



Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

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| MEETING | Fire Authority |
| DATE OF MEETING | 17 October 2018 |
| OFFICER | Mark Hemming, Director of Finance and Assets |
| LEAD MEMBER | Councillor Peter McDonald |
| SUBJECT OF THE REPORT | The 2019-20 Local Government Finance Settlement: Technical Consultation Paper (the Consultation) |
| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | <p>The Consultation was published on 24 July 2018, with a deadline for responses of 18 September 2018. In accordance with the Scheme of Delegation to Officers, the response was discussed with the Chairman and Lead Member before submission. This paper details the content of the submission for the attention of the Authority.</p> <p>The Consultation sought views on two key elements of the local government finance settlement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Maintaining the certainty of the four-year settlement offer (Question 1) ii. Council tax referendum principles (Question 2) <p>The Consultation also sought views on a number of other areas not directly relevant to the Authority, so a response of 'no comment' was submitted in relation to those questions.</p> <p>The response to Question 1 was that the Authority is in favour of maintaining the certainty provided by the four-year offer. Our existing Medium Term Financial Plan is based on these known amounts and the certainty will aid with planning for 2019/20.</p> <p>The current proposal within the Consultation is that the council tax referendum limit for fire and rescue authorities will be less than 3%. The response to this was that the Authority would recommend that fire and rescue authorities have the flexibility to increase council tax by [less than 3% or] up to and including £12, whichever is higher. The rationale and supporting evidence for this is contained within the submitted response (see Appendix B, Question 2).</p> |
| ACTION | Noting. |
| RECOMMENDATIONS | That the response to the consultation be noted. |

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| RISK MANAGEMENT | No direct impact. |
| FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS | <p>In 2018/19 BMKFA had the lowest precept of any non-metropolitan combined fire and rescue authority. The band D equivalent charge is £62.70. The total council tax receivable for 2018/19 (excluding prior years' surpluses) is £18.8m.</p> <p>The current draft medium-term financial plan assumes that council tax will be increased by 2.99% every year. For 2019/20 this would result in total council tax receipts of £19.4m (ignoring the effects of any growth in the council tax base).</p> <p>If the band D equivalent was increased by £12 for 2019/20 the total council tax receipts (ignoring any increases in the council tax base) would be £22.5m.</p> |
| LEGAL IMPLICATIONS | The Chief Fire Officer may make a formal response on behalf of the Authority to a Government Consultation Paper provided that such a response is subsequently referred to the appropriate committee for their attention. |
| CONSISTENCY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DUTY TO COLLABORATE | No direct impact. |
| HEALTH AND SAFETY | No direct impact. |
| EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY | No direct impact. |
| USE OF RESOURCES | See Financial Implications. |
| PROVENANCE SECTION & BACKGROUND PAPERS | <p>The 2018-19 Local Government Finance Settlement: Technical Consultation Paper, Fire Authority, 18 October 2017:</p> <p>https://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/5115/0719/9506/ITEM_10_Local_Government_Finance_Settlement_2018-19Appendices.pdf</p> <p>Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority Scheme of Delegation to Officers, June 2013</p> |
| APPENDICES | <p>Appendix A – The 2019-20 Local Government Finance Settlement: Technical Consultation Paper</p> <p>Appendix B – Response to the Consultation</p> |
| TIME REQUIRED | 10 minutes |
| REPORT ORIGINATOR AND CONTACT | <p>Mark Hemming</p> <p>mhemming@bucksfire.gov.uk</p> |