

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting of the Buckinghamshire County Council convened and held on Thursday 21 September 2017 in The Oculus, AVDC, Gatehouse Way, Aylesbury, commencing at 9.30 am and concluding at 11.50 am.

PRESENT

Mrs P Birchley in the Chair;

Mr R Bagge, Mr S Bowles, Mr N Brown, Mr T Butcher, Mr D Carroll, Mr W Chapple OBE, Mr J Chilver, Mr C Clare, Mrs L Clarke OBE, Mr A Collingwood, Mrs I Darby, Mr D Dhillon, Mr C Ditta, Mr C Etholen, Mr M Farrow, Mrs B Gibbs, Ms N Glover, Mr C Harriss, Lin Hazell, Mr A Hussain, Mr M Hussain, Mr N Hussain, Mr P Irwin, Mr R Khan, Ms A Macpherson, Mrs W Mallen, Mr D Martin, Mr P Martin, Mr R Reed, Mr B Roberts, Mr D Shakespeare OBE, Mr M Shaw, Mrs L Sullivan, Mrs J Teesdale, Mr M Tett, Julia Wassell, Mr D Watson, Ms A Wight, Mr G Williams and Ms K Wood

DIGNITARIES AND OTHERS PRESENT

Sir H Aubrey-Fletcher, Mr P Kara, Mr M Colston, Mr P Lawrence, Mrs G Miscampbell OBE DL, Mr D Polhill and Mr R Pushman

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr M Appleyard, Mr W Bendyshe-Brown, Ms J Blake, Mr D Hayday, Mr S Lambert, Ms J Ward, Mr W Whyte, Mr B Allen and Mr K Ross MBE DL

1 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Council meeting held on 13th July 2017 were agreed as a correct record.

2 PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

3 COMMUNICATIONS

Apologies were received from Mr M Appleyard, Mr B Bendyshe-Brown, Mrs J Blake, Mr D Hayday, Mr S Lambert, Mr W Whyte, Mrs J Ward, Mr B Allen and Mr K Ross MBE DL.

A minute's silence was held as a mark of respect for the recent passing of County Councillor Alan Walters MBE.

The Chairman reported on events attended since the last Council (full list attached).

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5 REPORT OF THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY

Mr R Reed, as Chairman of the Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority (BMKFA), introduced the item and welcomed Mr J Thelwell, Chief Fire Officer.

Mr Reed started by thanking the other County Councillors who were Members of the Fire Authority. He went on to say that the local MPs had been lobbied to make representations to Government in a bid to relax the council tax referendum limits so that the Fire Service could increase its precept to increase the pay of the staff. Members were told that local MPs had offered their support as there was recognition of the great efforts of the Fire Service on behalf of local residents.

Mr Thelwell made a presentation to Council (slides attached) and the following responses were made:

- In response to a question about apprentices, Mr Thelwell explained that BMKFRS was leading the way nationally on the role of apprentices and currently had 22 operational firefighter apprentices.
- In response to questions about Grenfell Tower, Mr Thelwell stressed the importance of providing counselling services for staff and the importance of good mental health amongst staff. Members heard that discussions were currently taking place with Thames Valley Police about increasing counselling services through collaboration. Mr Thelwell said that a number of premises had been identified across the County and the materials had been tested and it was acknowledged that there was a lot of learning from Grenfell Tower, particularly in terms of inspections. Mr Thelwell confirmed that the Fire Service worked closely with all key stakeholders, including the District Council as the housing provider.

Mr Reed and Mr Thelwell were thanked for their presentation.

6 SELECT COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Chairmen of the Select Committees presented their update to Council.

Mr D Watson thanked the Members of the Finance, Performance and Resources Select Committee for their work on the Growth Inquiry. He went on to report that a special meeting had taken place recently to review a call-in and he thanked all the Members, particularly the Cabinet Member and officers.

Mr D Dhillon, Chairman of the Children's and Social Care Select Committee, reported that an item at the recent Select Committee focussed on the voice of the child. He went on to thank the Committee Members, Co-opted Members and Officers, who support the Committee. In response to a question about hearing the voice of diverse groups of children, the Chairman reassured the Member and explained that the item was a 6 month review and there would be a further update at 12 months.

The Chairman of the Health & Adult Social Care Select Committee, Mr B Roberts reported that the Committee was working well together and Members continued to attend health meetings across the County. He thanked Committee Members for their enthusiasm and support.

Mr D Carroll, Chairman of the Transport, Environment and Communities Select Committee reported that the Growth Inquiry would be presented at the next Cabinet meeting and that the Committee's next Inquiry would be looking at the issue of Modern Slavery. He thanked the Committee Members for their support.

7 APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY ALDERMEN

Mrs S Ashmead, Monitoring Officer, presented the report and explained that nominations for Honorary Aldermen were restricted to past Councillors who had given eminent service to the Council in line with the criteria set out in the report.

RESOLVED

Council AGREED the following persons be appointed as additional Honorary Aldermen - Mrs Margaret Aston, Mrs Avril Davies and Mrs Valerie Letheren.

8 PROPORTIONALITY REPORT

Mrs S Ashmead, Monitoring Officer, presented the report.

RESOLVED

Council AGREED the political balance in the distribution of seats across Committees be as set out in Tables 1 and 2, to accord with the rules on proportionality.

9 CABINET MEMBERS' REPORTS

9a. Leader of the Council

In response to a question from a Member, the Leader of the Council Mr M Tett confirmed that the Sub-national Transport Body (STB) was not a regional group. Mr Tett explained that the STB was a bottom-up defined coalition which stretched across regional boundaries.

In response to a question about the expectation of the Brexit task and finish group, Mr Tett explained that the group was led by a senior officer who was working closely with the LGA to discuss which powers should be returned to local government.

9b. Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Transportation

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Transportation Mr M Shaw reported that the Secretary of State had reconfirmed his commitment to deliver the East/West Rail project. Mr Shaw showed his support for Project Edward Day (European Day Without A Road Death) and encouraged other Members to support this initiative.

Mr Shaw read out a message from Mr B Bendyshe-Brown who was recovering in

Hospital.

In response to Members' questions, Mr Shaw made the following points:

- The A4 cycle way strategic link had been discussed at two public consultation meetings and a written response to the consultation had been prepared. Mr Shaw confirmed that he had listened to the local views and substantial changes had been made to the scheme.
- The Governance Board was chaired by the Deputy Cabinet Member and going forward any changes to the charging policy would be discussed with the local Member.
- Mr Shaw agreed to follow-up the contract of work between Ringway Jacobs and Wycombe District Council.
- The consultation around the proposed parking scheme in Marlow would be commencing soon.
- There was a small budget of £1.5m for repairing footways.
- Mr Shaw stressed that taxi ranks were a District Council responsibility but the Council had worked closely with the taxi groups and other key partners to make Aylesbury a thriving town.
- The Council had devolved grass cutting to certain parishes and the Council continued to work closely with Parish Councils to enhance facilities for their local areas.
- The congestion on the London Road had been a challenge for some time but Mr Shaw welcomed the local Member involvement in shaping the plans.

(Mr C Etholen left the meeting)

9c. Cabinet Member for Children's Services

The Deputy Cabinet Member, Mrs J Teesdale highlighted the success of the "Looked After Children" event at Green Park.

In response to Members' questions, the Deputy Cabinet Member for Children's Services made the following points:

- The Early Help consultation was due to finish on 16th October and the results would help shape the delivery of services.
- Mrs Teesdale asked the senior officer to respond after the meeting to concerns raised about the progress made from Ofsted's last monitoring visit.
- The Council was expecting an Ofsted inspection shortly.
- In terms of Children's Centres, the aim was to put resources in the right place where those most in need would have access to them.
- Mrs Teesdale would look into why Walton Court had not been listed as a Children's Centre.

9d. Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing

In response to Members' questions, the Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing, Ms L Hazell made the following points:

- There were some care homes that were not sustainable but the Council did

- believe that it was paying the correct rates.
- Regular meetings took place between the Council and Seeley's House, including the users of the facility. The recent CQC report rated Seeley's House as "required improvement". Ms Hazell confirmed that the Council would continue to run the facility until an alternative could be found. Day services were also available across the County. Any further changes in the provision of respite care would be shared with Members.
 - Ms Hazell confirmed that she had not yet engaged with the Dementia Action Alliance but would be doing so.

9e. Cabinet Member for Education & Skills

Mr A Hussain, Deputy Cabinet Member for Education & Skills, made the following points in response to questions from Members.

- The Council would work hard to continue funding the Erasmus programme post-Brexit.
- Mr Hussain said he would come back to the Member about the response from the Council on Aylesbury Vale Academy's recent Ofsted report.
- The Council recognised the increased pressures and demands placed on Headteachers and support and advice was provided by the Council when required.

A Member commended the work of the Aylesbury Study Centre.

9f. Cabinet Member for Community Engagement & Public Health

Mr N Brown, Cabinet Member for Community Engagement & Public Health reported on the County Show and thanked all those involved in making the event such a success. He paid particular thanks to his Deputy Cabinet Member, Mrs A Wight.

A Member congratulated the County Museum Trust on their recent funding success.

In response to a question about the National Trading Standards Scams team, Mr Brown reported that the joint trading standards team between the Council and Surrey County Council had been very beneficial and receiving national involvement would only help to strengthen this area of work.

9g. Cabinet Member for Resources

The Cabinet Member for Resources, Mr J Chilver responded to an earlier question and explained that the value of risk was a complex formula that measured volatility of investments. Members were told that the Council's risk was minimal as most investments were cash deposits with only a small amount being invested in property funds and that risk management was covered in the Treasury Management Strategy.

Mr Chilver made the following points in response to Members' questions:

- The importance of contract management was acknowledged and an extensive training programme would be rolled out shortly, including best practice across the Council.

9h. Cabinet Member for Planning & Environment

Mr B Chapple OBE, Cabinet Member for Planning & Environment reported on the Government's recent housing figures.

In response to questions from Members', Mr Chapple made the following points:

- He confirmed that he would be happy to visit Marlow to see the flood system.
- There was a national agreement to increase housing and Buckinghamshire had to take a share of the increased housing but he would continue to lobby MPs.
- The Energy from Waste plant had been deemed a success but local concerns were acknowledged. Mr Chapple would be attending Parish meetings to listen to the local concerns.
- Infrastructure would be looked at in light of the Infrastructure Strategy which included schools and roads.
- The flooding prevention scheme at the Willows appeared to be working well. He acknowledged the work of County Councillor Steven Lambert.
- An initial meeting had taken place to discuss Aylesbury Garden Town and the intention would be to consult with many key stakeholders as the plans develop, including the Town Council.

The Leader of the Council added that housing was a District Council responsibility and he urged Members to make representations to their District Council Leaders. Mr Tett told Council that there was a £2.3bn national infrastructure fund and the County had put bids together for part of this funding.

The Chairman commented on the flowers in Aylesbury and wished to record her thanks to the Town Council.

10 NOTICES OF MOTION

The following Motion was proposed by Mr M Tett and seconded by Mr N Brown.

“This Council resolves to recognise the unique cultural contribution made by David Bowie to Aylesbury and agree to support the concept of a statue to David Bowie in the town.”

During debate, Members expressed their support for the Motion, reiterating the importance of recognising the musical heritage of Aylesbury.

RESOLVED

The Motion was AGREED unanimously.

(Mr M Appleyard joined the meeting)

11 CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS TAKEN - INFORMATION ONLY

The information was noted.

12 EVENTS AND INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS - INFORMATION ONLY

The information was noted.

CHAIRMAN

Chairman's Events July – Sept 2017

Date	Attendee/Host	Event
09 July 2017	Past Chairman Richard Pushman	Commemoration Service for 2nd Lt Frederick Youens VC
09 July 2017	Vice-Chairman	Bucks Scouts AGM
14 July 2017	Chairman	Simply Walk 15th Anniversary - Volunteers' Celebration
15 July 2017	Chairman	120th Anniversary Reception to commemorate the King of Siam's visit to Taplow Court
16 July 2017	Chairman	Horses, Hounds and Heroes
16 July 2017	Chairman	Japanese State Ministers Visit - Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology; and Cabinet Office
24 July 2017	Chairman	Dinner
30 July 2017	Chairman	Chesham Remembers 1914-1918
03 August 2017	Chairman	Visit to Burnham Opportunities Day Centre
06 August 2017	Chairman	Queen's Award for Enterprise - Symply Pet Foods
31 August 2017	Chairman	Bucks County Show
05 September 2017	Chairman	Ground Breaking Ceremony - Vinson Centre for Liberal Economics
06 September 2017	Chairman	RAF Halton Annual Reception
07 September 2017	Chairman	Graduation Ceremony - Bucks New University
08 September 2017	Vice Chairman	Fostering Awards Dinner
09 September 2017	Chairman	Wycombe MIND Health and Wellbeing Day/Wycombe Festival of Wellbeing
11 September 2017	Chairman	Opening Ceremony - Pitt and Rubens Boarding Houses
15 September 2017	Chairman	University of Buckingham Dinner in honour of a visit by Dr. Hon Dak Chung
16 September 2017	Chairman	Best Kept Village Competition Winners Tour
17 September 2017	Past Chairman Val Letheren	Wycombe Battle of Britain Service
17 September 2017	Vice Chairman	Town Mayor's Civic Service
20 September 2017	Chairman	AVDC - Deathtrap Performance



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Presentation to Buckinghamshire County Council



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Financial position and RSG

- Reduction in RSG –
- Between 2013-14 and 2017-18 RSG has decreased by 52%
- Between 2013/14 and 2019/20 reduced by 66%
- Reduced from £6.8 Million to £2.3 Million out of a £28 Million budget



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Council Tax

- Lowest council tax level for any Combined Fire Authority in the country, currently £60.88 per year
- Council tax per year in 2010 - £59.13
- There has been an increase in council tax of 25 pence per year since 2010.
- Buckinghamshire is 18% lower than the national average for CFA's
- Average council tax for CFA is £74.44 per year.



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Our Approach to Prevention

- Targeted community visits
- Youth engagement structure
- Wider community support
- Use of BFRS Premises
- All leading to a different public perception of the fire service, helping BFRS to be more diverse and inclusive



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How have we changed?

- Reduction in staff, we have reduced our wholetime establishment from 348 in 2010 to 252 (28%)
- Retained establishment 207 to 116
- Introduction of a bank system and different way of working
- Different employment propositions to attract and retain a flexible, diverse workforce
- Introduction of new skills including medical response



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Results

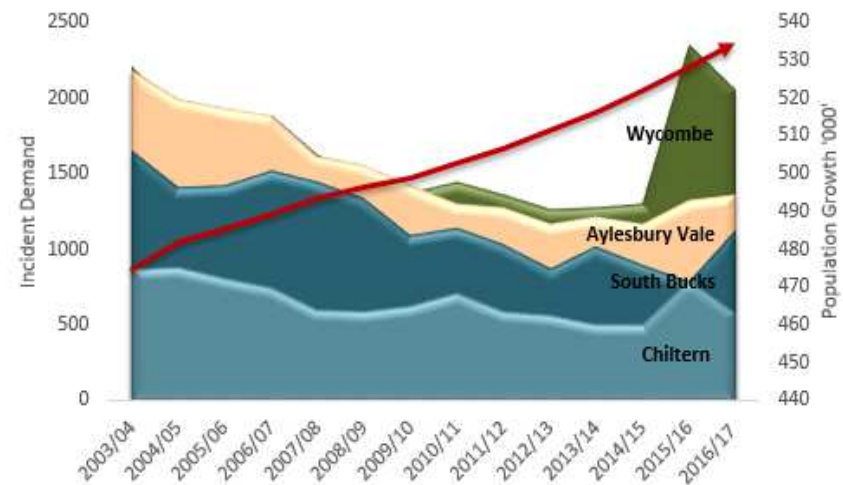


Change in demand within Buckinghamshire

Number of incidents per 10,000 population

	2003/04	2016/17	% Difference 2003/04 to 2016/17	Change in demand year on year between 2015/16 and 2016/17	
Buckinghamshire	163	74	↓ 54%	-4%	Decline
Milton Keynes	201	92	↓ 54%	9%	Increase
Aylesbury	35	15	↓ 56%	7%	Increase
High Wycombe	36	29	↓ 20%	-14%	Decline
Buckingham	5	6	↑ -28%	-1%	Decline
Beaconsfield	18	11	↓ 40%	32%	Increase
Gerrards Cross	17	10	↓ 39%	50%	Increase
Amersham	8	5	↓ 39%	-20%	Decline
Marlow	5	4	↓ 14%	-17%	Decline
Brill	1	1	↓ 50%	-7%	Decline
Chesham	8	4	↓ 53%	-45%	Decline
Great Missenden	3	3	↓ 16%	-6%	Decline
Haddenham	2	1	↓ 37%	-21%	Decline
Princes Risborough	3	3	↓ 15%	-12%	Decline
Stokenchurch	2	2	↑ -14%	-3%	Decline
Waddesdon	2	1	↓ 26%	-16%	Decline
Winslow	2	2	↓ 22%	7%	Increase

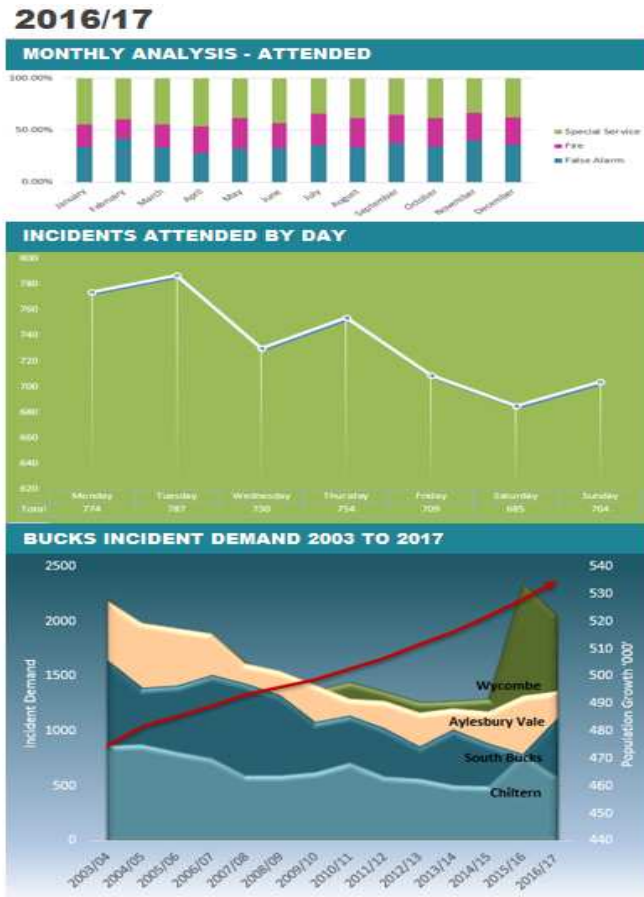
Buckinghamshire Snapshot
 April 2003 to March 2017





Buckinghamshire highlights

5138 Incidents attended
1373 Incidents attended in Aylesbury Vale
582 Incidents attended in Chiltern
1126 Incidents attended in South Bucks
2057 Incidents attended in Wycombe
2027 Special Service Incidents Attended
1798 False Alarms Attended
1318 Fires Attended
23/02/2017 Most Incidents Attended In One Day in Bucks
30 Most Incidents Attended In One Day
98% Customer Satisfaction - Very Satisfied



389 People Rescued

2,570 Home Safety Checks

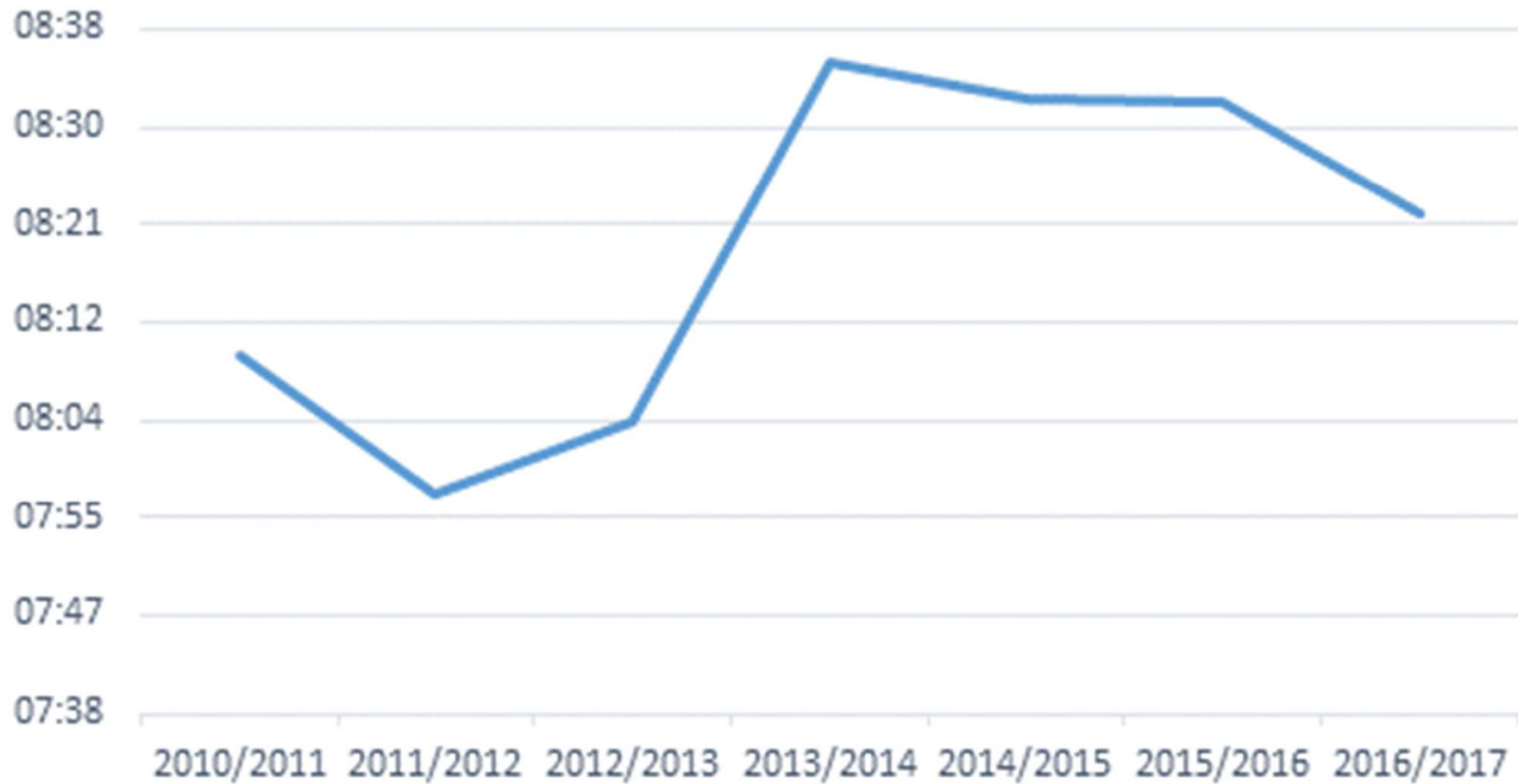
1,056 Medical Emergencies co-responder

Improving Attendance Times



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BFRS Average Attendance Time (exc co-res)





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Replenishing the workforce

- Blended approach, with transferees in.
- Balance skills, improve age profile and diversity
- Continue with our apprenticeship programme, by 2020 nearly 20% of our operational workforce will have come from apprenticeships, largely from your local communities.



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Response to Grenfell

- Joint inspections of high-rise premises by operational crews and inspecting officers
- Re-assurance messages to the public
- Supported other agencies and partners in reviewing fire safety arrangements
- Working with national groups to influence the outcomes of the reviews and changes to regulation and statute
- Using information gained to improve our service delivery



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What have we not done?

- Closed one fire station.
- Removed one fire engine.
- Made one Firefighter redundant.



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Investment - Vehicles

- £4.3m in 17 new pumps/water tenders/driver training vehicles up to 2021
- Recently delivered:
 - 3 no. 4x4's
 - 1 no. 7 Tonne
 - 4 no. Volvo pumps
- 4 more Volvo pumps due next month



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Investment - Property

- £500k spend every year on infrastructure improvements
- New £12m Blue Light Hub to be developed in Milton Keynes – opening due summer 2019
- Major aerials contracts currently agreed or under discussion – worth up to £180k p.a.
- Collaborative opportunities in hand at Princes Risborough, Winslow and Waddesdon



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Issues for the future

- Retention issues regarding on-call staff
- Further burdens following the incident at Grenfell Tower
- Increased housing leading to increased community safety activity
- Financial challenges in light of potential national pay award



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Financial performance

- Lowest council tax for any combined fire authority at £60.88 per year.
- Average council tax for parish councils is £61.03.
- Capping council tax by percentage terms disadvantages the most efficient.
- Currently lobbying government to relax the council tax referendum limits.
- Looking to raise council tax by £10 per year.



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“We look to the future as that is where we will spend the rest of our lives”