



Promoting improvements  
in policing and fire & rescue  
services to make everyone safer

6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Globe House,  
89 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1PN  
Email: matt.parr@hmicfrs.gov.uk

**Matt Parr CB**

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary  
Her Majesty's Inspector of Fire & Rescue Services

By email:

Jason Thelwell  
Chief Fire Officer  
Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service

06 August 2021

Dear Jason,

## **BUCKINGHAMSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE INSPECTION - FOLLOW UP**

Thank you for hosting the HMICFRS inspection team during our recent inspection. I know you were provided with initial feedback on 14 July 2021.

2. During the debrief, we shared our initial findings from the inspection fieldwork. The team described how the service has effective procedures in place for dealing with major and multi - agency incidents.
3. The inspection team also outlined areas where we felt improvement was needed. Following consideration of the evidence we collected I am writing to outline a cause of concern in relation to how Buckinghamshire FRS keeps the public safe through prevention activity.
4. We found that the service does not have a revised prevention strategy that identifies and prioritises those most at risk from fire. The service is making very limited use of risk modelling information to ensure prevention activity is targeted at the most vulnerable. We were concerned that prevention activity is not a sufficiently high priority for the service, and it has limited productivity when compared to other similar Fire & Rescue Services. There is currently a lack of direction for the prevention team to complete work of highest priority and at the time of the inspection operational crews were doing very limited prevention activity. As was found in the round one inspection in 2019, there is now a draft evaluation report for prevention activity, but this has not yet resulted in changes or improvements to prevention activity.

### ***Cause of concern***

Prevention activity is not a sufficiently high priority for the service, and it is not adequately identifying those most at risk from fire.

### ***Recommendation(s):***

By 30 September 2021, the service should have plans in place for:

- An effective system to define the levels of risk in the community.
- A revision of its prevention strategy that clearly prioritises the people most at risk of fire and other emergencies, giving focus and direction to specialist teams.

- The review of systems and processes for dealing with referrals from individuals and partner agencies. This is to make sure they are managed effectively and those referrals with highest identified risk are prioritised.

5. As a result of these concerns, I should be grateful if you would provide an action plan that sets out how you intend to address the issues we identified, by 30 September 2021. I have asked the inspection team to revisit your service in the winter this year to review the progress being made against your plan in relation to the above areas. Your service liaison lead, Kathryn Richardson, will be in touch to discuss arrangements for the revisit.

6. I understand this will be a challenging time for you and the service and I would be happy for you to meet with the team if you require further clarification. I am copying this letter to the Chair of Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Authority, Cllr Lesley Clarke.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Parr', followed by a long horizontal flourish.

**Matt Parr CB**

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary  
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