



# Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

<b>MEETING</b>	Fire Authority
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	13 February 2019
<b>OFFICER</b>	Area Commander Dave Norris, Head of Service Delivery
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	Councillor Jean Teesdale
<b>SUBJECT OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>Milton Keynes Safety Centre Review of Funding Agreement</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<p>The purpose of this report is to gain approval from the Authority for a staged three year Funding Agreement with the Milton Keynes Safety Centre comprising a £25,000 per annum grant, and additional commitment of up to £2,000 per annum contribution towards travel costs.</p> <p>The Authority and the Milton Keynes Safety Centre (Hazard Alley) Limited have had a Funding Agreement in place since 2011. At the Fire Authority meeting held on 10 February 2016, it was agreed to continue to support this community safety facility for a further three years, a commitment which is due to expire on 31 March 2019.</p> <p>The Funding Agreement provided a grant from the Authority to the Safety Centre of £25,000 per annum for three years from 1 April 2016, in addition to supporting related travel costs of up to £2,000 per annum. In return the Safety Centre pledged to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide safety education for children between the ages of 7-11;</li> <li>2. Provide safety education for community and vulnerable groups;</li> <li>3. Report quarterly as to the Safety Centre's performance.</li> </ol> <p>The key difference between the current funding agreement and this proposal is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the removal of requirement for the Safety Centre to provide office space for Authority staff (with associated provision of services);</li> <li>b) the increase to 4,000 of the minimum number of children from Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes schools each year;</li> <li>c) the updated Project actions in Schedule 1 (appendix 1);</li> </ol>

	<p>d) the payment intervals and terms have been adjusted to 6 monthly intervals;</p> <p>e) moving from being terminable by the Authority, in the event of financial constraints or for any other reason, on 3 months' notice to being terminable by the Authority on the first or second anniversary on 1 month's notice.</p> <p>The Safety Centre has indicated that it is in agreement with the proposed terms.</p>
<b>ACTION</b>	Decision
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	It is recommended that the Fire Authority approves the new funding agreement with the Safety Centre on the terms set out in this report.
<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>	<p>The Authority's current financial support equates to 10% of the Safety Centre's annual income but only 8% of its annual running costs.</p> <p>The Safety Centre is a registered charity relying on annual funding commitment such as that provided by the Authority. It should be noted that The Parks Trust currently commit £8,000 per annum to the Safety Centre however this is subject to annual agreement.</p> <p>To supplement regular funding streams, the Safety Centre applies for funding grants, securing £49,628 in the fiscal year 2017-18 (appendix 2). Such grants enable the Safety Centre to keep entrance costs to an affordable level for schools, and dependent on grant terms, offer subsidised places to schools in some areas within Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.</p> <p>£110,000 of the Centre's annual income for the fiscal year 2017-18 was through admission fees. £84,500 of this was through unrestricted admission fees. The remaining £25,500 was made up of restricted admission fees.</p> <p>The Safety Centre secures the remainder of its annual turnover from commercial enterprise, sponsorship and donations via community initiatives.</p> <p>Reducing the amount of funding the Authority commits to the Safety Centre would cause it to fundamentally change the way it operates, and impact on its long-term viability.</p>
<b>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</b>	The current agreement committed the Authority to a grant of £25,000 per annum for 3 years for the period 2016-2019, a total expenditure of £75,000. The proposed renewed arrangement would replicate this, committing the Authority to £25,000 per annum for the next 3 financial years, a total funding

	<p>expenditure of £75,000.</p> <p>The Authority will review annually the Safety Centre’s progress against Schedule 1 of the Funding Agreement, and if it considers the Safety Centre has not made satisfactory progress, payments may be withheld or suspended in line with Section 12.1 of the Funding Agreement.</p> <p>Additionally, the current agreement commits the Authority to provide the Safety Centre with a grant for traveling expenses incurred by Safety Centre staff on outreach or liaison activities using their own vehicles or public transport. Staff claim travelling expenses (at the casual user mileage rate of 45p/mile for use of their own vehicles based on HMRC rates) and a claim is submitted to the Authority by the Safety Centre at the close of each financial year. This grant is capped at a maximum of £2,000 per annum. The proposed agreement retains this facility and will commit the Authority to a maximum travel expenditure of £6,000 during the course of the Funding Agreement.</p>
<p><b>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</b></p>	<p>The funding arrangement supports the Authority’s obligation to promote fire safety and is therefore permitted by Section 5A of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.</p> <p>EU ‘State aid’ rules prohibit subsidies by local authorities when the subsidy might confer an unfair advantage to one organisation. There is no specific exemption for third sector organisations however the proposal remains within the current de-minimis level of EUR 200,000 over three fiscal years.</p>
<p><b>CONSISTENCY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DUTY TO COLLABORATE</b></p>	<p>A partnership arrangement has been in existence for many years, with the Authority being one of the driving forces for the Safety Centre’s creation in 1994.</p> <p>The Community Safety and Safeguarding Manager represents the Authority at the Safety Centre’s quarterly stakeholder meetings which provide a forum for the Centre to obtain up to date information regarding current and forthcoming priorities from relevant local partners including Thames Valley Police; The Parks Trust, Safer MK, MK Community Action and Milton Keynes Council (Road Safety Dept.).</p> <p>The Safety Centre actively collaborates with other Safety Centres through the Safety Centre Alliance, a national association formed in 2005 to facilitate support, networking and development between permanent interactive safety centres in the UK.</p>
<p><b>HEALTH AND SAFETY</b></p>	<p>No direct impact.</p>

<p><b>EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY</b></p>	<p>A condition of the Funding Agreement is that the Safety Centre complies with the Authority’s anti-discrimination requirements.</p>
<p><b>USE OF RESOURCES</b></p>	<p>These proposals are in line with the Authority’s Corporate Vision and associated strategic objectives to make Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes the safest place to live, work and travel.</p> <p>The Authority will continue to provide an officer to sit on the board of trustees. This position is presently held by the Group Commander Service Delivery (North).</p> <p>The Safety Centre’s performance against the Funding Agreement will be monitored by the Community Safety &amp; Safeguarding Manager on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>Throughout the three year period of the last Funding Agreement, the Safety Centre averaged 15,500 visitors per annum, engaging with a further 2,500 children through education liaison sessions delivered at school sites.</p> <p>In the fiscal year 2017-18, 39% (5,582) of the 14,525 children making school visits to the Safety Centre were from Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes, with 24% (3,444) being from Buckinghamshire, and 15% (2,138) from the Milton Keynes area, notwithstanding the number of children in receipt of liaison sessions at their school sites (appendix 3). These visitor numbers exceed the target set in Schedule 1 of the existing Memorandum Of Understanding.</p> <p>If the Authority were to employ a member of Community Safety staff to educate the equivalent number of children each year at school sites, it would cost £25414.46 for the pro rata staff member (inclusive of NI &amp; pension costs), without factoring in their transport provision, travel expenses, IT equipment or the resources required.</p> <p>In line with the pledges made in the last three year Funding Agreement, development of the use of the Safety Centre’s facilities out of school hours and term time has improved its use as a facility for community groups. This has included evening learning sessions for uniformed youth groups and specialist sessions for SEND groups the county of origin of which is detailed in Appendix 4. Additionally the Safety Centre has utilised school holiday periods to run three open days attended by 4,200 people, birthday parties and family tours.</p> <p>Agreement to continue the current level of funding to the Safety Centre enables the children within Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes to benefit from a</p>

	more kinaesthetic, experiential learning experience.
<b>PROVENANCE SECTION &amp; BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>	Minutes of the Fire Authority meeting 10 February 2016 <a href="https://bucksfire.gov.uk/index.php/download_file/view/1806/991/">https://bucksfire.gov.uk/index.php/download_file/view/1806/991/</a>
<b>APPENDICES</b>	Appendix 1 – Schedule 1 of the Agreement Appendix 2 – Breakdown of funding grants Appendix 3 – School visitors Appendix 4 – All visitors
<b>TIME REQUIRED</b>	10 minutes.
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