Service Document Strategy:

Health and Safety Strategy

1. Changes since the last version

Please note that as Service Documents are frequently updated, if you print a document, its accuracy cannot be guaranteed. Always check the intranet for the latest version.

2. Index *(delete if not required)*

3. Purpose and scope

The purpose of this strategy is to set out the strategic objectives for the next three years that seek to improve health and safety. It sits alongside the Well-being Strategy, dovetails into the People Strategy, and aligns with Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority's Public Safety Plan.

What we are doing is working! This is evidenced through our excellent health and safety performance statistics, the achievement of the RoSPA Gold Award and the case studies provided below. What this strategy will achieve is the further enhancement of the work we are doing and the success we have had.

Introduction

The UK Fire Service is going through a period of rapid unprecedented change. Service users expectations are increasing and the ongoing financial pressures to deliver more with less are placing additional pressure on Fire and Rescue Services nationwide. Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority remains committed to delivering its priorities, which are:

- Prevent incidents that cause harm from happening.
- Protect homes, public buildings and businesses from the effects of fire.
- To provide a timely and proportionate response to incidents by allocating our assets and resources in relation to risk and demand.
- To offer best value for money to our residents and businesses, ensure that the Service is compliant with legislative requirements, and recognised 'good' practice standards, which can be evidenced at all, times.

Looking to the future the Health and Safety Department (H&S) foresee:

- Continuing financial pressures affecting resourcing and the procurement of new vehicles, equipment and training.

- An increase in turnover of staff resulting in an 'experience' gap.
- The requirement for staff to 'do more with less' on an ongoing basis, potentially compromising their safety and affecting their well-being.

Despite these pressures, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority has a health and safety record to be proud of. Key contributors to this is the effective, proportionate management of risk, the training of staff and a positive behavioural safety culture. Everyone has a role to play in improving health and safety in the workplace including all those who undertake or influence workplace activities and attitudes.

Our Vision

Our vision is to make Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes the safest areas in England in which to live work and travel.

Health and safety is the golden thread linking all Service activities that serves to ensure employees conduct those activities in a safe and systematic way, protecting themselves and those affected by their activities, thus helping to achieve our vision.

Mission statement

To promote proportionate, appropriate and effective risk management.

Roles and responsibilities

Chief Fire Officer and Elected Members - Have ultimate responsibility for health and safety and well-being within the Authority.

Deputy Chief Fire Officer – Chair of Health, Safety and Well-being Committee and promotion of health, safety and well-being throughout the organisation.

Strategic Management Board – committed to securing, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and well-being of employees and other persons likely to be affected by the activities of the Authority, demonstrating that commitment through strong and visible leadership.

Head of Service Delivery – responsible for the implementation of health and safety policies and practices including the monitoring of performance.

Head of Service Development – – Departmental responsibility for health and safety function and the implementation of improvements across the service.

Health and Safety Manager – Responsible for the management of the health and safety function.

Health and Safety Technician – Responsible for the day to day delivery of the health and safety function.

Managers - Responsible for the health, safety and well-being of all their employees, contractors and visitors and for the stations/sites they manage.

Employees - Responsible for their own safety and the safety of others affected by their activities.

The five strategic themes

- **Working together:** Promoting broader ownership and cohesion of health and safety across the board.
- **Drive continuous improvement in health, safety and well-being:** Anticipate and solve new health and safety challenges.
- **Build an even better health and safety culture:** Raise awareness of and promote the benefits of an improved culture.
- **Effectively manage risk:** Simplify, wherever possible, risk management to ensure safe people and processes.
- **Engaging together:** Seek to continuously improve communications on health, safety and well-being matters.

Key points

- There needs to be broader ownership of health and safety.
- There needs to be greater cohesion between the H&S department, internal departments and external partners, agencies and organisations.
- It is important to drive continuous improvement in health, safety and well-being.
- We need to work together to build upon our positive health and safety culture.
- Wider recognition is needed of the benefits that come from a simplistic and proportionate approach to risk.
- Effective communications are key to successful engagement.

The implementation of this strategy should result in a greater and wider ownership and resolution of health and safety issues; improved productivity through a strong health and safety culture whilst employees and the communities we serve will be healthier and safer.

▪ Working together

Health and safety is not the responsibility of a particular individual(s) or part of an organisation but an integral part of everyone's role. This means engaging all employees with this ethos as they have a vital role in managing risk and preventing harm to individuals and the Authority.

Working together with employees, Human Resources and Occupational Health to reduce the impacts of work related injury/ill health; increasing awareness of and removing the stigma of mental health illness and improving the support networks available to improve employee well-being both physically and psychologically.

Engaging with employees and working with the Research and Development department on the design, specification and implementation of new services, vehicles and equipment is key.

Working with Facilities on the selection, performance and supervision of contractors to ensure compliance with relevant legislation i.e. Construction and Design Management Regulations 2015. Assisting and advising where necessary when major projects are factored into the Capital Plan.

Case study: Well-being Task & Finish Group

The creation and implementation of the Well-being Task and Finish group, made up of fire fighters, representative bodies, the Welfare Officer, Occupational health, the Mental Health Blue Light Champion and the Health and Safety Manager, was set up to review and assess the Service's current position in terms of employee physical and psychological well-being.

The group's terms of reference was to carry out a self –assessment against the College of Policing Blue Light Well-being Framework. Having conducted gap analysis against the framework the group went on to devise an action plan to move the Service forward from the areas considered to be 'Under developed' or 'In development' to becoming 'Fully developed'.

They have acquired funding for Blue Light trauma awareness, Mental Health First Aid and Mental Health Champions training to provide a network of support across the Service in a bid to reduce sickness absence associated with mental health illness. This training programme will be complete by the end of this financial year.

This work is an excellent example of how we are working together to improve health, safety and well-being

- ## Drive continuous improvement in health, safety & well-being

As a South East region, we have adopted the Health, and Safety Executive's (HSE) safety management system - HSG65 Plan, Do, Check, Act. Implementing and embedding this system across the Service provides assurance that we meet legislative requirements. It is relatively simple to implement, is less bureaucratic and less expensive than some other safety management systems.

Active monitoring – near misses and hazard reports are investigated with recommended actions being implemented wherever possible in order to prevent a safety event occurring.

Reactive monitoring – safety events are also investigated, again with outcomes being implemented and shared with the relevant stakeholders in order to prevent a recurrence. Regional and national learning from safety events and incidents is shared and a gap analysis is carried out and appropriate steps taken to close the gap. An audit trail of this process is held within the Operational Assurance management information system.

Health and safety training relevant to role is provided to staff ranging from the IOSH Safety for Executives, NEBOSH General Certificate, Accident Investigation training, IOSH Managing Safely, COSHH Assessors and First Aid at Work. This is not a definitive list. All employees complete E-learning packages on health and safety legislative subjects such as manual handling as a mandatory requirement.

The Authority has invested heavily in new fire appliances with electronic pumping systems and electronic stability programmes for safer driving when responding in an emergency. New e-draulic equipment has been procured to reduce the risk of high-pressure injection and manual handling injuries. Both of which are driving new and safer systems of work.

An audit programme of both health and safety policies and procedures and the implementation of the same is subscribed to. Peer audits using the RoSPA QSA Audit are carried out on a regular basis with the last in 2015 highlighting a huge improvement in performance from 65% in 2009 to 88% in 2015.

Case study: The RoSPA Health and Safety Awards

As a means of evidencing, the continuous improvement in health and safety performance the H&S department applied to be assessed for the RoSPA Health and Safety awards and submitted the required evidence.

The outcome of this assessment resulted in the achievement of the RoSPA Gold Award. A truly fantastic outcome.

■ Build an even better health and safety culture

Key to excellent health and safety performance is a positive health and safety culture. It can be difficult to determine the attitude to and the perception of the health and safety culture within the Service based on anecdotal evidence alone.

To overcome this difficulty it is necessary to establish a benchmark of the positivity of the culture and work to improve upon it moving forwards.

Factors that will improve the health and safety culture include engagement with staff; an increase in active monitoring; a learning environment, which works on a 'no blame' ethos and the accessibility of the health and safety department who act as 'enablers' and empowers individuals.

Case study: Behavioural Safety Culture survey

To determine the attitude to and the perception of the health and safety culture and to seek the views of employees on this matter, the H&S department purchased and conducted the HSE's Behavioural Safety Culture survey.

127 responses were received which equated to 27% of the workforce. Initial feedback to employees highlighted the most favourable and unfavourable responses.

■ Effectively manage risk

The Authority recognises that sensible and proportionate risk management is integral to delivering its Public Safety Plan to the communities it serves and protecting its most valuable asset – its people.

Positive outcomes of sensible and proportional risk management can include reduced sickness absence, a reduction in costs and an enhanced reputation- all key components in a successful business model.

The H&S department have an important role to play; sharing examples of good practice, providing relevant advice and information and setting the standards required to ensure efficient, effective and excellent health and safety performance, communicated to all, will build trust and ensure there is a common understanding of and commitment to proportionate health and safety.

Case study: CCTV on fire appliances

Vehicle accidents for the fire service nationally is an issue with BFRS being no exception. Employees and representative bodies were canvassed via a short survey, for their suggestions as to how we could work together to reduce the number of slow speed manoeuvring accidents. This action ensured that

employees were engaged with the process and would buy into the suggestions they made.

The outcome of the survey highlighted that the installation of CCTV was the preferred option. As a result of this funding was approved for 360 degree CCTV cameras to be fitted on all fire appliances as retro fit and on new appliances as part of the build.

Since the completion of the installation programme in 2016 we have seen a considerable reduction in the number of low speed manoeuvring accidents for a variety of reasons: drivers are aware that CCTV is present and recording their actions which helps to focus their minds. Third parties who may be inclined to initiate spurious claims against the authority for damage to their vehicle, allegedly caused by fire appliances, are discouraged by the presence of CCTV. Accident investigators always view CCTV footage as part of their investigation, which assists them in identifying the true immediate and underlying causes allowing them to make more informed and effective recommendations to prevent a recurrence.

An excellent example of effective risk management.

▪ Engaging together

Essential to excellent health and safety performance is the engagement and effective communications with employees, representative bodies, stakeholders and partner agencies.

Successful engagement builds effective working relationships and promotes 'buy in' from employees when negotiating on new procedures, services, vehicles and equipment.

Forums in place facilitating employee and representative bodies engagement are the Joint Consultation Forum; the Health, Safety and Well-being Committee and the senior management health and safety engagement sessions, a programme of which run on an annual basis.

In addition, a suite of health and safety communication documents ranging from safety critical notices to the 'Keeping Safe' brief are issued as required. A review of these documents is carried out via the health and safety engagement sessions.

Case study: Management information system

The Service utilises a management information system to disseminate statistics on a broad range of key performance indicators. These statistics are displayed on each Authority site.

Working with the Data Intelligence Team, a health and safety section was created providing details of health and safety performance in terms of safety event type and cause and overdue safety event investigations per Authority site. This information provides reminders to employees that actions need to be completed and directs the H&S department to follow up on outstanding actions. It also identifies areas for development allowing the H&S department to set SMART objectives to achieve improvement.

Feedback received from the health and safety engagement sessions identified that the Safety Event Awareness sheets as a communications media was not fit for purpose. The H&S department created a new form of communication – the 'Keeping Safe' brief that provides employees with outcomes from safety events; the number of outstanding investigations and handy hints on using the electronic safety event reporting and investigation system. This has been well received.

Making it happen

Whilst BFRS has an excellent health and safety record there is no room for complacency. We will strive for continuous improvement in both culture and performance.

The fundamentals for effective health and safety remain:

- Strong, visible leadership.
- Visible commitment to health and safety across all levels.
- Collaboration and partnership working, engaging with employees and other stakeholders.
- Managers across all levels and employees having the competence to identify and control the risks created by their activities.

The strategy provides direction to all employees and relevant stakeholders on how we will improve health and safety, including the culture, throughout the Authority to enable all to make a greater collective contribution.

The H&S department will support those efforts by capturing and promoting both learning and success and in developing measures to track progress towards the delivery of the five strategic themes.

How we are going to do it

These measures are not limited to, but will include the following:

Working together

- Encourage and recognise improvements, foster positive working relationships to deliver improved outcomes and minimise bureaucracy and contention.
- Work with employees to make the workplace healthier and safer by advising on and promoting high standards of risk control.
- Continue to collaborate and align with our Thames Valley partners and other agencies wherever the opportunity arises.

Drive continuous improvement in health, safety and well-being

- Support better outcomes, innovation and the safe and effective use of new technologies.
- Set realistic and achievable targets for a reduction in safety events and an increase in active monitoring and for safety event investigations to be completed within the allocated timeframe.
- A meaningful health and safety objective to form part of the appraisal process for all employees.

Build an even better health and safety culture

- Progress the work of the Working Group on the completion of the action plan from the Behavioural Safety Culture survey and on promoting the benefits of a positive culture.
- Conduct a further Behavioural Safety Culture survey in 2020 to measure improvement on the original benchmark.
- Continue with the programme of senior management health and safety engagement sessions and publish outcomes of 'you said, we listened, we did'.

Effectively manage risk

- Develop services and processes that contribute to improved management and control of risks.
- Continue to drive improvement through the promotion of active monitoring, building a 'learning' culture and simplifying processes where appropriate.

- Continue to audit, monitor and review the safety management system, supporting policies and procedures and the implementation of the same.
- Apply for another national health and safety award in 2021.

Engaging together

- Review and strive to improve methods of communication appropriate to its intended audience, in order to engage the workforce and achieve 'buy in' to inform and improve health and safety performance.
- Introduce a health, safety and well-being recognition scheme for all Authority stations/sites to participate in. The highest achieving station/site to be nominated for a Service Award for Excellence.
- Continue to develop effective working relationships and negotiations with the Representative Bodies and the Representative of the Employees.

4.   Glossary of terms *(delete if not required)*

Term	Definition
RoSPA	Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents
CCTV	Closed Circuit Television

5.   Consultation/publication/communication

Consultation has taken place with Fire Authority Members, the Senior Management team and the Representative bodies.

The strategy with be published on the internal and external website following approval by the Fire Authority.√

6.   Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

A) The impact table

Are there any possible impacts which need further investigation? To complete the table tick ✔ the likely impact.

Impact Table

Impact on people (protected groups and "others")	External Individuals			Authority Employees		
	Positive	**Negative**	**None**	**Positive**	**Negative**	**None**
People						
Gender			√			√
Race			√			√
Age			√			√
Religion/Belief			√			√
Sexual Orientation			√			√
Gender Reassignment			√			√
Pregnancy / Maternity			√			√
Marriage/Civil Partnership			√			√
Disability			√			√
Place						
Strengthen Community Cohesion	√			√		
Tackling Poverty / Promoting Social Inclusion	√			√		
Privacy			√			√
Health	√			√		
Environment	√			√		

If you have a tick in any negative box you need to consider why and include this in your risk assessment.

B) Privacy impact assessment screening questions
These questions are intended to help Authority staff involved with new projects and / or processes (or significantly changed processes) decide whether an

Impact Assessment is necessary. Answering 'yes' to any of these questions is an indication that an Impact Assessment would be a beneficial exercise.

Privacy Screening Questions		
Question	**Yes/ No?**	**Comment**
Will the project involve the collection of new information about individuals?	No	
Will the project compel individuals to provide information about themselves that they have not had to previously?	No	
Will information about individuals be disclosed to organisations or people who have not previously had routine access to the information?	No	
Are you using information about individuals for a purpose it is not currently used for, or in a way it is not currently used?	No	
Does the project involve you using new technology which might be perceived as being privacy intrusive? For example, the use of biometrics or facial recognition.	No	
Will the project result in you making decisions or taking action against individuals in ways which can have a significant impact on them?	No	
Is the information about individuals of a kind particularly likely to raise privacy concerns or expectations? For example, health records, criminal records or other information that people would consider to be particularly private.	No	
Will the project require you to contact individuals in ways which they may find intrusive?	No	

People Screening Questions

Question:	Yes/No:	Comment
Will the project you are undertaking affect any of the following factors explicitly? - Race - Disability - Gender - Religion/Belief - Sexuality - Age - Gender Reassignment - Pregnancy / Maternity - Marriage / Civil Partnerships	No	
Could the progression of your project have a negative effect on a particular person/group of persons within the organisation or externally?	No	
Does the progression of your project affect the status of any person/s within the organisation or externally?	No	
Will any person/s within the organisation or externally be negatively impacted, with respect to their personal status, by the completion of your project?	No	
Is there any new technology within your project that will negatively impact the wellbeing of a person/s within the organisation or externally.	No	
Is there any aspect of a person/s status that will negatively impact your project?	No	
Is there any risk that your project could fail to comply with all relative people laws, e.g. the Equalities Act 2010?	No	
If your project requires you to employ new members of staff, is there likely to be any people based prejudice within the recruitment process?	No	

Did you answer yes to any of the screening questions?

- If so, it is recommended that you carry out a full Impact Assessment.

- If you answered YES to questions in both sections, it is recommended that you carry out a full IIA – see Service Document Template for more information.