances does not include any element for meeting costs incurred by a Member who has to arrange care in order to carry out their function as a Member of the Fire Authority.</p> <p>The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 exclude the Authority from including such a provision in its Scheme. However, with the exception of co-opted members, all Members are appointed by either Buckinghamshire County Council or Milton Keynes Council and are entitled to claim "dependent carers' allowances" from their appointing authority. There are currently no co-opted members on the Authority.</p>
USE OF RESOURCES	The recommendation is consistent with the extant Scheme of Allowances.
PROVENANCE SECTION & BACKGROUND PAPERS	BMKFA Scheme for Members' Allowances 2015/16: http://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/9214/3273/6432/MEMBERS_ALLOWANCES_2015_16.pdf
APPENDICES	<p>Appendix A: Report of the Independent Panel on Member Allowances for Buckinghamshire County Council January 2015.</p> <p>Appendix B: Milton Keynes Council report of the Independent Panel of Members' Allowances March 2014.</p> <p>Appendix C: Draft Scheme for Members' Allowances 2016/17.</p>

Members' Allowances

TIME REQUIRED	10 Minutes.
REPORT ORIGINATOR AND CONTACT	Katie Nellist knellist@bucksfire.gov.uk 01296 744633

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5. REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT PANEL ON MEMBER ALLOWANCES FOR BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Introduction: The Regulatory Context

1. The following report notes the proceedings and recommendations made by Buckinghamshire County Council's Independent Panel on Member Allowances.

2 The Panel was established under Regulation 20 of the Local Authorities (Member Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (SI 2003 No 1021) to produce a report and make recommendations as required by Regulation 21. These regulations, made under relevant provisions in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government Act 2000, require all local authorities to maintain an Independent Panel on Member Allowances to review and make recommendations in respect of member allowances.

3. Councils are required to have regard to the recommendations of their Independent Panel before they make or amend a Member Allowances Scheme.

The Panel

Richard Benz, Partner, Kidd Rapinet, Solicitors, Aylesbury and founding Director and initial Chairman of Bucks Economic Partnership Alex Pratt JP BSc OBE, Managing Director, Serious Brands Ltd, and Chairman of Bucks Business First Lisa Williams, Managing Director of John Lewis, High Wycombe.

Terms of Reference

This review by the Panel is a whole-scheme review which has to be undertaken at least every four years. A part review was undertaken in 2012 and revisions made to the Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) after approval of the Panel's recommendations by full Council. The County Council also accepted the following Recommendations from the Panel in July 2013:

1 That the changes to the Scheme of Allowances mentioned above, and outlined in detail in Appendix 1 to this Report, be approved;

2 That an appropriate system of performance management for members be considered.

Interviews conducted by the Panel

The Panel met with the Party Group Leaders and the Chief Executive, individually, during the summer and invited comments from members of the Council on the Scheme and any changes that might be made. The Panel particularly invited comments on their recommendation from 2013 that a system of performance management for members should be developed.

Mr Martin Tett, Leader of the Council, and Mr Mike Appleyard, Deputy Leader of the Council.

Martin Tett and Mike Appleyard informed the Panel that, following the changes made in July last year, they were not proposing any further changes to the Member Allowances Scheme. They felt that the annual increase in rates linked previously to any officer pay award should be discontinued and the current rates of Special Responsibility Allowances, as outlined in Appendix 1 to this Report, should, therefore, be maintained. Other allowances in the Scheme should also continue at the current levels.

The Leader and Deputy Leader discussed their views on performance management of members with the Panel. In summary:-

They fully supported the principle but felt the development of a comprehensive system was not easy to achieve in practice. Members of the Council are elected every four years and this is a judgement in itself. Performance could not simply be gauged on the number of meetings a member attended, work in the community was as important. How would 'excellence' be judged and by whom? In the past when similar schemes have been discussed, the view has been that Group Leaders are not well placed to know what members do and contribute locally? How would contributions be 'moderated' between Groups? e.g. if one Group Leader thought his/her Group were all 'excellent' but another Group Leader were more challenging and rated his/her Group as only 'satisfactory'? No budget exists for further rewards and, in the light of the county's financial situation; the Council would probably have to reduce the standard Allowance to fund it. When services are being reduced and higher charges being made it is not an appropriate time to consider increasing allowances.

Mr Andy Huxley, Leader of the UKIP and Independent Group

Although he had some concerns over the number of SRAs paid, and felt that travel expenses paid were rather generous, Mr Huxley felt that the current system of Allowances works well. Whilst he supported the principle of performance management of members he was unsure how it could be applied in practice. Who would judge and on what criteria?

Mrs Avril Davies, Leader of the Liberal Democrat with Buckingham Labour Group

Mrs Davies felt that the existing rates in the Member Allowances Scheme were reasonable but expressed similar concerns about the number of SRAs paid. Travel expenses should be at paid at lowest petrol rate she felt. Mrs Davies supported the concept of performance management and shared with the Panel the performance management and review template that she uses with her Group. Mrs Davies wouldn't be against reward for excellence but was mindful of the budget implications. Money would be better spent on administrative support to her group, she felt.

Mrs Davies considered that the Council should pursue an accredited modular course of member development.

Mr Chris Williams, Chief Executive

Mr Williams explained the Council's Delivering Successful Performance (DSP) system of performance management for officers. It would be possible for a system of performance management to be developed for members, perhaps with a lower basic allowance and

then an "earned amount", but he appreciated all the issues mentioned by others that would make a system difficult to achieve.

Other Members of the Council

The Panel invited comments from all members of the Council on the current Allowances Scheme generally and, specifically, whether an element could possibly be built into the Scheme to reward excellence. In terms of the number of SRAs, and the levels of the allowances, there were no comments recommending that they be increased. There has been a historic link between the allowance rates and the annual officers pay award. The Council will need to decide whether the current rates of allowances should remain unchanged this year and, in future, how and when they are reviewed. The Council need to have "regard to" the views of the Panel before making changes to the Scheme of Allowances. The view of the Panel is that they should be delinked.

On the subject of "rewarding excellence", members were generally against this. Reasons such as budgetary implications, potential difficulties of fair and effective implementation (i.e. no "level playing field"), particularly in a political organisation, were mentioned.

Views of the Panel

The Panel are grateful to those members who gave up their time to meet with them and to the members who expressed their views in writing.

Contributors made the Panel aware of the Council's "Future Shape" proposals and for the Council to be more commercially aware in its approach. The Panel welcome this business-centred drive, particularly given the pressures local authorities are under in delivering quality services to the public with diminishing budgets. The ramifications of the "Future Shape" proposals are such that an even greater focus on a commercial approach and performance management is likely to be needed.

The Panel is aware that the Council will be under even more pressure, budget-wise, over the years ahead. Discussions will doubtless continue at national and local level about possible devolution of functions from central to local government and the debate about re-structuring local government in Buckinghamshire will gather pace. As a result of this, the Panel believes that the Council, as part of its business-centred approach, will need to give further consideration to performance management at all levels of the organisation. The Panel is disappointed that the Council has not yet acted on the recommendations it accepted in July 2013 and would urge the Council to act on them. In the view of the Panel, objections raised are not insurmountable and with careful thought and planning can be worked through and resolved. The Panel understands that other Councils are exploring the use of such a system and believes the Council should take the lead. The Panel notes that the Council uses it to measure the performance of its own staff.

The Panel consider that the "Future Shape" proposals are likely to require a reconsideration of the roles of elected members on the one hand and officers on the other- including (1) the traditional approach of elected members setting policy which is then implemented by officers and (2) in a cabinet-style system those involved in what could amount to a virtually full-time executive role being remunerated on a proper basis

for the time and effort put in, as opposed to simply receiving allowances. The Panel appreciates that these matters are outside of its terms of reference but proper consideration of them is, in its view, essential.

The Panel noted that the Council had recently been successful in achieving a refresh of the South-East Employers' (SEEMP) Member Development Charter. They congratulate the Council on this award and in their continuing commitment to member development. The Panel support the views of the SEEMP Panel judging the Award that the Council should, particularly, pursue the following areas of improvement:-

- All Members of Cabinet should be encouraged to have a Personal Development Plan (PDP) and a target of 80% of all members having a PDP should also be set
- All elected members be invited to prepare an Annual Report setting out their achievements for the year which could be uploaded to the Council's website. This would increase the visibility and accountability for each individual member. The Council should also re-visit and use the role profiles for all elected members as part of the PDP discussion. The role profiles will need to be reviewed to reflect the changing role of the member.
- The provision of leadership development particularly for members of the Cabinet
- The Council's Member Development Working Group should pilot and implement a 360 degree process to assist with the support for individual members.

With regard to POPs, the Panel see the following headings as being useful:-

Performance against (Strategic Plan) objectives

- What has worked particularly well in performing your role?
- What has worked less well and what have you learned from this?
- Attendance and contribution at Scrutiny and Committee Meetings?
- Attendance and contribution at Council?
- Attendance and contribution at Group Meetings?
- Representing constituents through Casework?
- Performance as a Deputy Cabinet Member Spokesperson?

Setting Objectives for next 12 months

Objectives should cover the period from April to March.

Learning and Development Needs

How are you seeking to develop your role and how will you acquire the required skills and experience? What support from the group and council would help?

In addition to the above, the Panel feels that the Council could add the 360 degree process to the template.

The Panel believes that a system of performance does not necessarily mean that the total spend on allowances would increase. Even if it did, the increased performance in delivery of Council activities could result in efficiency savings outweighing any increased allowances.

The Panel considers that, as part of any future structural review of local government in Buckinghamshire, central government should look again at the way local councillors are remunerated to ensure that the rewards are sufficient to attract the calibre of people who will be needed to run a different type of organisation.

THE PANEL'S RECOMMENDATIONS

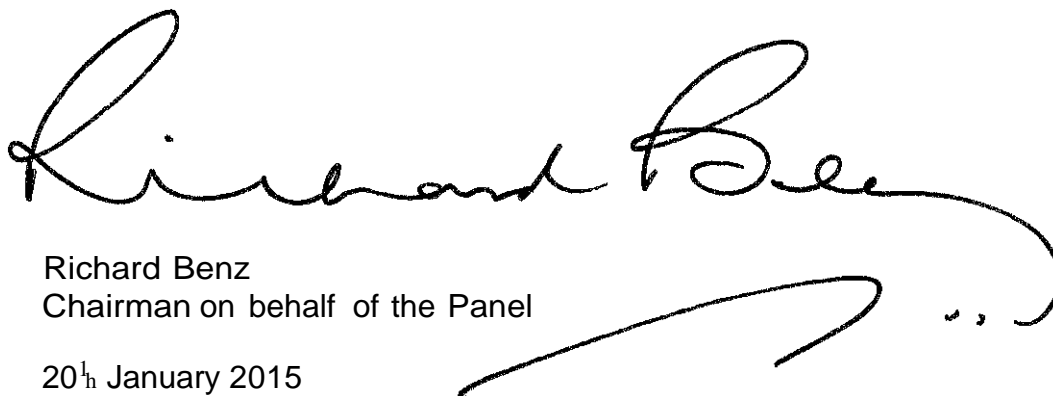
Following the four-yearly review the Panel recommends:-

1 That (having regard to the views of the Panel) the Council should decide whether the current rates of all Allowances in the Scheme should remain unchanged this year and, in future, how and when they are reviewed.

2 That the Council should take steps to implement the Panel's recommendations in its July 2013 report and continue to give due consideration to the development of a system of performance management for members starting with the initiatives outlined above.

3 That the Council should address in a timely way issues likely to result from the "Future Shape" proposals, having regard to the comments made in this report.

4 That the Council should invite the Panel to present and speak to this report.



Richard Benz
Chairman on behalf of the Panel

20th January 2015

APPENDIX 1

CURRENT SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCES

Post	SR Allowance (pa)	Total
Leader	£39,709	£39,709
Deputy leader	£26,473	£26,473
Cabinet Member (6)	£20,172	£121,032
Select Committee (Ch) x 4	£10,092	£40,368
Statutory Committee (Ch) x 4	£5,046	£20,184
Deputy Cabinet Members (7)	£5,046	£35,322
Group Leaders *		
Conservative (36)	£10,948	£10,948
Liberal Democrat (6) (5 Lib Dem /1 Labour	£2,938	£2,938
UKIP (7) (6 UKIP /1 Independent)	£3,205	£3,205
Chairman of the Council	£12,610	£12,610
Vice-Chairman of the Council	£3,156	£3,156
Chairman of Police & Crime Panel **	£10,092	£10,092
Police and Crime Panel Representative	£1,500	£1,500
Basic Allowance x 49	£10,718	£525,182
TOTAL		£852,719

*Allowances derived from formula: £1,336 basic plus £267 per member

** This is only payable in the case where the Panel elects the Buckinghamshire County Council's representative as its Chairman

**MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL - REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT PANEL ON MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES:
MARCH 2014****Introduction.**

1. The Independent Panel on Members' Allowances met on Tuesday 18th February and Friday 7th March to make recommendations about the allowances to be paid to elected members. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 requires councils to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel. The Council's existing scheme was approved by Council in 2009 and the Panel's most recent work was in 2010 when it was tasked with reviewing the Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs). It is for each local authority to decide its scheme and the amounts to be paid under that scheme but the Panel provides advice on the amounts to be paid and the Council must have regard to this advice. The Panel comprised:

Don Latham, Private Local Government Consultant (Chair)
John Moffoot, former Assistant Director Democratic Services
Julie Mills, Principal at MK College
Ruth Stone, Director of Community Action MK
Paul Griffiths, Chief Executive MK Chamber of Commerce
Helen Davies, Resident of MK

2. The Panel was made aware that the Council currently faces a significant budget shortfall and that in a time of austerity it is vital to ensure that public money is well spent and that all allowances are justified and merited. We noted that in line with staff pay there has been no increase in allowances in 2010/11/12 and only 1% in 2013. Nevertheless the Panel recognises that the allowances awarded to Members of Milton Keynes Council are above average when compared to other similar Councils and that the number of Councillors is being increased from 51 to 57 from May 2014 as recommended by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

3. Given the financial situation being faced by the Council the Panels overarching discussion was about the appropriateness of recommending an increase, albeit a small one, at a time when frontline services are being cut. The level of allowances did not appear to be a barrier to recruiting councillors but time commitment was the prime argument presented for increasing allowances. This is exacerbated by the specific structure and chair/vice chair scheme operated, through choice, by councillors. Caseload/constituency work was not presented to us as the real issue. Members seemed much more concerned about the workload linked to committees and other formal meetings. Nevertheless the overall financial package is being stretched by £60,000 (8.4%) on the appointment of 6 additional members and we considered, but have not recommended, that this be absorbed by reducing the Basic Allowance to £9,000 so that there would be no overall increase in the members' allowances budget.

4. The Panel considered the published material and comparisons with other Councils similar to Milton Keynes Council concerning remuneration of councillors. We were made aware of the National Census of Local Authority Councillors and also took into consideration the requirements of Government Regulations on Member Allowances. For reasons set out in our report we consider that the existing scheme is soundly structured and consider that the Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) are set at an appropriate level so would not recommend new allowances being introduced other than to provide an extra £60,000 required to fund the additional six Councillors

5. The Panel reviewed the National Census of Local Authority Councillors 2010 and noted that

Councillors have various roles and work to carry out. Also councils have different decision making structures. The census information was considered in the changing context in which local government works, with economic and social pressures, and a growing public scrutiny in a time of austerity. There is now an increasing focus on councillors as community leaders and the main findings of the census showed that councillors as individuals are dedicated people who devote a great deal of their own time to serving their communities. Councillors spend on average 23 hours per week on Council business and this is consistent with surveys previously undertaken in both 2004 and 2006. The Panel believes that the situation in Milton Keynes Council reflects this national position.

6. The Panel would especially like to record its thanks to June Allen, Corporate Leadership Team Support Manager, who supported the Panel throughout the review; also to the Leader of the Council, Group Leaders and other Members who presented their views verbally or in writing to the Panel. Careful consideration was given to all the points raised.

7. In the light of the information provided by members the Panel discussed four options:

a) That there be no increase in the Council budget for Member allowances in 2014/15 and that the additional cost of six additional members be absorbed by a reduction in existing allowances and that the workload of members be reduced by a streamlining of the democratic process.

b) That the existing scheme be updated from April by the increase in the NJC pay award. (This is the approved Index used in the existing scheme of allowances). Councillors expressed the view that particularly in the financial circumstances being faced by the Council that it would not be acceptable to increase allowances at a rate in excess of that applied to staff pay.

c) That after years of indexing, the scheme be consolidated (Annex 1) by rounding up allowances and simplifying expenses in a way to ensure control, ease administration and encourage transparency. Expressing the levels of SRAs in a way which makes their basis more evident may encourage future evaluation of performance for which, the Panel were pleased to note, job descriptions are already in place.

d) That the new Council, to be elected in May, be encouraged to make urgent changes in the democratic process to reduce demands on Members' time which was the prime argument presented to us for increasing allowances. This streamlining may well include Scrutiny. We consider this to be an early essential to avoid the Council falling back into existing patterns and make desired changes more difficult to achieve. The Panel did consider a reduction in allowances as a result of streamlining the democratic decision making process which could greatly reduce the demands on members' time. It could also be argued that six additional councillors will decrease workload for the extant 51 – an 11% increase in headcount with no increase in workload.

Panel Recommendations.

8. In the light of evidence examined and the input of Members **the Panel recommends that the existing Scheme be updated in April by the consolidation recommended in our report (Annex 1) and that £60,000 be added to the budget to fund six new councillors.**

Consolidated (updated) Scheme.

9. The Panel's recommendations for consolidation (the third option) are as follows :

- That £60,000 be added to the Budget to fund six new Councillors
- That the Basic Allowance be set at £10,000 for 2014 - 15. (Annex 2)
- That SRAs be updated and expressed as a % of the Basic Allowance. (Annex 3)
- The Civic Allowances paid to the Mayor be set at £11,000 and Deputy Mayor £5,500.
- That Members should continue to be restricted to one SRA.
- That the Co-opted Members allowance be set at £640.
- That the SRA for Chair of Budget Review be reduced by £868 to bring it into line with Chair of Audit Committee.
- That no changes be made to other aspects of the existing scheme other than for indexing where appropriate.
- That the Council takes appropriate action on the results of the current Government/Treasury consultation exercise on pensions - which is anticipated to happen in 2014. (Annex 4)
- That the costs of telephone and broadband be met by Members from their Basic Allowance from 1st April 2014.
- That the consolidated Basic and SRA allowances remain unchanged i.e. not indexed for three years until the Panel meets again.
- That the new Council, to be elected in May, be encouraged to make urgent changes in the democratic process to reduce demands on Members' time.

Basic Allowance.

10. **The Panel recommends that the Basic Allowance (including inflation) be set at £10,000 for 2014/2015.** (See Annex 2) It was suggested by the Labour Group that if some 'disentanglement' between remuneration and expenses could be made and discussed with HMRC that this could be helpful to members. The Panel takes the view that allowances compensate for expenses and are not intended to be a form of salary. (See Annex 4). This would be a matter for the Council to discuss with HMRC.

11. Members of Milton Keynes Council also receive reimbursement of telephone and broadband costs at a current annual cost of £7,700. We recommend that the Council streamlines the administration of the scheme, reduces costs and makes it more transparent by withdrawing this additional support with Members meeting these costs directly from their Basic Allowance from 1st April 2014. We were made aware, during our Member consultation that this could create problems for some low income earning Members but we believe with the Council under pressure to reduce costs of administration it should take this step that would also bring it into line with best practice. It would save costs and simplify administration.

Special Responsibility Allowances.

12. The Council also pays Special Responsibility Allowances to those councillors it considers to have *significant, additional responsibilities* over and above the generally accepted duties of a councillor. These special responsibilities are related to the discharge of the Council's functions.

13. The most significant is the Leader of the Council and the Panel recommend that the allowance be increased by £668 to £30,000 (3 x basic allowance). The Panel considered the current practice

of ring-fencing a total sum for the Cabinet, which is distributed per Cabinet Member. This has the benefit of enabling the Leader to determine the Cabinet structure without increasing the cost. The Cabinet Members are currently being paid £10,647, a total of £74,529 and the Panel recommends that this be rounded to and capped at £77,000. If the current Cabinet structure continues, the SRA per Cabinet Member, excluding the Leader, would be £11,000.

14. We were requested by a number of Members to consider additional SRAs but the Panel were totally agreed that there should be no additional SRAs. The Regulations make it clear that only *significant additional responsibilities* should be recognised and only a *minority of members* should receive an SRA. Our recommendations would result in 39% of the new Council receiving a SRA which would be in line with good practice. A case was made by a number of members for the introduction of SRAs for Vice Chairs. The reasons the Panel would not support this are set out in Annex 5. We do recommend that the SRA for Chair of Budget Review be reduced by £868 to bring it into line with Chair of Audit Committee.

15. We believe that SRAs are soundly structured but recommend that the use of the Basic Allowance as a bench mark for SRA calculations should be made explicit and that figures should be rounded as after a time of indexing they appear to have a degree of accuracy that cannot be justified. In other words we can re-establish a fresh baseline for the scheme which we believe, based on the work of previous Panels, establishes SRAs at an appropriate level.

16. It was suggested that consideration should be given to a "*de minimus*" payment for Group Leaders and the Panel recommend this should be £2,480 (i.e., £620 per Member for a notional minimum of 4 Members). The full details of our recommended changes are set out in Annex 3. This would produce an increase, including inflation, of £2,583 (1.2%) on the SRA budget of £211,713.

17. The Panel recommends, in line with current practice, that Members should continue to be restricted to one SRA. We do not support arguments for exceptions to this rule and we would not recommend the practice of transferability of allowances.

Co-opted Members of Committees

18. Persons co-opted to serve on Committees, Sub Committees or Panels, and who have voting rights, receive an allowance currently £634. This is paid in 12 equal, monthly instalments and will be liable for tax and National Insurance. All co-optees are eligible for travel and subsistence at the Members' rate when carrying out the duties for which they are co-opted. If the co-opted person ceases to serve the Council reserves the right to recover any overpayments of this allowance. **The Panel recommends that the Co-opted Members' allowance be increased to £640.**

Civic Allowances.

19. Currently the Mayor of Milton Keynes receives a civic allowance of £10,647 per annum, in line with that paid to Cabinet Members, paid in two equal instalments of £5,323 in May and November. The Deputy Mayor receives a civic allowance of 50% of the Mayor's allowance, i.e. £5,324 per annum, payable in two equal instalments of £2,662 in May and November. As part of a local agreement with HM Inspector of Taxes, these civic allowances are not liable for tax or National insurance contributions. In the event of a Mayor or Deputy Mayor ceasing to hold office the Council reserves the right to recover any overpayments of the Civic Allowance.

The Panel is recommending that Cabinet SRAs be increased to £11,000 and if this increase were also applied to Civic Allowances there would be a budget increase of £529 (3%). **The Panel recommends that the allowances paid to the Mayor be increased to £11,000 and Deputy Mayor to £5,500.**

Travel and Subsistence.

20. The Panel fully endorses the Council's existing arrangements for travel and subsistence. Reimbursement to councillors for travel and subsistence is paid at the current rates agreed by the National Joint Council (NJC) for the reimbursement of Council officers. In some instances Mileage claims may be liable for tax and National Insurance contributions. Councillors are reimbursed the full cost of travel by the most appropriate means of transport at standard class rates whilst carrying out Approved Duties, provided a valid receipt (bus ticket etc) is produced to substantiate the claim. All reasonable claims for subsistence are paid for carrying out Approved Duties and as there is no profit element in the payment of subsistence, this allowance is not subject to tax or National Insurance contributions.

Child Care and Dependent Carer's Allowance.

21. The Panel recommends that the scheme should continue unchanged except that for child care the minimum wage rate applicable to the age of the carer should be updated to October 2013 wage rates, and should continue to be adjusted to meet any future changes in the applicable minimum wage:

£6.31 per hour (21 years and over)

£5.03 per hour (18 -20 year olds)

£3.72 per hour (for workers under 18 who are above compulsory school leaving age)

Some Members suggested that the Council should adopt the Living Wage but the Panel received no evidence that the allowance set at the present level discourages people standing.

Claimable Allowances.

22. The Panel noted and endorsed the Council's current scheme. There is a 3 month time limit for submitting claims i.e. Child Care and Dependent Carers Allowance and Travel and Subsistence Allowances. Any claims made outside of this limit will only be paid in exceptional circumstances with the approval of the Service Manager, Legal and Democratic Services and the Service Manager Audit and Risk Management.

Dual Authority roles.

23. The Panel notes the Council's decision that Councillors should not receive an allowance for more than one authority (e.g. Fire Authority) for the same duties. The Panel support the continuation of this position.

Forgoing Allowances.

24. A councillor may forgo all or part of any allowances to which he or she is entitled, provided he or she has given notice in writing to the Service Manager, Legal and Democratic Services.

Suspension and Withholding Allowances.

25. The Panel confirms the existing arrangements. In the event of a councillor being suspended from duty following an investigation by the Council's Standards Committee allowances will not be paid to the councillor concerned during the period of suspension. If necessary, a pro rata calculation will be made based on the number of days in the Council year concerned to determine if an adjustment for under or overpayment needs to be made to ensure that the correct amount is withheld during the suspension period. The Council should reserve the right to recover any overpayments.

Approved Duties.

26. The Panel endorses the list of 'Approved Duties' under the regulations and note that these include attendance at conferences, seminars and other Member Development and training events as approved by the Council or Service Manager, Legal and Democratic Services. The Panel was mindful of the training costs of a new Council with the prospect of many new Councillors and for Member Development training being a priority. We understand that appropriate budget provision has been made. We also discussed how appraisal of performance could play an important role in a situation where Members work under great pressures.

We noted that attendance at casework surgeries organised at advertised times and venues within the Member's own ward is an Approved Duty. The Panel considered recommending that this cost should in future be incurred as part of the Basic Allowance. However, in the light of the answers to our questions by Members and the low cost, we are not recommending change. We do not agree with the request that general casework should be included. We considered other issues raised by the Leader of the Council but we do not propose changes to Approved Duties.

Indexing.

27. The Panel considered recommending that the NJC award for staff pay should continue to be used as the basis for updating allowances but that having set a new baseline for allowances in our report we recommend that there should be no indexation for three years of the Basic Allowance and SRAs until the Panel meets again. But we recommend that the Dependent Carer's allowance should continue to be indexed to the maximum hourly rates for minimum wage for age of carer/average hourly cost of Milton Keynes Council. Travel and Subsistence allowances should be paid at the same rates and conditions applicable to Officer and HMRC rates where applicable.

Pensions.

28. All Councillors are eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme. Both Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowance will be taken into account when calculating pension entitlement. The Panel noted that on 19th December 2012 the Local Government Minister, Mike Brandon Lewis, made a statement to the House of Commons setting out the Department's intention to remove access for councillors to the LGPS in England from April 2014 (Annex 4) and that a separate paper be issued as part of the planned consultation on the wider reform of the LGPS - which is anticipated to be completed in 2014.

Basic Allowance

1. The Statutory Guidance is very specific on the questions a Panel must consider when arriving at the recommended Basic Allowance:

'Having established what Councillors do, and the hours which are devoted to these tasks the local authorities will need to take a view on the rate at which, and the number of hours for which, Councillors ought to be remunerated.'

2. The underlying approach in setting the recommended Basic Allowance is based on the above statutory guidance as published by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), par.67. As a result, the Panel is under a duty to arrive at answers for the following three variables when setting and recommending an appropriate Basic Allowance:

- a) Time required to fulfil roles of ordinary Members
- b) The voluntary principle, the notion that part of the time put in by a Member in their back bench roles should be unremunerated, often known as the Public Service Discount (PSD)
- c) The worth of a backbench Member's time, or rate of remuneration.

3. **Time required to fulfil back bench roles = 140 days annual equivalent.** The 2003 Panel acknowledged that the role of the back bench councillor was at least 60 hours per month, or at least 90 - 95 days per year. The 2010 Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) census of Councillors shows that Councillors not in senior positions put in at least 23 hours per week, but that includes all types of councils. The Panel has translated this research by the IDeA into just over half a working week, or equivalent of 140 days per year.

4. **Public Service Discount: = 30%.** The previous Panel made the assumption that anything over 60 hours per month was the voluntary element or public service. However the common discount applied to English authorities is around 30%. In other words, of the 142 days expected time input, one third has been determined as public service, say 42 days, with 98 being left as the remunerated time.

5. **Rate for the job = £102 per day.** The Local Government Association no longer provides advice on a recommended daily session rate. The annual average wage/salary in the UK is £26,500 which the Panel have translated into £102 per day.

6. Thus, following the statutory guidance with the variables outlined above produces the following Basic Allowance:

- Time for the job: 140 equivalent days per year
- Public Service 30% (42 days)
- Rate for the job £102 per day

98 remunerated days x £102 = £9,996 say £10,000 Basic Allowance 2014 - 2015.

7. This is paid in 12 equal instalments and is subject to both tax and National Insurance contributions where applicable. If a councillor ceases to be a councillor before the end of his or her term of office, payment of the allowance ceases and a pro rata calculation is made to ensure that the councillor receives the right amount of allowance. The Council reserves the right to recover any overpayments of Basic Allowance.

8. The Basic Allowance is intended to recognise the time commitment of all councillors, including such inevitable calls on their time at meetings with officers and constituents and attendance at political group meetings. It is also intended to cover incidental costs, such as the use of their homes for council business.

Special Responsibility Allowances

The Panel believes that SRAs are soundly structured but recommend, in line with good practice, that the use of the Basic Allowance as a bench mark for SRA calculations be made explicit and that figures should be rounded as, after a time of indexing, they appear to have a degree of accuracy that cannot be justified. We did not have evidence to justify a significant increase or proposal for change in the existing scheme. We do recommend that the SRA for Chair of Budget Review be reduced by £1,000 to bring it into line with Chair of Audit Committee. What is set out below is a fresh baseline for the scheme which we believe, based on the work of previous Panels, sets SRAs at an appropriate level.

	Current £	Revised £	+/- £
Leader of the Council (300% basic allowance)	29,332	30,000	668+
Main Opposition Group Leader - per Group Member (16) (£614 increased to £620)	9,824	9,920	96+
Smaller Opposition Group Leader - per Group Member (15) (£614 increased to £620)	9,210	9,300	90+
Cabinet Members (7) - (Pool Cap of £77,000) (110% basic allowance)	10,647	11,000	2,471+
Chair of Development Control Committee (80% basic allowance)	8,051	8,000	51-
Chair of Licensing & Regulation Committees (80% basic allowance)	8,051	8,000	51-
Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee (75% basic allowance)	7,368	7,500	132+
Chair of Budget Review Group (55% basic allowance)	6,368	5,500	868-
Chair of Audit Committee (55% basic allowance)	5,368	5,500	132+
Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Select Committee (5) (45% basic allowance)	4,549	4,500	245-
Chair of Executive Scrutiny Panel (45% basic allowance)	4,368	4,500	132+
Chair of Standards Committee (30% basic allowance)	2,933	3,000	77+

This would increase the SRA budget (including inflation) of £211,713 by £2,583 (1.2%).

Written Ministerial statement of 19 December 2012 on Councillors Pensions.

On 12 September 2001, the then Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions announced plans to give taxpayer - funded pensions to councillors, through access to the LGPS. The proposals came into force in 2003. The Councillors' Commission report of the last administration noted that 912 councillors in England had joined that pension scheme by 2004. A Taxpayers' Alliance survey in February 2009, across the whole United Kingdom, found that 3,527 councillors had pensions as of 2007 to 2008; a further survey in January 2012 found that figure had increased to 4,548 councillors by 2010 to 2011. The trend is clear.

Abolition of taxpayer-funded pensions

Ministers in this government take a fundamentally different view from the last administration. We do not believe that taxpayer-funded pensions are justified. Councillors are volunteers undertaking public service; they are not and should not be employees of the council and on the municipal payroll. They are not professional, full-time politicians, nor should they be encouraged to become so. Councillors do not receive a salary; rather, they receive allowances to compensate for their out-of-pocket expenses. Yet following changes made by the last administration, allowances have slowly become a form of salary, a situation worsened by the state-funded pensions. This is a corrosive influence on local democracy and independent thought, blurring the distinction between council staff and councillors. Every bit of the public sector needs to do its bit to help pay off the deficit inherited from the last administration. Local government grants are being reduced. Ministers have cut and then frozen their salaries. Public sector pensions, including parliamentary pensions, are being reformed to reduce the burden on taxpayers. It is only right that councillors do their bit as well. We do not believe that an occupational pension scheme intended for employees, and paid for by taxpayers, is an appropriate vehicle for councillors.

Existing pension rights

Subject to consultation, we propose that there will be no access for councillors to the LGPS in England from April 2014. In the interests of fairness, those councillors already in the scheme would have their accrued rights up to April 2014 fully protected, but would not be able to accrue any further benefits after that date in the existing scheme. This will not prevent councillors contributing to a personal pension: if they put aside part of their (taxable) allowances into such a pension, then that is a matter for them; they will continue to receive income tax relief like any ordinary member of the population, subject to the prevailing tax rules. Although central records on councillors' participation in the scheme are not held by my department, initial rough estimates suggest that this could save £7 million a year in taxpayers' money. There is absolutely no case for increasing councillor allowances to compensate. Instead, councils may want to consider earlier, voluntary closure of the scheme to their councillors as a sensible saving.

Civic duty

Eligibility regulations for the LGPS are overseen by my department. Although this is a centrally mandated change (as was its original introduction), we believe these reforms will assist localism and local democracy by encouraging a greater separation between councillors and officers. Robust local scrutiny of council spending requires councillors to be substantively independent of means and of thought from the body they are overseeing. Civic duty should not be bought. We do not believe it will have any detrimental effect on people choosing to become councillors. The best thing we can do to encourage more people to take part in municipal public life is to decentralise power to local communities so being a councillor is a meaningful and rewarding role.

Elected mayors

We recognise that there is a greater expectation that an elected mayor is a full-time position. We therefore propose to consult on allowing elected mayors to remain in the scheme as a voluntary option (but not as an expectation), subject to local scrutiny, challenge and determination. The salaries of the mayor of London, members of the Greater London Assembly and police and crime commissioners will remain pensionable.

Timing

Statutory consultation is required and will commence in due course, as part of the planned consultation on the wider reform of the LGPS. We will consult with the Welsh Assembly government in respect of access to the LGPS for councillors in Wales.

As a former councillor myself, I would like to pay tribute to their often unsung and on-going work in standing up for their local residents. We hope these reforms will further strengthen the integrity and independence of councillors and increase the respect within their communities for the voluntary work they undertake as champions of the people.

Vice Chair Allowances

1) A number of Councillors including the Leader and in particular the Labour Group, in a written submission, made the argument for payment of Vice Chairs as follows:

'For some years now, it has been the practice of the Council to have two Vice-Chairs of each Select Committee, one each from the parties not holding the Chair. This, we feel, can ensure cross-party buy-in to the Select Committee process, a factor that we think is specifically important for the Administration Party. The effectiveness of the scrutiny system relies on effective planning meetings, which involves the vice chairs every bit as much as the Chair. This is not an assertion we make wildly - the planning meetings are documented and I am sure agendas, and notes, will be made available to the Panel by Officers. It has been said, perhaps with some justification that the only thing the Chair does which the Vice-Chairs don't, is to chair the meetings. We feel that this situation should again be reflected in the Allowance system, as it was for some years in the past.

We feel there is a particular injustice with respects the Vice-Chairs of the Licensing and Regulatory Committees. Here also, the bi-party arrangement re Vice Chairs operates. The Vice-Chairs are constitutionally required to chair hearings panels in the absence of the Chair. They frequently do this and we can supply supporting evidence if this is required. There must be an injustice here and we invite the Panel to consider it.'

2. There are a number of reasons why the Panel would not support in principle the payment of SRAs to Vice Chairs.

Basic Allowance. Setting the Basic Allowance at an above average rate of £10,000 implies that the whole membership is widely engaged in the work of the Council. For some members fulfilment, satisfaction, training and experience can be gained through a vice chair role. For others it may be joint working, task and finish groups, working with other agencies or a priority for community engagement. The Basic Allowance set at this level assumes all those activities are covered. Some Councils will have a lower Basic Allowance and more Members on SRAs. But it is regarded as bad practice to pay the majority of members a SRA.

Significant Additional responsibilities over and above the generally accepted duties of a councillor is the clear guidance of the Regulations. The Panel has an obligation to take heed of the New Constitutions: Guidance on Regulation for Local Authority Allowances, republished by the Department for Communities and Local Government on 5th May 2006.

Can a small allowance - even if it were allowed to be taken out of the Chair's allowance - be an indicator of significant additional responsibilities? The Panel was informed that for this reason it was, in the experience of the Chairman, common for Panels not to recommend such payments. The Panel were made aware of the challenge that had been made previously to such payments and the response of the District Auditor. We were aware of the legal arguments but our decision is based solely on the merits of the case and the principle of keeping SRA payments to the minimum (1/3rd) in line with best practice.

Minimum number of Councillors should be receiving a SRA. If the majority of members of a council receive a SRA the local electorate may rightly question whether this was justified. Indeed this was questioned on the audit of another authority on the Audit of Accounts and the District Auditor supported the member of the public in their challenge and the allowances were withdrawn.

The current scheme provides for 22 allowances in a membership of 51 shortly to increase to 57 (39%). Vice chair allowances would have the potential to double the number of SRAs being paid. The reality is that 6 should be a maximum additional allowances to keep within the spirit of the Regulations. If they are small they can be challenged and they would add to the overall budget cost in a time of austerity when staff and services are being reduced.

Cost of politics is a matter of concern to the Panel. Recognising the challenges of being in a 'hung council' we do not believe that the additional costs of being in that position should fall on the community. We believe that political balance can be achieved without it having to be built in at Vice Chair level. We would much prefer to have a realistic Basic Allowance. Indeed, with the 'non-political' roles of the Regulatory Committees, it could be seen to be more above politics not to have politically defined Vice Chairs. We were pleased to note that the Overview and Scrutiny Panels were chaired by members of the minority parties. Sometimes the hidden agenda may be to find ways of financially rewarding those members of minority groups who are not the Administration. The move to vice chair allowances can be used as a mechanism to get the majority of members on a SRA. This can be the 'hidden agenda' but we believe is not the case in Milton Keynes where there is a history of parties working together for the benefit of the community.

Summary

The arguments against making provision for SRAs for Vice Chairs have been set out clearly by previous Panels and we concur with their views. We strongly believe that the existing scheme provides allowances at the right level and would not recommend a proliferation of smaller SRAs. In the end this is a matter for the Council to determine but the Panel would strongly recommend against such a move.



**BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON
KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY**

***MEMBERS' SCHEME OF ALLOWANCES
2016/17***

THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY

MEMBERS' SCHEME OF ALLOWANCES

Introduction

1. This Scheme is governed by the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances)(England) Regulations 2003 and the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances)(England) (Amendment) Regulations 2003 – “the regulations.”
2. Elected Members of the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Combined Fire Authority may claim basic allowances, special responsibility allowances, travelling allowances and subsistence allowances for approved duties in accordance with the provisions of this scheme.
3. Appointed (non elected) members may claim co-optees allowance, travelling allowances and subsistence allowances for approved duties specified in this scheme.
4. "Year" means the 12 months ending with 31 March.
5. The Scheme has four Schedules attached which are:
 - (a) Schedule 1 - Special Responsibility Allowances
 - (b) Schedule 2 - Payment of Travelling and Subsistence Allowances
 - (c) Schedule 3 - Duties Excluded from the Allowances Scheme
 - (d) Schedule 4 - Rates of Allowances

Creation and Amendment of the Scheme

6. This scheme comes into effect on 1 April 2016.
7. For subsequent changes in basic allowances, special responsibility allowances and co-optees allowances, new rates will be payable from the date the amendment takes effect as set out either in this scheme or the Regulations.
8. The Fire Authority will be responsible for amending the scheme and in doing so will have regard to any recommendations to its constituent councils of the independent remuneration panels set up by them.

Basic Allowances

9. The Fire Authority will pay equally to each Member of the Authority a basic allowance of an amount specified in Schedule 4.
10. Where the term of office of a Member begins or ends in the course of a financial year entitlement will be apportioned in accordance with the Regulations. The apportionment will not take place where a Member's term of office lasts less than one month.
11. Basic Allowances are payable monthly and are subject to tax and national insurance deductions.

Special Responsibility Allowances

12. The Fire Authority will pay each year to the Members of the Fire Authority who have special responsibilities by reason of the office(s) they hold the special responsibility allowances set out in Schedule 1.
13. Where a Member takes up or relinquishes any post that carries a special responsibility allowance in the course of a financial year the entitlement will be apportioned in accordance with the Regulations. The apportionment will not take place where a Member's term of office lasts less than one month.
14. Special responsibility allowances are payable in monthly instalments and are subject to tax and national insurance deductions. Where a Member is eligible for more than one special responsibility allowance (whether payable by the Fire Authority or another authority for Fire Authority duties) only the highest one will be payable, with the exception that a Lead Member may claim one Lead Member's Allowance in addition to one other Special Responsibility Allowance payable.

Approved Duties

15. Travelling and Subsistence Allowances are payable monthly and are only payable to Elected Members of the Fire Authority for the approved duties set out in Schedule 2.

Co-optees Allowance

16. A Co-optees Allowance may be paid to appointed members (i.e. non-Elected Members whether voting or not) for the performance of any approved duty as defined by this document.
17. The allowance will be payable in monthly instalments and are subject to tax and national insurance deductions.

Travelling and Subsistence Allowances

18. The term "Member" for the purpose of travelling and subsistence allowances applies to any person who is a Member of the Fire Authority, or who is a member of any committee, sub-committee or panel of the Fire Authority, and so includes appointed non-elected members of those bodies. The payment of these allowances is dependent upon the performance of an "approved duty" which is an attendance as a member at a meeting, or the carrying on of a duty, set out in Schedule 2.
19. The rates for travel and subsistence allowances are specified in Schedule 4.

Allowances are Maxima

20. The scales for all allowances are maxima and there is no obligation on any Member to claim any or all of the allowances.
21. A Member shall give notice in writing to the ~~Treasurer~~ Chief Finance Officer that he/she elects to forego any part of his/her entitlement to an allowance under the scheme.

Social Functions and Occasions

22. Elected Members on occasions are invited, or feel it necessary to attend functions, or occasions which have a social element. No allowances are paid to Members of the Fire Authority on these occasions unless the Member is undertaking the performance of a positive duty and one of significant size, e.g. making a speech or distributing prizes when travel and subsistence allowances may be paid. Merely to attend because the member is interested or represents people in the district is insufficient to justify payment of any allowances.

Conference Expenses

23. If attendance at a conference has been approved by the Authority, conference expenses which are obligatory and outside the control of the Member, will be paid in advance on request or will be reimbursed. These expenses will include the conference fee. The actual cost of accommodation, meals and the like, will only be met or reimbursed if it is part of the inclusive charge for the conference or it is a requirement of the conference or its organisers that the Member should stay at a particular hotel.
24. Travel and subsistence allowances are payable where appropriate.

Telephones

25. A mobile phone will be provided to the Chairman of the Fire Authority, with the cost of supply, rental and business calls being met by the Fire Authority.

Avoidance of Duplication

26. A claim for an allowance under this scheme must include, or be accompanied by, a statement signed by the claimant that no other claim has been, or will be made for the matter to which the claim relates.

Records of Payments

27. Records of payments made to Members are available for inspection free of charge by any local government elector of the Fire Authority.
28. A person entitled to inspect a record may make a copy of any part of it.
29. Details of total payments made to each Member for allowances under this scheme will be published as soon as practicable after the end of the year to which they relate.

Claim Forms

30. All information requested on the claim form must be provided, including details of start and finish times, journeys made and meetings attended. (It is always advisable for Members to make contemporaneous notes in their diary to assist in the completion of claims).
31. Claims for expenses should only be made when actually incurred, ie rail/bus, taxis, hotel accommodation. Receipts should be provided.
32. Claims for the same expenses (mileage, travel and subsistence etc) must not be made from more than one body.
33. Claim forms should be completed and submitted to the ~~Treasurer~~ Chief Finance Officer, preferably within seven working days after the end of each calendar month.
34. Payments for basic and special responsibility allowances will be paid monthly in arrears and travel and subsistence payments will be paid monthly in arrears on the submission of a claim form.
35. No claim from a Member for traveling or subsistence allowances which is submitted more than three months after the costs were incurred and no later than the end of April for the preceding financial year will be entertained.

SCHEDULE 1

SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCES FROM APRIL 2016

Special Responsibility Allowance per annum

• Position	£
• Chairman	11,974
• Vice-Chairman	4,012
• Chairman – Executive Committee	4,940
• Chairman – Overview and Audit Committee	3,236
• Chairman – Human Resources Sub-Committee	1,620
• Group Leaders	3,593
• Lead Members	3,122

SCHEDULE 2

PAYMENT OF TRAVELLING AND SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES

The duties in this Section have been approved for the payment of travel and subsistence allowances:

- (a) Attendance at a meeting of the Fire Authority;
- (b) Attendance at a meeting of any committee or sub-committee of the Fire Authority;
- (c) Attendance at a meeting of any section, panel, working party or other meeting authorised by the Fire Authority or a committee or sub-committee of the Fire Authority or a joint committee of the Fire Authority and one or more other authorities to which the member has been specifically appointed provided that it is a meeting to which Members of at least two political groups have been invited.
- (d) Attendance at a meeting of an association of authorities of which the Fire Authority is a member and to which the member has been appointed by the Fire Authority to represent it.
- (e) Attendance at ad hoc meetings with other authorities, organisations or bodies authorised by a committee or sub-committee of the Fire Authority, or the Director of Legal and Governance on the advice of the relevant Chairman or Vice-Chairman if this is not practicable.
- (f) Attendance at briefing meetings to which Members of at least two political groups have been invited authorised by a committee or sub-committee of the Fire Authority, or the Director of Legal and Governance on the advice of the relevant Chairman or Vice-Chairman if this is not practicable.
- (g) Attendance at seminars and conferences arranged by the Fire Authority, a committee or sub-committee of the Fire Authority, or the Director of Legal and Governance on the advice of the relevant Chairman or Vice-Chairman if this is not practicable, about any of its functions.
- (h) Attendance at specific visits arranged by the Fire Authority, a committee or sub-committee of the Fire Authority, or the Director of Legal and Governance on the advice of the relevant Chairman or Vice-Chairman if this is not practicable, about any of its functions and where Members of at least two political groups have been invited.
- (i) Attendance at a meeting of any body or authority upon which the member has been appointed by the Fire Authority or a committee or sub-committee of the Fire Authority to represent it.

- (j) Attendance in connection with the discharge of any function of the Fire Authority conferred by or under any enactment and empowering or requiring the Fire Authority to inspect or authorise the inspection of premises.
- (k) Attendance at meetings of bodies where the Fire Authority makes appointments, where the Fire Authority has a major influence at national, regional, county or district level. These bodies are listed below:
 - (i) Local Government Association
 - (ii) Fire Commission
- (l) Attendance at any disciplinary, grievance, dismissal or appeals sub-committee or panel.
- (m) The following duties if approved by the Fire Authority or a Committee:
 - Attendance at briefing meetings held for the purpose of, or in connection with, the discharge of the functions of the Fire Authority or any of its committees or sub-committees.
 - Attendance at the official opening of new Fire Authority establishments or projects.
 - Attendance by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Fire Authority and of committees at official functions in a representative capacity.
 - Duties undertaken by Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the Fire Authority, committees or subcommittees acting in an official capacity.
 - Members' delegations to Government Departments.
 - Town Centre Management Meetings and Parishes.
- (n) Meetings organised by the Chief Fire Officer, ~~Treasurer~~ Chief Finance Officer or Director of Legal and Governance or their nominated representatives with external bodies or persons to further the business and aims of the Fire Authority which the relevant officer certifies requires the attendance of members on the grounds of urgency which prevents approval being obtained from the Fire Authority, a committee or sub-committee

Note: In authorising attendances in accordance with the above, no member, official or officer of the Fire Authority shall act in a discriminatory manner reflecting party political preference. Members, officials and officers should take care to ensure that their actions can not be construed as having been discriminatory.

SCHEDULE 3

DUTIES EXCLUDED FROM THE ALLOWANCES SCHEME

The duties in this Section are those for which the Fire Authority has decided that no allowances will be paid.

- Members' surgeries
- Political activities

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SCHEDULE 4

RATES OF ALLOWANCES

From April 2016 the following rates of allowances will apply

Basic Allowance:

£1,199 per annum

Special Responsibility Allowances:

See Schedule 1

Co-optees Allowance

£300 per annum

Travel Allowances

(a) Car

The rate for travel by a Member's own private motor vehicle, or one belonging to a member of his/her family or otherwise provided for his/her use, other than a solo motor cycle, shall be 45 pence for the first 10,000 miles and 25 pence for each mile after that.

(b) Motorcycle

The rate for travel by a Member's own motorcycle, or one belonging to a member of his/her family, or otherwise provided for his/her use, shall be 24 pence per mile.

(c) Bicycle

The rate for travel by a Member's own bicycle, or one belonging to a member of his/her family, or otherwise provided for his/her use, shall not exceed 20p a mile.

(d) Public Transport

Members can claim the full cost of travelling on public transport at standard class rates whilst carrying out Approved Duties, provided a valid receipt, bus ticket etc is produced to substantiate the claim.

Subsistence

The rate of subsistence allowance shall not exceed the amounts which can be claimed under the Buckinghamshire County Council Members Allowances Scheme applicable at the time when the cost is incurred.

Uplift for Inflation

Basic, Special Responsibility and Co-optees allowances will be adjusted for inflation each year until, but not beyond 1 April 2017, in line with the pay award for the Authority's staff on National Joint Council for Local Authorities' Fire and Rescue Services, Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book).

Travel and Subsistence allowances will be adjusted for inflation each year in line with the Buckinghamshire County Council Members Allowances Scheme applicable at the time when the cost is incurred.

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Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

MEETING	Fire Authority
DATE OF MEETING	16 December 2015
OFFICER	Lynne Swift, Director People & Organisational Development
LEAD MEMBER	Councillor Roger Reed
SUBJECT OF THE REPORT	BMKFA Pay Policy Principles and Statement 2016/17
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>The Authority is required to approve its Pay Policy Principles and Statement before the end of March immediately preceding the financial year to which it relates.</p> <p>It is proposed that the attached draft (Appendix 1) be the Authority's revised Pay Policy Principles and Statement for 2016/17. It is based on the Authority's current approved in-year amendments to the Pay Policy Principles and Statement for 2015/16, save as amended by additional text underlined (<u>underlined</u>) and deleted text shown struck through (struck through).</p> <p>The Pay Policy Principles and Statement has been revised and minor amendments made to section 17 'Pay Multiple', where the data has been updated to reflect the figures as at October 2015.</p> <p>The Government announced on 23 May 2015 its intention to end six-figure exit payments within all public sector bodies. A consultation document requesting views on the details of the policy ran between July and August 2015. A draft Statutory Instrument has been published setting out the detail.</p> <p>A core element of the proposal is that in order to relax the restrictions on the payment of exit payments under the proposed regulations, approval will be required of the full Fire Authority and that restrictions on the aggregate exit payments will apply unless there are exceptional circumstances. The introduction of the restriction on exit payments at a £95,000 cap will require an in-year amendment to the Authority's Pay Policy.</p>
ACTION	Decision.

<p>RECOMMENDATIONS</p>	<p>It is recommended that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Pay Policy Principles and Statement at Appendix 1 be approved as the statutory Pay Policy Statement for 2016/17. 2. The requirement for an in-year review of the Pay Policy Principles and Statement with the introduction of the £95,000 cap on public sector exit payments be noted. 3. The change to the National Minimum Wage, at a rate of £6.70 per hour, to the National Living Wage, at a rate of £7.20 per hour on 1 April 2016 be noted. 4. The application of the National Living Wage as the lowest rate of pay for staff for financial year 2016/17 be approved.
<p>RISK MANAGEMENT</p>	<p>The Fire Authority is required to adopt and publish a Pay Policy Principles and Statement annually.</p>
<p>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</p>	<p>There would be minimal direct financial implications arising from the Pay Policy Principles and Statement. Any financial impact of subsequent decisions will be factored into the Medium Term Financial Planning process and scrutinised and challenged by Members. Any in-year impacts will be considered and reported through the budget monitoring process and any resource re-allocation will be subject to the usual virement approvals and limits as set out in the Financial Regulations.</p>
<p>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</p>	<p>Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011 places a requirement on the Authority to prepare annually, a statement setting out the Authority’s policies on the remuneration of its chief officers, the remuneration of its lowest paid employees and the relationship between the remuneration of its chief officers and the remuneration of its employees who are not chief officers. Chief officers are the most senior officers of the Authority. Authorities are required to state the definition of lowest paid employees they have adopted in the statement, and explain the reasons for adopting that particular definition. The statement may also set out the Authority’s policies relating to other terms and conditions applying to it senior officers. In preparing its Statement, the Authority must have regard to any guidance issued or approved by the Secretary of State.</p>

	<p>The 2016/17 Pay Policy Principles and Statement must be approved by the full Fire Authority before 31 March 2016. Approval cannot be delegated to any committee, sub-committee, or officers.</p> <p>The Pay Policy Principles and Statement may be amended by the full Fire Authority during the financial year to which it applies.</p> <p>Section 41 of the Localism Act 2011 requires the Authority to comply with its Pay Policy Principles and Statement for the relevant financial year when making a determination that relates to the remuneration, or other terms and conditions of a senior officer of the Authority.</p> <p>The Pay Policy Principles and Statement must include the Authority’s policies in relation to senior pay on:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the level and elements of remuneration (b) remuneration on recruitment (c) increases and additions to remuneration (d) the use of performance related pay (e) the use of bonuses (f) the approach to payment on their ceasing to be employed by the Authority, and (g) the publication of and access to information relating to remuneration <p>The statutory guidance gives discretion as to whether the Authority wishes to mirror these headings in its Pay Policy Principles and Statement in respect of its other employees.</p>
<p>CONSISTENCY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF COLLABORATION</p>	<p>There is scope within the tender process for an apprentice training agency to collaborate with Royal Berkshire Fire Authority on the potential future use of apprentices within the Service.</p>
<p>HEALTH AND SAFETY</p>	<p>No implications.</p>
<p>EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY</p>	<p>Pay decisions will be subject to the demands of equal pay processes.</p> <p>A People Impact Assessment will be updated, as a minimum annually, as analysis is undertaken on all pay decisions and a review of trends carried out. This will ensure an equitable, transparent, consistent and legally compliant basis for the employment relationship between the Authority and its employees.</p>

	<p>The Authority plans to engage ten Firefighter apprentices and seven Support Services staff apprentices through an appointed training agency in the Financial year 2016/17. This presents the Authority with an opportunity to adapt and refresh the workforce. The apprentices will be paid a minimum rate of pay of the National Minimum wage until 31 March 2016 and from 1 April 2016 the National Living Wage as a minimum. This is above the National Minimum Wage rate for apprentices. At the Executive Committee meeting on 29 July 2015 the Authority approved enhanced pay rates for apprentices, which increases with experience and competence. Any increases would be subject to the apprentice reaching agreed developmental milestones.</p> <p>On 14 July 2015 the Government Equalities Office launched a consultation, <i>Closing the Gender Pay Gap</i>, the results of which will be published winter 2015. In the consultation the Government states publishing pay information highlighting any differences in pay between male and female employees, therefore showing greater transparency within the workplace, will encourage employers to consider what more can be done to close any pay gaps. The Authority will note any recommendations following publication of the report.</p>
<p>USE OF RESOURCES</p>	<p>Adoption of the annual Pay Policy Principles and Statement ensures statutory compliance. However, as the legislation permits in-year changes there is scope for the Authority to revisit certain elements to reflect the needs of the Service.</p> <p>Communication with stakeholders: Following approval of the Pay Policy Principles and Statement, communication will be via the normal policy publication and amendment process.</p> <p>Internal Controls: Adherence to the Pay Policy Principles and Statement is controlled via strict establishment and pay change approval process controls.</p>
<p>PROVENANCE SECTION & BACKGROUND PAPERS</p>	<p>Background</p> <p>Report to Fire Authority held 18 February 2015: BMKFA Pay Policy Principles and Statement 2015/16: http://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/4614/2347/0573/Fire_Authority_Agenda.pdf</p> <p>Report to Executive Committee held 29 July 2015:</p>

	<p>Apprenticeship Scheme: http://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/6414/3714/4213/EXECUTIVE_COMMITTEE_PACK_290715.pdf</p> <p>Link to Public Sector Exit Payments, response to the consultation document: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/464367/Public_sector_exit_payments_response.pdf</p> <p>Link to Draft Public Sector Exit Payment Regulations 2016: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/473606/Draft_public_sector_exit_cap_regs.pdf</p>
<p>APPENDICES</p>	<p>Appendix 1: Draft Pay Policy Principles and Statement 2016/17 (Part 1: All staff, Part 2: SMB only)</p> <p>Annexe A: "Grey Book" pay rates from 1 July 2015</p> <p>Annexe B: Support Services staff pay scales from 1 September 2014</p> <p>Annexe C: Employee Bonus Payment Setting Scheme and Process</p>
<p>TIME REQUIRED</p>	<p>10 minutes.</p>
<p>REPORT ORIGINATOR AND CONTACT</p>	<p>Faye Mansfield - Human Resources Development Manager</p> <p>fmansfield@bucksfire.gov.uk</p> <p>01296 744623</p>

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Director of People & Organisational Development

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Page :

1 of 17

Policy Note:

Pay Policy Principles and Statement 2016/17

To:	Document Type:	✓	Document Summary:
All employees of the Authority, including temporary staff.	Policy	✓	This policy sets out the principles of accountability, transparency and fairness relating to pay. The policy lays down how pay is managed and set for all employees of the Authority including the Strategic Management Board.
	Assessment		
	Procedure		
	Guidance Note		
	Technical Note		
	Information		
	Safety Critical		
Keyword: Pay, pay rates, pay scales, remuneration, performance related pay, pay multiple, bonus			
Please note that as Documents are frequently updated, if you print a document, its accuracy cannot be guaranteed, always check for latest version.			

Document History:

First issue: 15 February 2012

Second issue: 13 February 2013. This is the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority Pay Policy Statement 2013/2014 for the purposes of the Localism Act 2011 and has been approved by resolution of the full Authority at the meeting of the Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority on 13th February 2013.

Third issue: 19 February 2014. A meeting of the full Authority is required to approve its Pay Policy Statement before the end of the 31 March immediately preceding the financial year to which it relates.

Adoption of the Pay Policy Statement ensures statutory compliance. Legislation permits in-year changes to revisit certain elements to reflect the needs of the service.

Version 3.1: Document revised and minor amendments made to terminology, 1 September 2014 Support Services Staff revised pay scales and 1 July 2014 NJC Circular 03/14 pay rates added.

Version 4.0: 2015/16 Pay Policy Principles and Statement presented to a meeting of the full Fire Authority on 18 February 2015.

Version 5.0: 2016/17 Pay Policy Principles and Statement presented to a meeting of the full Fire Authority on 16 December 2015.

Version:	Version 6.0	Status of document:	Final Draft
Author:	Director of People and OD	PIA:	Reviewed annually
Issue Date:	Before 1 April 2016	Review Date:	
File Name	Pay Policy Principles and Statement		



Policy Note:

Pay Policy Principles and Statement 2016/17

Contents

Subject	Page
Principles	3
Accountability	3
Transparency	3
Fairness	4
Part 1 Pay Policy (All staff excluding SMB)	4
Levels and elements of remuneration	4
Remuneration on recruitment	5
Increases and additions to remuneration	5
Use of performance related pay	6
Use of bonuses	6
Approach on ceasing to hold office or be employed	6
Publication of and access to information relating to remuneration	6
Pay multiple	6
Part 2 Pay Policy – Strategic Management Board (SMB)	8
Levels and elements of remuneration	8
Remuneration on recruitment	8
Increases and additions to remuneration	8
Use of performance related pay	8
Use of bonuses	8
Approach on ceasing to hold office or be employed	8
Publication of and access to information relating to remuneration	9

Version:	Version 6.0	Status of document:	Final Draft
Author:	Director of People and OD	PIA:	Reviewed annually
Issue Date:	Before 1 April 2016	Review Date:	
File Name	Pay Policy Principles and Statement		



Policy Note:

Pay Policy Principles and Statement 2016/17

BMKFA Pay Policy Principles and Statement

This document applies to all employees of Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority (The Authority).

Principles

1. Accountability

Decisions on pay policies will be taken by elected members - those who are directly accountable to local communities. We will ensure that all democratically accountable members have a significant input into how decisions on pay are made and that we are open about the policies that determine those decisions.

Our annual Pay Policy Statements and any amendments to them will be considered by a meeting of the Fire Authority and will not be delegated to any sub-committee. In scheduling such meetings, we will act in accordance with our responsibilities under part 5A of the Local Government Act 1972. However, we note that the Secretary of State does not consider that any of the grounds for exclusion of the public would be met for discussions of Pay Policy Statements. Such meetings should therefore be open to the public and should not exclude observers. All decisions on pay and reward for chief officers must comply with the current Pay Policy Statement.

The Fire Authority will be offered the opportunity to vote before salary packages (£100,000 plus) are offered in respect of a new appointment. For this purpose, salary packages should include salary, any bonuses, fees or allowances routinely payable to the appointee and any benefits in kind to which the officer is entitled as a result of their employment.

2. Transparency

Our Pay Policy Statement along with our approach to the publication of and access to information relating to remuneration will be published on our website.

Although we are not required to use our Pay Policy Statement to publish specific numerical data on pay and reward, we will consider how the information within the Pay Policy Statement fits with that data on pay and reward that we publish separately.

This includes that data required to be published under the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency and by the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011.

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Issue Date:	Before 1 April 2016	Review Date:	
File Name	Pay Policy Principles and Statement		



Pay Policy Principles and Statement 2016/17

Policy Note:

3. Fairness

We will ensure that decisions about senior pay are taken in the context of similar decisions on lower paid staff salaries and that the relationship between those decisions is considered. We will consider our proposals for the pay relationship between the remuneration of chief officers and employees who are not chief officers.

We will publish our pay multiple – the ratio between the highest paid employee and the mean average earnings and the lowest paid across the Fire and Rescue Service.

We will set out our approach to the award of other elements of remuneration including bonuses, performance related pay as well as severance payments.

Statement 1 April 2012

Part 1 Pay Policy (all staff excluding SMB)

1. All pay decisions will be fair based on policy and reflecting the requirements of legislation.
2. Our systems will be transparent and well known amongst staff groups and we will discuss planned changes to our systems with the appropriate representative bodies.
3. We will where possible avoid complex pay systems and in determining pay we will make reference to market rates in order to secure best value for the taxpayer.

Level and elements of remuneration

4. The majority of staff are employed under contracts with either the terms and conditions of the NJC for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services Scheme of Conditions of Service, 2004 "the Grey Book" incorporated; or with the provisions of the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority scheme of conditions of Service for Support Services staff.
5. For Grey Book staff rates of pay are set out in circulars issued by the NJC and entitlements are governed by Part B of the Grey Book. However the Authority recognises that new employees may be employed on terms and conditions outside of the Grey Book. The Authority also recognises that employees in existing firefighter roles may want to agree rates of pay outside of the Grey Book for the protection of services and provision of enhanced resilience. This includes the operation of the 'Bank System'.

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Issue Date:	Before 1 April 2016	Review Date:	
File Name	Pay Policy Principles and Statement		



Policy Note:

Pay Policy Principles and Statement 2016/17

6. For other staff the pay structure takes the form of pay scales with spinal column points. Progression is based on evidenced performance and would normally occur on 1st April if the required criteria are met; at least six months in post, subject to performance and the maximum grade for the post not being exceeded. Incremental progression may be withheld if performance is not to the required standard.

7. Pay scales are inserted in the annexes:

Annexe A "Grey Book" Pay rates from 1 July 2014 2015

Annexe B "Support Services staff" Pay scales from 1 September 2014 (as amended in May 2015 for 1% pay award, October 2015 for National Minimum Wage increase, and April 2016 with the introduction of the National Living Wage)

8. Some members of staff participate in lease car and private healthcare insurance arrangements.

9. The Authority reimburses mileage, travel expenses, subsistence and other expenses (e.g. overnight stays, meals and professional fees) when appropriate and in accordance with the Authority's procedures relating to expenses.

Remuneration on Recruitment

10. Remuneration will be based on the evaluated rate for the job, either nationally or locally.

Increases and additions to remuneration

11. Additional Responsibility Allowance (ARA) payments for "Grey Book" staff and occasional Honoraria for "Support Services" staff on local terms and conditions are used to reward increased responsibilities and duties beyond the normal remit of the role for specific periods, for existing staff to cover managed vacancies for short to medium term periods, enabling successful change management with minimal risk.

12. Any such payments require the signature of two Directors in accordance with the current procedures.

Version:	Version 6.0	Status of document:	Final Draft
Author:	Director of People and OD	PIA:	Reviewed annually
Issue Date:	Before 1 April 2016	Review Date:	
File Name	Pay Policy Principles and Statement		



Policy Note:

Pay Policy Principles and Statement 2016/17

Use of Performance related pay

13. Performance related pay is not in operation although certain posts attract performance increments based on skill development.

Use of bonuses

14. One off bonus payments may be considered linked to evidenced and scrutinised delivery of performance management objectives and is outlined in Annexe C.

Approach on ceasing to hold office or be employed by the Authority

15. The Authority’s current policies in respect of discretionary payments are in line with the recommendations to be found in the minutes of the Fire Authority on 24 June 2014 titled Local Government Pension Scheme 2014 – Employer Discretions and the minutes of the Executive Committee held on 17 July 2013.

Publication of and access to information relating to remuneration

16. We will publish information in accordance with the “Local Government Transparency Code 2014.

Pay Multiple

17. The pay multiple is the ratio between the highest paid salary and the median average salary of the Authority’s workforce. The average salary level is defined as the total of all regular payments made to an individual.

For the financial year 2016/17, the definition of lowest paid staff are those staff we employ who are paid at rates that are maintained in line with the National Minimum Wage at age 21 or over. Living Wage and the lowest rate will be that applicable for workers aged 25 and over. We opt not to use lower pay rates permitted under the National Minimum Wage for 16 to 20 year olds or apprentices.

The current BMKFA pay multiples are:

The Authority’s pay multiple; the ratio between the highest paid employee and the median average salary figure for all employees in the Authority is:

Highest pay: lowest pay - 10.71:1
 Highest pay: median pay - 4.7772:1

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Author:	Director of People and OD	PIA:	Reviewed annually
Issue Date:	Before 1 April 2016	Review Date:	
File Name	Pay Policy Principles and Statement		



Policy Note:

**Pay Policy Principles and Statement
2016/17**

Year	Highest pay : Lowest pay	Highest pay : Median pay
<u>2016/17</u>	<u>10.71:1</u>	<u>4.72:1</u>
2015/16	11.04:1	4.77:1
2014/15	11.5:1	4.87:1
2013/14	11.72:1	4.9:1
2012/13	12.7:1	5.0:1

18. It is our intention that salary multiples do not reach the 1:20 ratio referred to in the Hutton Report.

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File Name	Pay Policy Principles and Statement		



Policy Note:

Pay Policy Principles and Statement 2016/17

Part 2 Pay Policy – Strategic Management Board (SMB)

SMB members pay arrangements are covered by the National Joint Council for Brigade Managers of Fire and Rescue Services known as the “Gold Book”.

Level and elements of remuneration

- 19 Senior management remuneration comprises salary, car provision and private medical insurance.
- 20. Gold Book Pay is based on a twin track approach of an annual nationally agreed pay deal and a local pay agreement. SMB Pay Policy includes proposals to consider the implementation of Earn Back Arrangements and addresses the requirements of the Localism Act in relation to the SMB.

Remuneration on Recruitment

- 21. Remuneration will be based on the evaluated rate for the job.

Increases and additions to remuneration

- 22. Increases and additions for senior management posts will require approval of the appropriate committee of the Authority.

Use of Performance related pay

- 23. Performance related pay will be used in the context of the relevant policy, based on “Earn back” principles and will need approval by the appropriate committee.

Use of Bonuses

- 24. One off bonus payments may be considered linked to evidenced and scrutinised delivery of performance management objectives.

Approach on ceasing to hold office or be employed by the Authority

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25. Summary dismissal Dismissal with notice Redundancy Resignation or leave date
 Redeployment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dismissal without notice payments Salary payment in line with contract In accordance with service policy Normal salary payment until end of notice period In accordance with prevailing service policy |
|---|--|

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Policy Note:

Pay Policy Principles and Statement 2016/17

- 26. This Authority does not make payments to senior staff members who leave other than to those who are leaving for the purposes of improved efficiency.
- 27. Re-employment/re-engagement will not normally occur following retirement, however there may be exceptional circumstances where specialist knowledge and expertise are required for a defined period of time in the event of which re-employment/re-engagement may be considered.
- 28. The Fire Authority will be given the opportunity to vote as to the terms of appointment or dismissal of the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive and deputy to the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive, or equivalent.

Publication of and access to information relating to remuneration

- 29. We will publish information in accordance with the "Local Government Transparency Code 2014".

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File Name	Pay Policy Principles and Statement		



Policy Note:

**Pay Policy Principles and Statement
2016/17**

ANNEXE A

FIREFIGHTING ROLES – GREY BOOK PAY RATES FROM 1st JULY 2015

	Basic annual £	Basic hourly rate £	Overtime rate £
Firefighter			
Trainee	22,017	10.05	15.08
Development	22,933	10.47	15.71
Competent	29,345	13.40	20.10
Crew Manager			
Development	31,189	14.28	21.36
Competent	32,533	14.86	22.28
Watch Manager			
Development	33,237	15.18	22.77
Competent A	34,160	15.60	23.40
Competent B	36,381	16.61	24.92
Station Manager			
Development	37,842	17.28	25.92
Competent A	38,977	17.80	26.70
Competent B	41,737	19.06	28.59
Group Manager			
Development	43,582	19.90	Not Applicable
Competent A	44,889	20.50	"
Competent B	48,313	22.06	"
Area Manager			
Development	51,165	23.36	Not applicable
Competent A	52,699	24.06	"
Competent B	56,124	25.63	"

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Policy Note:

**Pay Policy Principles and Statement
 2016/17**

**FIREFIGHTING ROLES – GREY BOOK PAY RATES
 (RETAINED DUTY SYSTEM) FROM 1st JULY 2015**

	(1) £ per annum	(2) £ per annum	(3) £ per Hour	(4) £ per occasion
Firefighter				
Trainee	2,202	1,101	10.05	3.86
Development	2,293	1,147	10.47	3.86
Competent	2,935	1,467	13.40	3.86
Crew Manager				
Development	3,119	1,559	14.24	3.86
Competent	3,253	1,627	14.86	3.86
Watch Manager				
Development	3,324	1,662	15.18	3.86
Competent A	3,416	1,708	15.60	3.86
Competent B	3,638	1,819	16.61	3.86
Station Manager				
Development	3,784	1,892	17.28	3.86
Competent A	3,898	1,949	17.80	3.86
Competent B	4,174	2,087	19.06	3.86
Group Manager				
Development	4,358	2,179	19.90	3.86
Competent A	4,489	2,244	20.50	3.86
Competent B	4,831	2,416	22.06	3.86
Area Manager				
Development	5,117	2,558	23.36	3.86
Competent A	5,270	2,635	24.06	3.86
Competent B	5,612	2,806	25.63	3.86

Column 1 shows the full annual retainer
 Column 2 shows the retainer for employees on the day crewing duty system
 Column 3 shows the hourly rate for work undertaken
 Column 4 shows the disturbance payment per call-out

Version:	Version 6.0	Status of document:	Final Draft
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Issue Date:	Before 1 April 2016	Review Date:	
File Name	Pay Policy Principles and Statement		



Policy Note:

**Pay Policy Principles and Statement
2016/17**

ANNEXE B

SUPPORT SERVICES STAFF PAY SCALES					
REVISED PAY SCALES	MONEY VALUE	PREVIOUS SCALES	SPINAL COLUMN POINT	PAY POINT DESCRIPTOR	RESPONSIBILITY LEVELS
A (NLW)	£12,926	NMW	1	Until April 2016: National Minimum Wage	6
	£13,890	NLW		2016/17: National Living Wage	
B	£16,057	New	2	Development	7
	£16,458	New	3	Competent	
C	£17,281	Scale 1	4	Development	8
	£18,030	Scale 1	5	Competent	
	£18,811	Scale 1	6		
D	£19,111	New	7	Development	9
	£19,589	New	8	Competent	
E	£20,412	Scale 2	9	Development	10
	£20,787	Scale 2	10	Competent	
	£21,164	Scale 2	11		
F	£22,296	Scale 3	12	Development	11
	£22,797	Scale 3	13	Competent	
	£23,298	Scale 3	14		
G	£24,452	Scale 4	15	Development	12
	£24,805	Scale 4	16	Competent	
	£25,297	Scale 4	17		
H	£26,712	Scale 5	18	Development	13
	£27,193	Scale 5	19	Competent	
	£27,836	Scale 5	20		
I	£30,432	Scale 6	21	Development	14
	£31,263	Scale 6	22	Competent	
	£32,104	Scale 6	23		
J	£33,138	New	24	Development	15
	£33,966	New	25	Competent	
K	£37,651	Scale 7	26	Development	16
	£38,604	Scale 7	27	Competent	
	£39,707	Scale 7	28		
L	£40,920	New	29	Development	17

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Issue Date:	Before 1 April 2016	Review Date:	
File Name	Pay Policy Principles and Statement		



Policy Note:

Pay Policy Principles and Statement 2016/17

	£41,943	New	30	Competent	
M	£44,385	Scale 8	31	Development	18
	£45,607	Scale 8	32	Competent	
	£46,821	Scale 8	33		
N	£54,434	Scale 9	34	Development	19
	£55,790	Scale 9	35	Competent	
	£57,297	Scale 9	36		
O	£59,138	New	37	Development	20
	£60,616	New	38	Competent	

NB: With effect from 1 September 2014 Support Services Staff pay scales were reclassified to letters and five additional scales have been added. From 1 September 2014 existing staff will retain the existing three point scales, however new employees (as defined) will transfer to the two pay points system.

New employees:

- Those joining from outside the Authority
- Those moving voluntarily within the Authority
- Those who accept a grading increase
- Those who are redeployed as an alternative to redundancy, and
- Following any period of pay protection, those whose posts are reduced in grade

KEY: Development (blue) Competent (green) 3rd pay point for staff employed prior to 1 September 2014 only, and not applicable for new employees (as defined) (red)

FLEET MANAGEMENT	MONEY VALUE	PAY POINT DESCRIPTOR
Fleet Management Vehicle Technicians	£12,926	<i>Until April 2016:</i> National Minimum Wage
	£13,890	<i>2016/17:</i> National Living Wage
	£23,799	VT Point 1
	£24,308	VT Point 2
	£24,810	VT Point 3
	£25,298	VT Point 4
	£25,768	VT Point 5
Fleet Management Supervisors	£26,236	VT Point 6
	£26,711	SU Point 7
	£27,197	SU Point 8
Fleet Management	£27,841	SU Point 9
	£28,493	FM Point 10
	£29,145	FM Point 11
	£29,792	FM Point 12

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File Name	Pay Policy Principles and Statement		



Information Asset Owner:

Director of People & Organisational Development

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Page :

14 of 17

Policy Note:

**Pay Policy Principles and Statement
2016/17**

	£30,433	FM Point 13
	£31,263	FM Point 14
	£32,104	FM Point 15

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Policy Note:

Pay Policy Principles and Statement 2016/17

ANNEXE C

EMPLOYEE BONUS PAYMENT SETTING SCHEME AND PROCESS

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to set out in outline the principles and process for determining whether or not employees will receive bonus payments and if so, sets out the process to determine the allocation of such payments. Bonus payments will be one-off and paid only to reflect excellent performance; that is performance, which exceeds the standards and targets agreed with the employee during their annual appraisal process and prior to the start of the financial year, for which any performance scheme is introduced.

Eligibility

Eligibility would be specified as part of any scheme rules on an annual basis.

Key Principles

The following key principles underpin any bonus and/or performance related reward schemes:

- The Scheme is entirely discretionary and forms no part of the contract of employment.
- The Scheme sits in the context of the Authority’s overall strategic and performance management processes, therefore targets and objectives included in any scheme will align with the Corporate and Public Safety Plan objectives, via the “golden thread” process.
- Payments will only be made where the employee’s contribution not only reflects excellence but also clearly assists with achieving the Authority’s strategic objectives.
- It is intended to reward those who can demonstrate sustained, outstanding achievement or excellence in their role.
- It is intended to recognise and reward, not only the exceeding of targets and standards, but also the acquisition of the necessary competencies and deployment of behaviours that reinforce the Authority’s values and norms.
- The amount of money available to be paid in bonus payments to employees under the scheme, will be determined as part of the annual budgeting process and any scheme will be self-funding.

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Issue Date:	Before 1 April 2016	Review Date:	
File Name	Pay Policy Principles and Statement		



Pay Policy Principles and Statement 2016/17

Policy Note:

- All eligible candidates invited to participate in any scheme must have an agreed appraisal, including core and stretching objectives in advance of the bonus scheme year.
- Recommendations for payments under the scheme will be made by the employee's line manager following the annual appraisal round to the appropriate Director.
- Recommendations will be reviewed by a Moderating Panel consisting of:
 - The Chief Operating Officer
 - The Director of People and Organisation Development
 - The Director of Finance and Assets
 - The Director of Legal and Governance

The Moderating Panel may choose to appoint an independent advisor to assist with the process of ensuring that proposed awards are based on the exercise of consistent judgement in both the setting of targets and standards and the assessment of achievement against these.

- Payments under the Scheme will be authorised by the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive on recommendation of the Moderation Panel.
- Employees will only be informed of approved awards and not as to whether or not a recommendation was made.
- There will be no appeal against recommendations or final decisions.
- The Executive Committee will receive an annual report summarising the awards, if any, that have been made.
- Eligibility criteria will be approved by SMB on an annual basis. This may include decisions not to run a bonus scheme or to extend to other workgroups.
- Decisions will comply with the requirements of the Authority's pay policy, which is reviewed and approved annually.
- If and when an annual bonus scheme is agreed, specific detailed rules will be developed in advance of the scheme year; for example, new staff who become eligible in year, long term absence etc.
- Any payments will be subject to statutory deductions.

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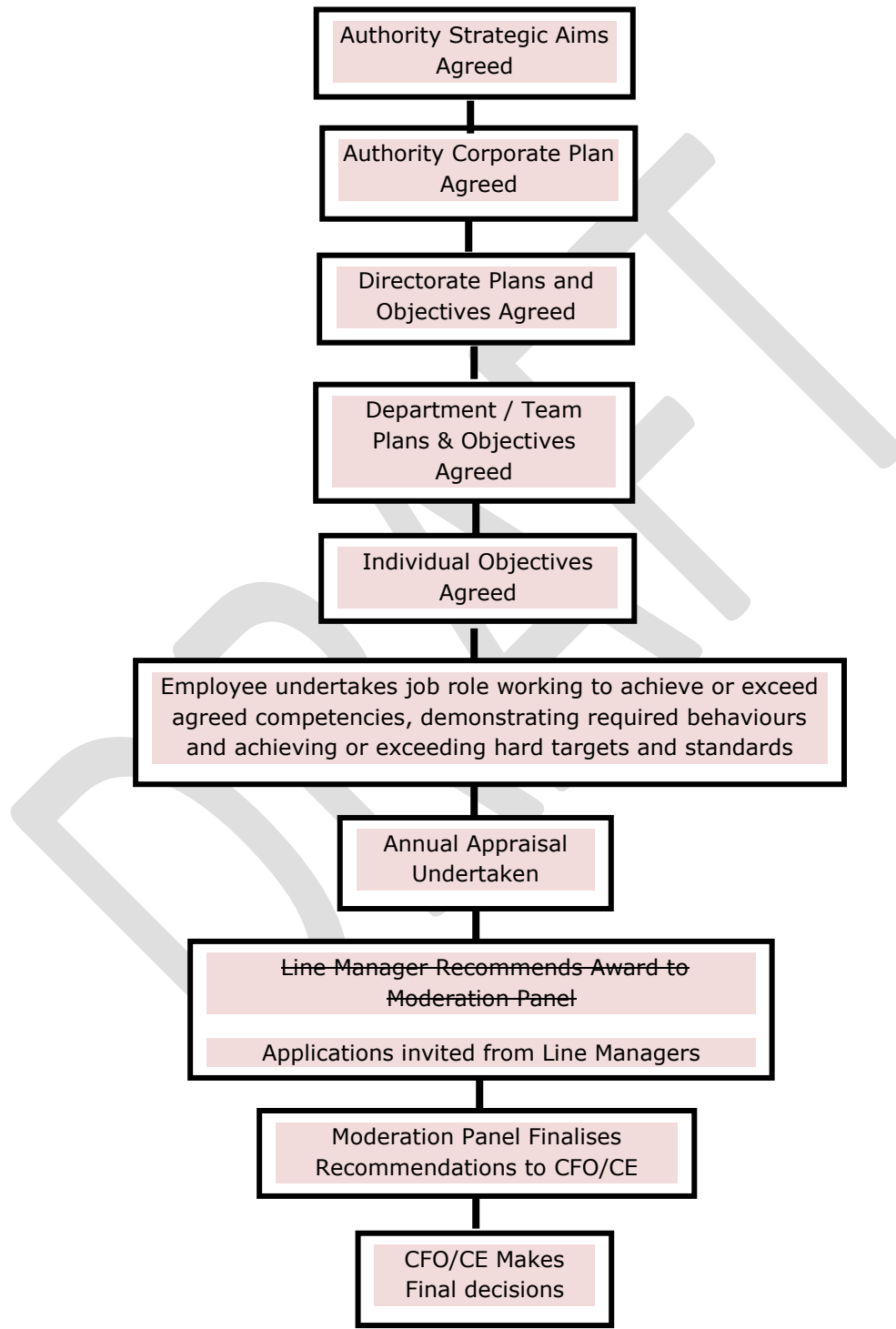


Policy Note:

**Pay Policy Principles and Statement
2016/17**

**BUCKINGHAMSHIRE & MILTON KEYNES FIRE
AUTHORITY**

Bonus Setting Scheme Process Flow Chart



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Author:	Director of People and OD	PIA:	Reviewed annually
Issue Date:	Before 1 April 2016	Review Date:	
File Name	Pay Policy Principles and Statement		

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Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

MEETING	Fire Authority
DATE OF MEETING	16 December 2015
OFFICER	Lynne Swift, Director of People & Organisational Development
LEAD MEMBER	Councillor Roger Reed
SUBJECT OF THE REPORT	The Blue Light Pledge
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>The Blue Light Pledge is an initiative run by Mind, the mental health charity, in partnership with the blue light services. This report describes the Blue Light Pledge, its relevance to the Authority and the benefits of becoming signatories to it.</p> <p>Mind, the mental health charity have reported that one in six workers are dealing with mental health problems at any one time, and therefore has a potentially significant impact on the presence and effectiveness of any workforce, including that of Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority (BMKFA).</p> <p>The BMKFA Corporate Plan 2015-20 incorporates a strategic aim 'to optimise the contribution and well-being of our people'. A key measure of success arising from the successful implementation of this enabler is a reduction in sickness absence and a more productive workforce.</p> <p>The Blue Light Pledge is described as an 'aspirational statement with meaning'. Its primary objective is the removal of stigma surrounding mental health. In order to be eligible to sign the pledge a document must be submitted to Mind describing all of the measures, in place and proposed, that the applying body will undertake in order to tackle mental health issues in their workforce and thereby reduce the level of stigma surrounding this type of illness.</p> <p>BMKFA submitted its pledge document to Mind in September 2015. Our submission was considered to be very strong. This is extremely encouraging as our pledge document was based almost entirely on measures that the Authority already has in place (Appendix 1).</p>
ACTION	Decision.

RECOMMENDATIONS	It is recommended that the Blue Light Pledge be endorsed for signature by the Chairman of the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive.
RISK MANAGEMENT	The primary risk associated with not signing the Blue Light Pledge is that top level buy-in will not be clearly demonstrated and the subsequent cascading of this ethos throughout the Authority's staff and management will not be as well versed as they could be in addressing mental health issues within BMKFA.
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	There are no direct costs attached to the production or signing of the Blue Light Pledge.
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	There are no known legal implications arising.
CONSISTENCY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF COLLABORATION	<p>BMKFA has hosted staff from Thames Valley Police and South Central Ambulance Service on the first Blue Light Resilience course that has been run in-house. Authority staff have also attended the same course hosted by Thames Valley Police.</p> <p>As collaboration increases across the Thames Valley and staff employed by our partner services fulfil vital functions on behalf of the Authority; future stages will include work with these partners to progress their own pledge.</p>
HEALTH AND SAFETY	<p>The Authority will demonstrate its recognition that individuals with mental health issues may face more stigma and discrimination than those with physical health problems and this could potentially adversely influence the treatment of the individual within the workplace. The Authority can demonstrate that it is taking positive measures to redress this potential imbalance. The measures contained within the Blue Light Pledge will be accessible to all staff regardless of staff group.</p> <p>The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 describes any 'impairment of a person's physical or mental condition' as a 'personal injury'. The Authority's signing of the pledge would be a strong contribution to making the causing of such injuries less likely.</p>
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY	No adverse impacts have been identified. All measures contained within the pledge are available to all employees. Reasonable adjustments to be made as required to ensure fair access.
USE OF RESOURCES	Contribution to the achievement of strategic objectives: Signing up to the Blue Light Pledge would support the Authority in achieving its workforce strategy (2015-20 Corporate Plan, Strategic Enabler 1 – 'to optimise the contribution and well-being of our people') by using the pledge as a further opportunity

	<p>to promote mental wellbeing and reduce sickness absence occasioned by such illnesses.</p> <p>Communication with stakeholders: Stakeholder communication will be a significant element in the success of the Blue Light Pledge. Following Authority approval the signing of the pledge will be communicated to the Leadership Group and remainder of staff by normal channels.</p> <p>Communication with the public will be via the BMKFA external website and external outlets as advised by the Communications Officer.</p> <p>System of internal control: Regular reports will be provided to the Performance Management Board on the progress and effectiveness of the Blue Light Pledge and its measures in reducing levels of sickness absence caused by stress, anxiety and other mental health issues.</p>
<p>PROVENANCE SECTION & BACKGROUND PAPERS</p>	<p>Background</p> <p>Work related stress, anxiety and depression statistics in Great Britain 2014/15</p> <p>http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causdis/stress/index.htm</p> <p>Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority 2015 – 20 Corporate Plan</p> <p>http://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/5514/3315/2727/ITEM_1_4b_2015-20_Corporate_Plan_-_Covering_Exec_Paper_Appendix_1.pdf</p>
<p>APPENDICES</p>	<p>Appendix 1: Summary of the BMKFA Blue Light Pledge Components.</p> <p>Appendix 2: The Blue Light Time to Change pledge action plan - Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority.</p>
<p>TIME REQUIRED</p>	<p>10 Minutes.</p>
<p>REPORT ORIGINATOR AND CONTACT</p>	<p>Denis Melia</p> <p>dmelia@bucksfire.gov.uk</p> <p>01296 744646</p> <p>07776 390238</p>

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Appendix 1 – BMKFA Blue Light Pledge Components

The BMKFA Blue Light Pledge lists the following measures that the Authority is taking to address mental health issues:

- Top level buy-in. If in agreement, pledge to be signed by Chairman of CFA and Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive.
- Ensuring that our Stress in the Workplace procedure is up to date.
- Creating an area on the intranet where individuals can share their stories about mental health issues that they have personally experienced (NOTE: This is a requirement for the Blue Light Pledge and the only new piece of work that the Authority had to undertake to gain the pledge). It will also signpost to available help.
- Employment of a Welfare Officer.
- People Asset Management (PAM) Assist - 24 hour anonymous assistance service for staff.
- Stress auditing of individuals reporting suffering from stress.
- Close ties with the Firefighters Charity and access to the assistance they can offer.
- Critical Incident Stress Debriefing available from trained staff following traumatic incidents.
- Participating in the Mind Blue Light resilience courses. These are a proactive measure for staff who are not currently experiencing mental health issues. We are currently running one in-house for the next 6 weeks that any staff can attend. Future courses are planned for all managers early in the New Year.
- 70 places on mental Mind Mental Health for Managers workshops have been sourced for the Authority. These will be delivered in house and are at no cost to the service. This course focuses on enhancing manager's skills in identifying and managing instances of mental ill health among the staff they manage.
- Members of BFRS will be receiving training as 'Blue Light Champions' to promote the ethos of the Blue Light Pledge and its component parts to the wider workforce.

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The Blue Light Time to Change pledge action plan

Your name: Denis Melia	Your email: dmelia@bucksfire.gov.uk	Your service name: Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority
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About the pledge

To drive long term change, we are working with Police, Fire and Rescue, Search and Rescue and Ambulance services in their capacity as employers to tackle mental health stigma in their workplace. We invite services to make the pledge and detail the tangible action they will take in the form below.

By pledging, you will be aligning your service with a major national movement for change. Importantly, it shows that this aspirational commitment to be active in tackling mental health stigma and discrimination in your workplace has support from the top, helping to inspire the culture of your organisation.

Please save this action plan document to file and upload here <http://www.time-to-change.org.uk/bluelightpledge> when ready to submit.

We ask that you submit your plan a minimum of four weeks before the preferred date of your pledge signing to allow us time to feedback on your plan and send you a Blue Light Time to Change pledge board to sign.

When you upload your plan online you will need the following information:

- a completed action plan (table below)
- the date and time of your signing
- know the person who will be signing on behalf of your organisation
- where the signing will be taking place

Your pledge action plan

The pledge you are taking is not a measure of attainment or success; instead, it's an aspiration. It's a statement of your organisation's intent to work towards improvement and therefore we want to know what you are aiming to do to support these aspirations.

Why do we want an action plan?

Whilst neither a quality mark nor endorsement, for a pledge to have real value, it should lead to some practical action. Your action plan will not be shared with anyone outside of the Blue Light Programme or Time to Change, but we need to see that you are serious about being active in tackling mental health stigma to ensure the Blue Light Time to Change organisational pledge maintains its value.

Meeting the action plan criteria

We have developed a set of essential criteria to help guide you in the development of your action plan. This criteria has been developed from our learning, working with 325 organisations across sectors who signed up to the Time to Change organisational pledge between 2011/14. Our [pledge toolkit](#) has been designed to support you in completing your plan and gives examples of how each essential criteria may be met. Please ensure you download and have this to hand when you are discussing and completing your form.

However, please don't be limited by our criteria. We encourage you to get creative and create a plan that is manageable within your capacity and resources, but that is ambitious and sustainable. Please feel free to add additional activity above and beyond our essential criteria. We strongly encourage you to think about how you will sustain the momentum and weave activity into long term strategies relevant to wellbeing.

Essential criteria

Criteria	Your activity (how will you meet each criteria). Please refer to the Blue Light Time to Change pledge toolkit for examples.	Timescale	Internal lead (include contact details)	Performance Indicator
1) Top level senior buy in	Director of People and Organisational Development is sponsoring our Participation in the Blue Light Pledge. The pledge has the full backing of the Chief Fire Officer and lead Fire Authority members.	Current and ongoing. Signing of the pledge will be carried out by Chair of Fire Authority, Lead Fire Authority member for People and/or Health.	Station Commander Denis Melia. dmelia@bucksifre.gov.uk Tel: 01296 744646 Mob: 07776 390238	Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority is hosting a MIND Blue Light course for its own employees and those of other Blue light services. Additionally, 2 staff members are attending the course at other venues and 5 are doing the on-line version.
2) Internal communications campaign	Blue Light course advertised via intranet and by poster/flyer at all 21 locations throughout the service. Blue Light Pledge will be publicised on our intranet and internet	Current and ongoing.	Station Commander Denis Melia. dmelia@bucksifre.gov.uk	Use of Intranet analytics will indicate awareness levels of staff. All managers will be communicated with and instructed to ensure that their staff are aware of the Blue Light Pledge, its meaning and all of the facilities

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Appendix 2

	website closer to the signing date.		Tel: 01296 744646	that the Services staff have at their disposal to aid them in the prevention and treatment of mental health issues.
3) Review policy and processes that impact on mental health and wellbeing.	Stress Policy up to date. Trade unions consulted on content and invited to comment.	Ongoing, all policies reviewed on a no longer than 3 yearly basis.	Mr Terry Ridgely terryr@bucksfire.gov.uk	All policies are contained within the Service's Electronic Document Management System which date stamps the documents last issue or review date.
4) Create space for people with lived experience of mental health problems to share their stories.	Area being created on the Service's Intranet.	Will be functioning by pledge signing date.	Station Commander Denis Melia. dmelia@bucksfire.gov.uk Tel: 01296 744646	Ongoing – will be in place by signing date.
5) Commit to activity on key dates in the mental health calendar e.g. World Mental Health Day, National Time to Talk Day.	Going forward this will be done and will be used to keep the issue of mental health awareness as a constant but benign presence in the daily life of the Service.	These will be advertised in advance and on the day/week/month of the campaign or event.	Station Commander Denis Melia. dmelia@bucksfire.gov.uk Tel: 01296 744646	Ongoing – to commence in second half of September 2015.

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<p>6) Commit to sending one manager to the Blue Light Programme free half day face to face training for line managers/shift leaders.</p>	<p>Indicate your commitment by emailing bluelight@mind.org.uk requesting more information. You do not need to confirm who will attend the training at this stage. Completed 9 September 2015.</p>	<p>Awaiting dates</p>	<p>Station Commander Denis Melia. dmelia@bucksifre.gov.uk Tel: 01296 744646</p>	<p>Awaiting dates from MIND.</p>
<p>Other actions</p> <p>Please refer back to the Blue Light Time to Change pledge toolkit for examples of other activities you could include in your plan</p>				
<p>7) Policy</p>	<p>Organisational Stress Policy.</p>	<p>Written policy, freely available to all staff via intranet. Trade Unions consulted on content.</p>	<p>Mr Terry Ridgely terryr@bucksfire.gov.uk</p>	
<p>8) Welfare Officer</p>	<p>Employment of a paid member of staff as Welfare Officer. The role is primarily concerned with stress auditing and liaising with employees who are absent from work for a</p>	<p>Permanent – ongoing.</p>	<p>Mr Terry Ridgely terryr@bucksfire.gov.uk</p>	<p>Year on year, sickness absence through stress or mental health issues continues to decline.</p>

	<p>prolonged period due to any reason of physical or mental health. The purpose of this liaison is to mitigate the effects of the initial absence and to ensure that the fact of being absent from work does not in itself become a source of poor mental health. This role is extremely valuable in ensuring that our staff are directed to all appropriate sources of assistance available to aid them getting back to work. This includes direction to our occupational health 'Assist' mental health service, private physiotherapy funded by the Service and a point of contact for the Firefighters Charity which offers a number of support functions for Fire and Rescue Staff, ex-Fire and Rescue Staff and their families.</p>			
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<p>9) Employee Assistance Programme</p>	<p>Employee Assistance Programme. This is a function of the Authority's Occupational Health provider and is a 24/365 assistance service for all Authority staff. Staff can access the service via a confidential telephone number or by email and receive advice on any personal or work-related issue. The Authority does not get to know who has accessed the service. Staff known to be involved in discipline, performance management or any other formal processes or events considered to be potentially stressful are directed to the service on multiple occasions throughout the course of the process.</p>	<p>Current and ongoing. Should the Authority's occupational health provider change, this provision will be transferred to a new provider at the same time which may or may not be the provider of the remainder of our occupational health services.</p>	<p>Kerry McCafferty kmccafferty@buckfire.gov.uk</p>	<p>Quarterly return showings numbers (not identities) of people using the service.</p>
<p>10) Mind Workshops</p>	<p>HR Project Manager to attend 2 x MIND workshops in London on 17 September 2015.</p>	<p>September 2015</p>	<p>Station Commander Denis Melia.</p>	<p>By attendance register following event.</p>

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			dmelia@bucksifre.gov.uk Tel: 01296 744646	
11) Critical Incident Stress Debriefing	Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD). Following operational incident where fatalities or other potential sources of acute or post-traumatic stress have been present, Incident Commanders and Monitoring Officers MUST include an offer of Critical Incident Stress Debriefing for all Fire and Rescue Staff attending the incident and other staff who may be working remotely but who may still be affected by the incident, i.e. a Control Operator talking to a trapped occupant in a building on fire. The CISD process is facilitated by a group of operational and non-	Current - ongoing	Mr Terry Ridgely terryr@bucksfire.gov.uk	Records maintained of occasions when CISD is requested.

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Appendix 2

	<p>operational FRS staff who have been trained in CISD.</p> <p>The first offer of assistance is included as part of the operational 'Hot Debrief' process that usually takes place at the scene and subsequent reminders are given at suitable intervals i.e. back at the fire station, the next day on duty, the following week. Monitoring Officers who do not form part of the crew and who may be responsible for ensuring the awareness of CISD facility to the crews involved, are themselves offered the service by a more senior officer who is aware of their involvement in the incident. Senior officer present also ensures that staff attending the incident from</p>			
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Appendix 2

	neighbouring FRSs are directed to suitable provision within their own service.			
12) Mind Blue Light Courses	<p>MIND Blue Light Course</p> <p>Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service will be hosting a MIND Blue Light course in house during September and October 2015. This will be attended by our own staff members and staff from other blue light services. In addition we have 5 members of staff doing the on-line version and 2 attending the course with another service.</p>	September/ October 2015	<p>Station Commander Denis Melia.</p> <p>dmelia@bucksifre.gov.uk</p> <p>Tel: 01296 744646</p> <p>Mob: 07776 390 238</p> <p>or</p> <p>Rachel Lailey</p> <p>rlailey@bucksfire.gov.uk</p>	Course successfully completed by a number of staff.

Who will be signing the pledge on behalf of your organisation?	Preferred date of your pledge signing.	Pledge signing occasion (for example, name of the event where you will sign e.g. all staff meeting).	Address to which you require your pledge board to be sent once your action plan has been approved.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chair of Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority. 2. Chief Fire Officer, Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service. 	16 December 2015	Combined Fire Authority Meeting	Station Commander Denis Melia, HR Department, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority Headquarters, Stocklake, Aylesbury, HP20 1BD

Your pledge board

Please indicate whether you require

A board with space for one signatory from your service	
A board with space for up to three signatories from your service	✓

Communications

We would love to tweet about your signing on the day.
If you are happy for us to do so please tick below and provide your twitter handle.

Please tweet about our signing on the day	✓
Twitter handle: T.B.C (We have several)	

Next steps

Have you...

- ✓ ...completed your action plan table above?
- ✓ ...arranged a date for your signing that is at least 4 weeks away? If you do not have a signing date don't worry. Just submit your plan online and let us know as soon as you have confirmed a date. And please ensure you still give us 4 weeks' notice so that we may send your pledge board in good time.
- ✓ ...confirmed the name/s of who is signing the pledge on behalf of your organisation?
- ✓ ...arranged a location for the signing?

If the answer to all of the above is yes, please submit this information via the Time to Change website at <http://www.time-to-change.org.uk/bluelightpledge>



Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

MEETING	Fire Authority
DATE OF MEETING	16 December 2015
OFFICER	Lynne Swift, Director of People and Organisational Development
LEAD MEMBER	Councillor Roger Reed
SUBJECT OF THE REPORT	Global Corporate Challenge Employee Health, Wellbeing and Engagement Programme
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>The Global Corporate Challenge (GCC) was an excellent pilot initiative which ran through the summer of 2015 to promote our commitment to improve employee health and wellbeing for all of our employees.</p> <p>The GCC fits well with the Authority's strategic aim within the Corporate Plan 2015-20 "to optimise the contribution and well-being of our people".</p> <p>The key aspects of the initiative were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competing with 50,000 teams from 1,500 of the world's most respected companies (including other fire and rescue services) over a 100 day period. • A funded place available for all employees. • Aim was to improve health, fitness and wellbeing across the whole Service. • Creating some competition and having fun doing it. • Fantastic response was received from employees with 34 teams of seven signing up (238 participants). <p>This initiative demonstrated the Authority's commitment to employee wellbeing which was clearly valued by employees who rated their overall GCC experience as either excellent or good. It is positive to note that participants reported improved engagement, wellbeing and motivation, particularly considering the initiative came a short time after an ongoing period of industrial action.</p> <p>Positive results included: reduced stress levels, better sleep patterns and weight loss, leading to a healthier lifestyle and an increase in either participant's productivity or concentration.</p>

ACTION	Information.
RECOMMENDATIONS	It is recommended that Members note the positive outcomes of this initiative.
RISK MANAGEMENT	The GCC initiative meets the objectives of the 2015 - 2020 Corporate Plan to optimise the contribution and wellbeing of our people. Risks such as sickness absence, reduced productivity and poor employee relations are potentially reduced as a result of participant employees reporting improved health and wellbeing, motivation and engagement.
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	The cost of the initiative was £12k.
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	There are no legal implications arising as a result of this report.
CONSISTENCY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF COLLABORATION	As participation must exceed one thousand employees to gain financial advantage, this initiative was progressed as a single service pilot. The Thames Valley services have identified occupational health and well-being provision as opportunities for collaboration to consider. If the Authority decides to follow up the GCC initiative in future years, collaboration will be considered with partner organisations when the combined total of employees approaches the one thousand figure.
HEALTH AND SAFETY	The initiative supports a healthier lifestyle and improved wellbeing.
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY	The initiative was open to all employees. No equality or diversity issues are identified.
USE OF RESOURCES	<p>Communication with stakeholders:</p> <p>The initiative was well publicised through posters on noticeboards and communication on the intranet to all employees. Regular updates were communicated throughout the 100 days and post initiative summary provided. The full support of SMB was visible with the CFO/CE and other SMB members participating in a team.</p> <p>The balance between spending and resources:</p> <p>The organisation, marketing and communications required to implement the GCC programme required the allocation of the resources of the HR Officer (Employee Relations) for part of her working week as a stretch objective. In addition voluntary hours were also provided from this resource to ensure the initiative was a success.</p>

	<p>The system of internal control:</p> <p>During the 100 days regular updates were provided by GCC to management in the form of weekly reports.</p> <p>The Performance Management Board will be carrying out a more detailed analysis of the programme and will be asked to consider whether the Authority should run this initiative in the future</p> <p>The medium term financial strategy:</p> <p>Absence levels will continue to be monitored to determine if there are longer term positive impacts that may be attributed to this initiative. Absence levels did reduce during the initiative. A reduction in absence levels contributes positively to the Medium Term Financial Plan.</p>
<p>PROVENANCE SECTION & BACKGROUND PAPERS</p>	<p>Background</p> <p>The GCC programme focussed on physical and psychological health including exercise, nutrition, sleep and psychological wellbeing. The programme starts by getting people moving with a 100 day virtual journey around the world, the ultimate target being 10,000 steps per day during which the employees unlocked intriguing new locations along the way.</p> <p>The Corporate Plan includes the strategic aim.</p> <p>Corporate Plan for 2015-2020:</p> <p>http://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/5514/3315/2727/ITEM_14b_2015-20_Corporate_Plan_-_Covering_Exec_Paper_Appendix_1.pdf</p>
<p>APPENDICES</p>	<p>None.</p>
<p>TIME REQUIRED</p>	<p>10 Minutes.</p>
<p>REPORT ORIGINATOR AND CONTACT</p>	<p>Mark Ridder, Employee Relations Manager</p> <p>mridder@bucksfire.gov.uk</p> <p>01296 744634</p>

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Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority



MEETING	Fire Authority
DATE OF MEETING	16 December 2015
OFFICER	Julian Parsons, Head of Service Development.
LEAD MEMBER	Councillor David Schofield.
SUBJECT OF THE REPORT	Health and Safety Annual Report 2014/15
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire and Rescue Service Health and Safety performance report 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015 including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BFRS H&S achievements • Statistical overview
ACTION	Information.
RECOMMENDATIONS	Members are requested to note the performance of service in terms of Health, Safety and Welfare.
RISK MANAGEMENT	This report identifies how the Service has progressed on its health, safety and welfare performance over the period stated.
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	None.
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	As mentioned in the Health and Safety section below.
CONSISTENCY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF COLLABORATION	<p>In line with the tri-service memorandum of understanding on collaboration, there is ongoing and future planned collaborations which are detailed in this report and include the procurement of CCTV.</p> <p>There is also significant collaboration on health and safety matters with other services and partners, which are also detailed.</p>
HEALTH AND SAFETY	Demonstrates BMKFRS compliance with health and safety legislation through its policies and procedures and implementation of the same.
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY	There are no people impacts arising from this report.
USE OF RESOURCES	No use of resources implications.

PROVENANCE SECTION & BACKGROUND PAPERS	This is the health and safety report compiled each year to summarise performance and progress.
APPENDICES	Health and Safety Annual Report 2014/15
TIME REQUIRED	15 minutes.
REPORT ORIGINATOR AND CONTACT	Alison Chart achart@bucksfire.gov.uk 01296 744490

Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority



Health and Safety Annual Report 2014/15

Contents

<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
1. Forewords	3
2. Executive Summary	4
3. Summary	5
4. Forward Planning	11
5. Audits and Inspections	12

Appendices:

1. BMKFRS Health & Safety statistics	14
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1 Forewords

"I am pleased to have continued as the lead member for Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority in Health and Safety matters and I welcome this annual report which sets out the service's achievements. It is important that members continue to be kept aware of pertinent health and safety matters and I feel that our oversight helps to contribute to ensuring that both our employees and the communities we serve are safe and protected.

It is particularly pleasing to note the excellent health and safety performance in the operational environment where, of the eight categories, Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service came top with the least number of injuries in six of those categories compared with other peer Fire and Rescue Services".

Councillor David Schofield
Authority Lead Member for
Health and Safety

"It is pleasing to note that the health and safety performance of the Service continues to improve which can only be achieved by the concerted efforts of all staff. This is testament to all staff embracing the values of the Authority and playing their part to make Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes the safest areas in England in which to live, work and travel".

Jason Thelwell
Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive of
Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire
Authority

2 Executive Summary

2.1 The Director of People and Organisational Development (POD) has, with the agreement of the other members of the Strategic Management Board (SMB) created a fourth strategic aim – People. The objective of this strategic aim is to optimise the contribution and well-being of our people and forms part of the Corporate Plan 2015/16.

2.2 A Work Life and Well-being Survey initiated by the University of Middlesex and led by the POD department was sent to all employees. 193 responses were received and whilst BMKFRS did not achieve any of the benchmark scores in any category they were only missed by a small margin.

2.3 It has been a good year for Health and Safety training following approval of funds by the Training Strategy Group. Details of courses provided and qualifications can be found in Section 3.2 of the report.

2.4 In order to protect the Authority and its employees the Health and Safety Manager has written a 'Significant Event' procedure. This procedure has been written to provide a robust process to follow in the event of a severe, multiple or fatal injury to a third party or an Authority employee.

2.5 As part of changes to the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012, the Authority has purchased two Class H vacuum cleaners with High Efficiency Particulate Arresting (HEPA) filters for dry decontamination purposes which now ensures compliance with the Regulations.

2.6 As part of regional bench-marking safety event statistics for all 9 of the South East Fire and Rescue Services are collated and compared on an annual basis. The results show that BMKFA are placed second in the table along with Kent, with the Isle of Wight in first position. This is a great position compared to the other 5 Services; however, we continue to strive for improvement.

2.7 CCTV update: Buckinghamshire and Royal Berkshire are procuring CCTV collaboratively. The first tranche will be installed at the end of this financial year.

2.8 Collaborative working on health and safety matters within the Thames Valley is increasing particularly since the integration of the three control rooms.

2.9 The statistical analysis for 2014/15 detailed in the appendix at the end of this year's report provides valuable comparisons with last year's DCLG returns and against those Services of a similar size and structure –our peer group.

3 Summary

3.1 People and Well-being Strategic Aim

The Director of People and Organisational Development (POD) has, with the agreement of the other members of the SMB created a fourth strategic aim – 'People'.

The objective of this strategic aim is to optimise the contribution and well-being of our people and forms part of the Corporate Plan 2015/16. In order to meet this objective, the Health and Safety Manager has been working with the Director of POD to identify how the Authority can:

- Adapt and refresh the workforce to improve service delivery, resilience and deliver the Public Safety Plan (PSP).
- Move to flexible, affordable, local terms and conditions where appropriate, to support demand and risk led people resourcing.
- Adapt our employee propositions to optimise employee motivation, attract and retain the right calibre, high performing people.
- Promote employee well-being to improve contribution.

Whilst the first three sit primarily with Human Resources, the fourth sits between Human Resources and Health and Safety. The Director of POD and the Health and Safety Manager identified that this strategic aim could follow the Prevention, Protection and Response facets of the other strategic aims:

- Prevention – promoting health and well-being
- Protection – provide assured safe systems of work
- Response – intervene to restore individual contribution and well-being

As part of this, a set of priorities for 2015/16 have been established so within Prevention – promoting health and well-being it was recognised that it was important to:

- Recognise and resolve mental health issues as early as possible
- Track hours worked under the Working Time Regulations
- Provide a musculoskeletal education programme
- Define and implement health and fitness standards

To provide, under Protection, assured safe systems of work by:

- Carrying out workplace well-being surveys
- Carrying out risk assessments – e.g. medical
- Ensure medicals are fit for purpose

Finally, under Response, how to intervene to restore individual contribution and well-being through:

- Sickness absence and getting back to work
- Employee Assistance Programme, specialist and welfare interventions
- Personalised individual interventions including reasonable adjustments and alternate duties.

Work Life and Well-being Survey: The University of Middlesex approached the Director of POD with a Work Life and Well-being survey based on the HSE 7 core psychosocial hazards: Demands, Control, Peer Support, Managerial Support, Relationships, Role and Change; which they were undertaking with Fire Authorities and other industries. It was agreed that we would participate. The survey was planned to have a 4 week response period however this was extended to 6 weeks as the response rate was improving week on week. In all, 193 responses were received. Whilst BMKFRS did not achieve any of the benchmark scores in any category they were only missed by a small margin. Consideration is being given to conducting a further survey in 2016.

This survey was carried out by the other Thames Valley FRSs with results being very similar in the fact that neither achieved the benchmark scores.

Health and Safety Objectives

The strategic objectives set by the CFO for the H&S Manager have all been achieved; six monthly reports detailing safety events that have occurred at incidents and training events have been presented to SMB; monthly summaries of current health and safety issues, trend analysis of safety events and updates are circulated to SMB for their information and training packages for Display Screen Equipment assessments, manual handling and Employee Responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 have been placed on the learning management system as a mandatory requirement for completion.

3.2 Health and Safety (H&S) Training

It has been a good year for Health and Safety training following approval of funds by the Training Strategy Group. The following is a breakdown of the training that has been carried out.

A **NEBOSH General Certificate** training course was held in December 2014 which captured those newly promoted Station Commanders and Inspecting Officers. In March a **NEBOSH Fire Safety and Risk Management** course was held for Inspecting Officers and the H&S Manager and Technician resulting in achievement of the qualification for all. This qualification for the H&S Manager and Technician ensures that Fire Risk Assessments, completed by Station Commanders and Site Managers as the 'responsible person', are quality assured by competent persons therefore negating the need for all Station Commanders

and Site Managers to undertake the NEBOSH Fire Safety and Risk Management qualification. This provides a considerable cost saving for the Authority.

Accident Investigation training for Level 2 Accident Investigators - Middle Managers (Station Commanders and Support staff equivalents) took place in April and July of this year using a well-known and highly regarded training provider. This was well received by all with the outcome being an improvement in the standard of investigation reports, particularly in the format, quality of information gathered and consistency. The remainder of Level 2 Accident Investigators will receive their training in the next financial year subject to approval by the Training Strategy Group. Supervisory Managers (Watch and Crew Managers) are Level 1 Accident Investigators will receive training in the next financial year.

Noise at Work Risk assessment and Management training was offered to members of personnel by Oxfordshire FRS who hosted the course. Two persons, the H&S Technician and Asset Management Technician attended the course and were successful in attaining the qualification.

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (CoSHH) and risk assessment training was carried out in March. Attendees included the H&S Technician, the Facilities Supervisor, a station stores person, two station caterers and a Workshop Technician. They are now qualified to recognise the hazardous effects of substances they work with and create the necessary risk assessment using the materials safety data sheets.

Personal Safety Training: As part of the training review, the H&S department identified that those personnel who work as either Community Safety Co-ordinators or Inspecting Officers and have to enter either domestic or commercial properties alone need to have personal safety training. This training was provided by the 'Suzi Lamplugh Trust' in July and was well received by all. This is the first occasion that such training was carried out by the Authority.

3.3 Management of Risk

In order to protect the Authority and its employees the Health and Safety Manager has written a 'Significant Event' procedure. This procedure has been written to provide a robust process to follow in the event of a severe, multiple or fatal injury to a third party or Authority employee as a result of the Authority's activities whether operational, training or routine or any other incident deemed to be a significant event. It encompasses the Death in the Workplace guidance document issued by CFOA to ensure that best practice is followed in such events.

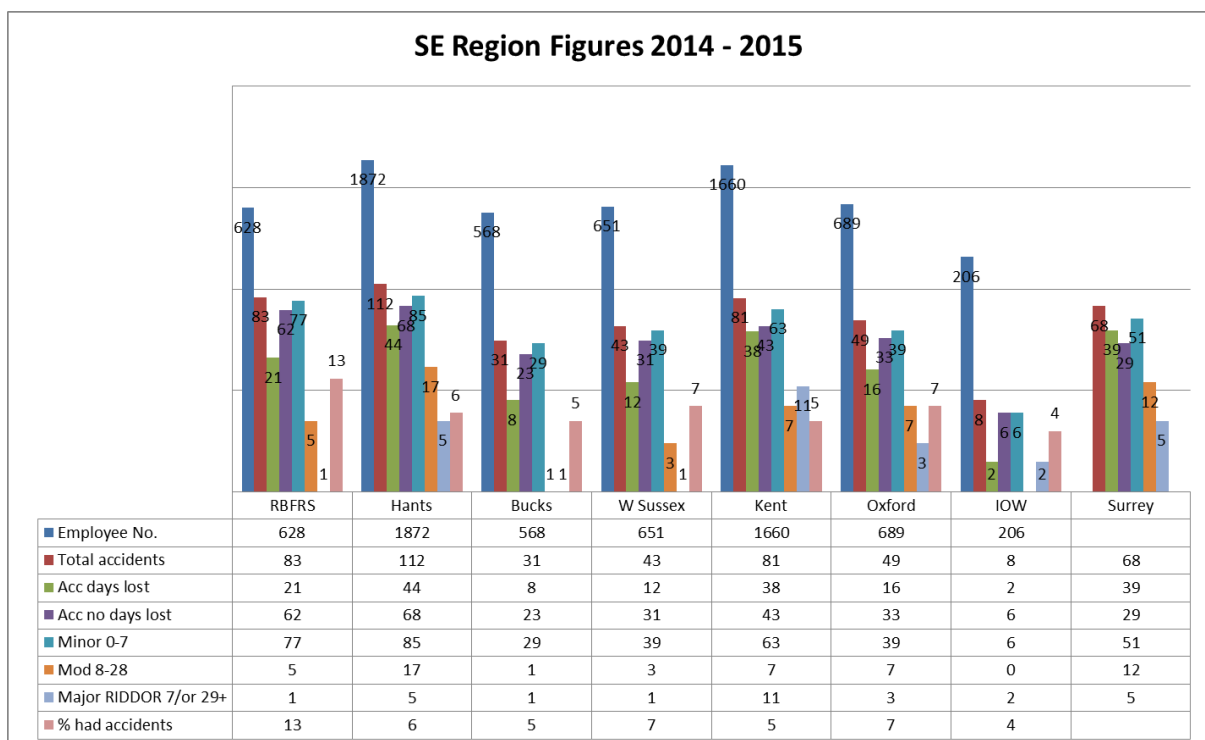
Since the introduction of operational functionality hearing tests and the associated procedure note, there have been no more instances of personnel being taken off the run for extended durations. Where there is concern over an

individual's hearing an operational hearing test is carried out which either allows the individual to resume operational duties or further tests to be carried out promptly. This system is working well.

As part of changes to the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012, the Authority has purchased two Class H vacuum cleaners with High Efficiency Particulate Arrestors (HEPA) filters for dry decontamination purposes. The procurement was carried out collaboratively by all three Thames Valley Services with each purchasing two vacuums in order to provide resilience for the future. These vacuums are held at Aylesbury Fire Station with one being carried on the Specialist Equipment Vehicle (SEV) and the other in stock as a spare. This will allow one to always be in service as should one be used it can be sent away for cleaning or testing/maintenance with one still available.

As part of regional bench-marking safety event statistics for all 9 of the South East Fire and Rescue Services are collated and compared on an annual basis.

Below is a graph which shows the South East regional comparator figures for 8 of the 9 Services (East Sussex did not provide their figures) detailing number of employees; total accidents; accident days lost; accident no days lost; minor safety events; moderate safety events and major RIDDOR 7 day or more than 29 days sickness safety events. The results show that BMKFA are placed second in the table along with Kent, with the Isle of Wight in first position. A good position compared to the other 5 Services however, there is room for improvement.



This year has seen an increase in the number of projects that the H&S department have been working on with other departments such as: Human Resources (HR), Facilities, Workshops, Protection, Research and Development and the On-call Station Commanders. Such projects are as follows:

- Stress risk assessment process and stress procedure which are now fully implemented and embedded,
- The process for operational personnel to be able to claim costs, if charged by their GPs, for immunisations such as Hepatitis A which they could be exposed to in the course of their duties,
- The fitness and well-being of employees with the Global Corporate Challenge which encouraged the workforce to improve their fitness and generated a healthy competition between teams,
- CCTV – working with Research and Development and the Fleet Manager to design a systems specification as well as working with the Procurement team in preparation to go out to tender,
- Working with the Driving Centre Manager to review, simplify and streamline the 'Driving for Work' policy and procedures as well as the Fleet Manager to assist in the creation of procedures for the pool cars (White fleet) and procedures for the use of personnel's own vehicles (Grey fleet) both of which are currently out for consultation.
- Working with the On-call Station Commanders to agree a common and uniform health and safety notice board. The H&S department purchased notice boards for each stand alone On-call station which were fitted by Facilities; on each board is displayed the latest health and safety communications. A member of the crew has the responsibility for ensuring the notice board is always up to date. These boards are to be rolled out across every station and site within the Authority.

CCTV- A specification was written which included:

- 360 degree vision,
- Speed of the appliance,
- Whether sirens and horns were in use,
- Whether headlights and indicators were in use,
- When the driver commenced braking,
- When the driver changed gear,
- Time stamp should the appliance be involved in a collision.

Following which a scoping day was held to which Royal Berkshire FRS and Oxfordshire FRS were invited to attend in a bid to encourage collaboration on this project in order to achieve best value for money. Both Services attended however, Oxfordshire FRS decided not to commit to the project as they were not in the position to go ahead. Following the day, Royal Berkshire FRS did commit to the project with BMKFRS leading the way. The tender process is underway with installation by the end of this financial year.

3.4 Incident Command Manual

With the release of the new Incident Command manual, a gap analysis has been carried out with the outcome being that as a Service we are in a good position and will not require considerable revision to our procedures. Any necessary amendments are small and easy to implement and take the form of removing the 'transitional' tactical mode from the Analytical Risk Assessment form, changing the appropriate incident ground tabards and implementing new aide memoires.

It is likely that there will be a South East regional approach; more details will follow once final decisions are made.

3.5 Collaborative Working

Thames Valley collaborative working is increasing particularly since the integration of the three Control Rooms. From a health and safety perspective, the creation and implementation of a joint Thames Valley Fire Control safety event notification form has been significant; a review of the same will take place in due course in order to ensure it is working efficiently for all stakeholders. Other joint procedures will follow such as the 'exposure to hazardous substances at incidents'; lone working; Display Screen Equipment and Manual Handling.

South East regional health and safety work is continuing to further improve common ways of working, best practice and bench-marking. The group continues to meet quarterly and is attended by either one or both members of the Health and Safety team.

Last year's report contained reference to a **South East and West Midlands, joint project** – a fire service specific health and safety audit process similar to that currently used in the region – RoSPA QSA Audit.

The audit process has been written with West Midlands creating the question sets for the Risk Control Performance Indicators which measure the practical application of the health and safety policies and procedures within a set of subjects such as COSHH, Working at Height and the Control of Contractors. The South East region have devised the question sets for the health and safety management systems adopted by FRSs which inform the planning, organisation, implementation, monitoring and review of the policies and procedures. The question sets are created from two overarching documents – the Health and Safety Executive's HSG 65, Plan, Do, Check, Act safety management system and the DCLG National Framework for Health, Safety and Welfare in the Operational Environment.

On completion, the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) viewed the audit process and offered a business proposal for the provision of accreditation which, in order to offer the audit to other Fire Services is important and considered best practice. This was then taken to CFOA to gauge their interest in

adopting the audit process and whether they would be willing to fund the accreditation. A further update will be provided in due course.

3.6 Health and Safety Team performance

Strategic commitment to Health and Safety is still a vital part of successful health and safety performance. The quarterly Health, Safety and Welfare Committee meetings are chaired by either the Chief or Deputy Chief Fire Officer and well supported by Cllr. Schofield, the Lead Member of the Fire Authority for Health, Safety and Welfare, who takes a consistent and active interest in the work of the department. The health and safety team would like to express their thanks to Cllr. Schofield for his dedication.

Under CFO Thelwell, the reporting of health and safety performance now goes to the Performance Management Board. SMB are updated as and when necessary either by the Head of Service Development or via the Deputy Chief Fire Officer.

The six month 'mini' report on the frequency and types of safety event occurring at operational incidents and training events is still produced and goes to Performance Management Board. The period of 1st January to 30th June 2015 is captured in the latest report with the outcome being a total of **24** safety events occurred at the total number of incidents attended – **4119**, meaning the percentage of safety events in total is **0.58%**.

A comparison has been carried out between the first six months of the year and the same period in 2014 with the following outcome:

- January to June 2014 - **3300** incidents and **31** safety events resulting in a percentage of **0.9%**
- January to June 2015 – **4119** incidents and **24** safety events resulting in a percentage of **0.58%** - a reduction.

These figures are impressive. Please see hyperlink below to view the full report.

[H&S six month report](#)

4 Forward Planning

4.1 Budgetary Impacts

Whilst the health and safety training budget was fully exhausted during this year, the actual health and safety budget saw an underspend of £8239. This financial achievement further consolidates the fact that the H&S department continue to offer effective and efficient service at very good value for money.

Currently the forecast for the end of this financial year is a 'break even' position due to financing an upgrade in the safety event recording system which will be internet based and will allow more comprehensive analysis, automation of 'reminders' and allow crews to instantly report safety events via their tablet and send them directly to the health and safety department – a considerable improvement on the current system.

4.2 Objectives for 2014/15

The Authority's vision is "that Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes is the safest place in England in which to live, work and travel". To support this vision the Corporate Plan 2012/15 sets out five strategic aims. Whilst health and safety runs through all of them it is clearly stated in 'Response, People and Resources' in priorities 1, 2 and 3; 1 and 2; and 1 and 2 respectively. The Corporate Plan can be accessed via the link below. There is a new Corporate Plan for 2015-20 which will be included in the H&S annual report 2015/16.

[Corporate Plan 2012-15](#)

Health and Safety objectives have been set in line with the Authority's Public Safety Plan and will be reviewed at the end of the financial year.

5 Audits and Inspections

5.1 Internal Audits and Inspections

The annual H&S station/site audit form was amended again prior to this year's audit programme following extensive feedback from those completing the audit.

Following completion of the audit programme the H&S team visit 4 stations/sites chosen at random but covering all duty systems to quality assure and verify the outcomes provided by the auditor. Stations and sites visited were Great Holm, Buckingham and Haddenham stations and Control. The Health, Safety and Welfare committee are briefed of the findings at the December meeting and updated subsequently until all issues are closed.

Any property issues are incorporated into the property capital plan and prioritised using the Red, Amber and Green (RAG) traffic light system. At each Health, Safety and Welfare Committee meeting the Facilities Manager provides an update as to the progress of works.

5.2 RoSPA QSA Audit

Whilst the South East region audit programme for 2014 was delayed it was decided at the December meeting that BMKFRS would be audited in October 2015 and would be the first Service to pilot the self- assessment of the planning, organising, implementing, monitoring and review of policies and procedures. Due to the retirement of two senior health and safety personnel at West Sussex during 2014, the regional group agreed to defer their audit until early 2016. BMKFRS's Health and Safety Manager will be leading this audit.

6 Appendices

6.1 Detailed below is an appendix which provides information and data on BMKFRS health and safety performance in the 'Family Peer Group' Performance Comparison table for 2013/14 and 2014/15.

To clarify, the 'Family Peer Group' is defined as those fire services of a similar size, number of employees and population as BMKFRS.

Appendix 1

Family peer group performance comparison tables 2013/14 and 2014/15

The H&S department are required to report on BMKFRS end of year accident statistical returns to the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) on 31st May 2015 for the period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015.

Summary:

The Health and Safety Department provided returns for;

HS1- Injuries during operational incidents, split into Whole-time and On-Call categories and sub divided for accidents at fires, at Road Traffic Collisions and at other Special Service Calls.

HS2- Injuries during training and routine activities also split into Whole-time and On-Call categories and sub divided for accidents during operational training, fitness training and routine activities

VE1- Vehicle accidents displayed as a comparison against our peer group.

Findings:

HS1- personnel injured at operational incidents has again seen an increase of two on last year. A 25% increase on last year's events.

Reason – It is difficult to clearly identify the reason for the increase. The injuries were primarily musculoskeletal of a minor nature – 3 sprained ankles, 1 pulled calf and 1 pulled finger tendon. A chemical stored in an unsecured container, spilt from height, causing a slight burn to a firefighter's arm accounted for a further injury. In addition, it was found that a firefighter who suffered from a stomach upset had eaten a hot meal pack, taken from the appliance, which was out of date.

Of the 3 ankle injuries 1 was due to traversing the motorway embankment in the dark whilst dealing with a car fire causing his ankle to overturn. The second was due to tripping over hose that he was laying out and the third was due to the positioning of the appliance when a firefighter stepped back off the appliance whilst wearing BA and twisted his ankle on uneven ground. Work will be carried out over the next year to work on reducing the number of musculoskeletal injuries.

HS2- Training and routine safety events have seen a decrease of 8. These occurred in the routine activities category; a decrease of 40% which is excellent performance.

Reason: It is difficult to clearly identify the reason although it is likely to be connected to behavioural safety as focus on health and safety during routine and training events is not as concentrated as at operational incidents. A behavioural safety survey will be carried out to benchmark our behavioural safety culture.

In addition to the DCLG yearly statistical returns the health and safety report includes comparisons against those fire services of a similar size, number of employees and population for this year and those carried out in 2013/14.

Total Number of Persons Injured	2013/14	Total Number of Persons Injured	2014/15
Buckinghamshire	26	Buckinghamshire	22
Wiltshire	41	West Sussex	33
West Sussex	49	Wiltshire	34
Northamptonshire	53	Oxfordshire	40
Bedfordshire	55	Northamptonshire	49
Oxfordshire	61	Dorset	57
Suffolk	62	Bedfordshire	59
Dorset	68	East Sussex	61
Berkshire	73	Suffolk	67
Norfolk	102	Berkshire	68
East Sussex	106	East Sussex	77
Cambridgeshire	134	Cambridgeshire	89

BMKFRS continue to hold first place with the least number of persons injured this year; in addition there has been a reduction of 4 compared to last year – excellent news!

Total Number of injuries at fires	2013/14	Total Number of injuries at fires	2014/15
Buckinghamshire	3	Wiltshire	5
Wiltshire	5	Buckinghamshire	7
West Sussex	9	West Sussex	7
Dorset	11	Dorset	9
Bedfordshire	13	Bedfordshire	11
Northamptonshire	14	Northamptonshire	11
Berkshire	15	Berkshire	18
Suffolk	15	Suffolk	19
Norfolk	19	Norfolk	20
Oxfordshire	27	Oxfordshire	20
Cambridgeshire	29	Cambridgeshire	23
East Sussex	30	East Sussex	29

There has been an increase in the number of injuries at fires by 4 taking the total to 7 compared with 3 last year resulting in BMKFRS slipping from top place to second. Analysis of these events show that 5 of the 7 relate to musculoskeletal injuries – 3 ankles, 1 pulled calf and 1 pulled finger tendon. 1

injury related to a chemical substance which spilt from an unsecured container stored at high level which went down the arm of the firefighter between his PPE.

Total Number of injuries at Special Services	2013/14	Total Number of injuries at Special Services	2014/15
Berkshire	2	Oxfordshire	1
Cambridgeshire	2	West Sussex	2
West Sussex	3	Buckinghamshire	3
Norfolk	4	Northamptonshire	3
East Sussex	4	Berkshire	4
Buckinghamshire	5	Dorset	4
Dorset	8	Wiltshire	6
Wiltshire	14	Bedfordshire	7
Northamptonshire	15	Norfolk	11
Oxfordshire	15	Suffolk	13
Bedfordshire	19	Cambridgeshire	15
Suffolk	27	East Sussex	20

It is pleasing to note that BMKFRS has moved from sixth place last year to third place this year for injuries sustained at Special Service incidents with a reduction of 2. The 3 injuries sustained all related to back injuries whilst at Road Traffic Collisions.

Total Number of injuries during routine activities	2013/14	Total Number of injuries during routine activities	2014/15
Dorset	5	Buckinghamshire	4
Suffolk	7	Dorset	6
Oxfordshire	8	Oxfordshire	8
Berkshire	10	Wiltshire	8
Buckinghamshire	10	Suffolk	9
Wiltshire	10	East Sussex	9
Northamptonshire	12	West Sussex	10
Bedfordshire	15	Northamptonshire	11
Norfolk	16	Berkshire	12
West Sussex	17	Bedfordshire	14
East Sussex	19	Norfolk	15
Cambridgeshire	40	Cambridgeshire	21

This year has seen an improvement in the number of injuries sustained during routine activities; the figures have decreased by 6 from 10 to 4 resulting in BMKFRS being top of the table with the least number.

Total Number of injuries during Training	2013/14	Total Number of injuries during Training	2014/15
Buckinghamshire	10	Buckinghamshire	8
Northamptonshire	19	Wiltshire	11
West Sussex	19	Northamptonshire	16
Bedfordshire	22	West Sussex	16
Oxfordshire	24	Oxfordshire	20
Wiltshire	24	Cambridgeshire	24
Dorset	33	Bedfordshire	25
Berkshire	34	Dorset	27
Suffolk	36	Suffolk	27
Norfolk	40	East Sussex	28
East Sussex	42	Berkshire	29
Cambridgeshire	50	Norfolk	40

Yet again BMKFRS hold first position with the least number of injuries sustained during training. There has also been a reduction in the number of injuries from 10 last year to 8. This is an excellent result.

Total Number of Major injuries	2013/14	Total Number of Major injuries	2014/15
Buckinghamshire	0	Buckinghamshire	0
West Sussex	0	Norfolk	0
Bedfordshire	0	Bedfordshire	0
Berkshire	0	Oxfordshire	0
Norfolk	0	Dorset	0
Northamptonshire	1	West Sussex	1
Oxfordshire	1	Berkshire	1
Wiltshire	1	Suffolk	1
Cambridgeshire	1	Wiltshire	2
Suffolk	2	Northamptonshire	6
Dorset	3	East Sussex	6
Cambridgeshire	3	Cambridgeshire	13

First position has again been maintained this year in this category, providing further evidence that BMKFRS operational personnel are some of the safest in the country. A very pleasing result!

Total Number of over 7 day injuries	2013/14	Total Number of over 7 day injuries	2014/15
Buckinghamshire	2	Buckinghamshire	2
Dorset	7	East Sussex	2
East Sussex	7	West Sussex	3
Northamptonshire	7	Dorset	5
Bedfordshire	8	Bedfordshire	7
Wiltshire	8	Suffolk	7
Berkshire	9	Northamptonshire	8
West Sussex	9	Oxfordshire	8
Cambridgeshire	10	Wiltshire	10
Suffolk	10	Berkshire	10
Oxfordshire	12	Norfolk	12
Norfolk	19	Cambridgeshire	20

BMKFRS has retained first place in "RIDDOR reporting over 7 day injuries" for this year; maintaining the number of 2 events – excellent performance which assists in improving the number of days lost to the Authority through sickness.

This year sees an improvement in the number of vehicle safety events compared to last (see table below). This year BMKFRS hold fourth position with 30 compared to fifth place with 46 last year. This is a reduction of 16 vehicle safety events which is evidence that the processes put in place to reduce the number are effective thus achieving the objective set last year to reduce this type of event and improve the position in the league table.

Vehicle Safety Events 2014/15	
Fire & Rescue Service	Total Number of safety events
Berkshire	26
Suffolk	27
Bedfordshire	27
Buckinghamshire	30
Cambridgeshire	34
West Sussex	41
Northamptonshire	48
Oxfordshire	49
Wiltshire	50
Northamptonshire	58
Dorset	68
East Sussex	68
Norfolk	92

The league table below shows a comparison of safety events with other fire and rescue services of similar size in numbers of employees to BMKFRS. As last year, BMKFRS lead with the least number of safety events which is fantastic news.

Annual Incidence Rate			
Fire & Rescue Service	Total Number of employees	Total number of safety events	Incident Rate
Buckinghamshire	528	22	4166
West Sussex	651	33	5069
Wiltshire	528	34	6439
Oxfordshire	589	40	6791
East Sussex	791	61	7711
Dorset	702	57	8119
Norfolk	875	77	8800
Northamptonshire	522	49	9386
Suffolk	702	67	9544
Bedfordshire	571	59	9734
Berkshire	596	68	11409
Cambridgeshire	614	89	14495

These figures are calculated using the Annual Incidence Rate which is calculated by the number of reportable injuries in the financial year divided by the average number employed during the year x 100,000, giving the number of injuries per 100,000 workers. This calculation provides a more accurate picture of the overall health and safety performance in the operational arena.

These statistics, produced by central government, evidence that BMKFRS have one of the best safety records in the country for operational employees compared to its peers of similar size and demographics. These results further enhance the vision of the Authority and employees that Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes is the safest place in England in which to live, work and travel and as such are something that everyone should be very proud of.

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