



Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

Meeting and date: Executive Committee, 23 March 2022

Report title: Funding Phase 2 Leadership & Management Development Programme

Lead Member: Councillor Steven Lambert; People, Equality and Diversity and Assurance

Report sponsor: Calum Bell, Head of Protection, Assurance & Development

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Action: Noting and Decision

Recommendations: That the Committee:

1. Note the positive evaluation of Phase 1 of the Leadership & Management Development Programme
2. Approve the transfer of the £51k underspend from the 2021/22 Training Needs Analysis budget, into a future funding reserve, to be used in 2022/23 to procure phase 2 of the Leadership & Management Development Programme and fund a delegate onto the Executive Leadership Programme.

Executive summary:

During the 2021/22 Medium-Term Financial Planning (MTFP) process, a growth bid was presented to Members, requesting a £75k investment to deliver a leadership and management development programme (LMDP) which would improve the effectiveness of existing managers as well as provide development opportunities and pathways for future managers and leaders of the organisation.

The programme has initially been delivered by an external provider and the content built upon the foundations contained within the NFCC Leadership Framework, the priority areas identified via the HMICFRS inspection.

Members approved a partial bid of £50k with an invite to present a further bid for the remaining funds the next year, with an evaluation of the programme.

There have been a number of workforce development challenges presented this year, which has meant additional development centres, more frequent appointments boards and substantive processes – all requiring the time and focus of the Learning and Development Team. Therefore the scope, design, procurement and subsequent implementation of phase 1 was delayed until Autumn 2021. However, it is pleasing to report that cohort 1 and 2's programmes have completed, with a further 2 cohorts starting in February. In total 50 delegates will have attended.

To ensure the programme content is fit for purpose and that both facilitators and delegates are engaged and finding value in attending, initial feedback – in the form
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of a survey - was sought from the attendees of cohorts 1 and 2. A summary of the feedback is contained within Appendix 2 and will be used to develop the content for the remaining cohorts of phase 1, phase 2 and adapt the facilitators approach where necessary.

A more in-depth evaluation will be undertaken as part of the project, which will include re-visiting the initial audit undertaken as part of this project, reviewing of appraisal performance ratings and any change in culture survey outcomes.

The next phase (phase 2) of the programme is to roll it out to the remaining established managers, this includes operational Watch Commanders.

It has become apparent through reviewing the allocated budget for the Training Needs Analysis (TNA), that there will no longer be a need for a growth bid, and that a forecasted underspend could be used to fund phase 2 instead.

Currently the staff development cost centre which holds the budget line for the TNA is forecasting an underspend. When cross referenced with the organisation's TNA (Appendix 1) and following a comprehensive review with department managers of the training that had been approved by the Training Strategy Group, against what they will realistically be able to procure this financial year, there is an accurate forecasted underspend of £51k.

An underspend within this budget and against the TNA hadn't occurred until 2020/21 and we are seeing the same again with this year. The potential reasoning for the underspend could include;

- We continue to see an impact from covid on the amount of external training being procured/available
- Training is being delivered differently – less travelling/residential costs, more being delivered virtually
- The TNA being produced by managers are for role critical training only
- Not all the training approved by the TNA gets procured for various reasons

The final phase for the LMDP, once all existing managers have completed the programme, is for it to become acquisition training for all new managers/leaders and development for any potential future managers/leaders. This will be delivered internally via the Learning and Development team, therefore no longer requiring additional funding to procure delivery by the external provider.

In addition to the LMDP, two senior managers within the service have been successful in securing places on the Executive Leadership Programme (ELP), one in 2022 and for which the funding has been factored into Appendix 1 and one place in 2023. The identified underspend from 2021/22 TNA will also be used to fund the ELP place in 2023.

This paper is seeking approval to transfer the £51k underspend identified above, into a future funding reserve, to be used to procure phase 2 of the LMDP and fund one delegate onto the Executive Leadership Programme in 2022/23.

Financial implications: This proposal has been developed in consultation with the Director of Finance and Assets, Deputy Director of Finance and Assets, Procurement Manager and Principal Accountants (budget monitoring and member of TSG).

The Director of Finance and Assets has approved a procurement waiver in accordance with Contract Standing Order 4.3, for delivery of phase 2 of the LMDP, to allow the continued use of the current supplier, without the need to re-tender. This enables continuity between phase 1 and phase 2 of the programmes and to ensure all managers/leaders are getting the same message/input/development.

Risk management: Staff Availability is an identified corporate risk which is reviewed regularly by SMT and the Overview and Audit Committee.

The delegates for phase 2 of this programme will include operational Watch Commanders and potentially Crew Commanders. This will require advanced planning with the Resource Management Team to enable the programmes to be run when resourcing numbers allow, and for delegates to attend on their duty days, to remove any need to pay overtime. We are planning to run these programmes from September 2022, once the 18 new Firefighters return from the Fire Service College and are available as operational assets to the organisation.

The organisational performance benefits to Leadership and Management Development are to enable current and future managers and leaders to be more effective at decision making and to role model leadership behaviours and this will result in improved staff performance.

There is a significant risk of high staff turnover at middle and senior management level over the next two years, therefore being pro-active in developing these skills now will help react to this level of change.

Legal implications: To maintain continuity of the quality of training, Phase 2 of the Leadership & Management Development Programme will be awarded to Mary Foster Consulting Ltd up to a value of £50,000, in accordance with Contract Standing Order 4.3.

“ 4.3 If an Officer requires an exemption from one or more Orders where there is no emergency and the estimated value is below the European threshold, this requires the prior approval of the Chief Finance Officer if the value is up to £50,000”

Privacy and security implications: There are no concerns on privacy issues with this project. An Impact Assessment was undertaken as part of the project management process and is continually reviewed.

Duty to collaborate: We continue to work with other local councils and fire and emergency service partners on continuous improvement and reform, through sharing best practice.

Health and safety implications: Considered, none identified at this stage.

Environmental implications: Considered, none identified at this stage.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion implications: The Leadership & Management Development Programme supports and endorses delivery of BFRS' Equality and Diversity Objectives 2020-2025.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for the LMDP project.

Consultation and communication: Regular communication is undertaken across BFRS, delivered via:

- Monthly project updates to the Business Transformation Board (BTB)
- Intranet articles
- Regular engagement with staff / face to face briefings

Background papers: None identified at this time.

Appendix	Title	Protective Marking
1	TNA Overview	
2	Initial Evaluation of Phase 1	