



Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

Meeting and date: Fire Authority – 7 December 2022

Report title: 2025 – 2030 Service Planning

Lead Member: Councillor Simon Rouse: Service Delivery, Protection and Collaboration

Report sponsor: Mick Osborne, Chief Operating Officer / Deputy Chief Fire Officer

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Action: Decision

Recommendations – That:

1. the successor plan to the 2020 – 2025 Public Safety Plan, be known as the ‘2025 – 2030 Community Risk Management Plan’;
2. the provisional timescale for preparation of the 2025 – 2030 Community Risk Management and Corporate Plans be approved;
3. any changes to the sequencing and timing of the 2025 – 2030 planning process be delegated to the Executive Committee for approval.

Executive summary:

Under the [Fire and Rescue National Framework for England \(2018\)](#), each fire and rescue authority is required to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). Amongst other things, this must:

“...cover at least a three-year time span and be reviewed and revised as often as it is necessary to ensure that the authority is able to deliver the requirements set out in this Framework”.

The Authority’s current IRMP, known as the ‘Public Safety Plan’ (PSP) expires on 31 March 2025. The purpose of this paper is to outline the process and timescale for production of the next IRMP and associated Corporate Plan, which will cover the period 2025 – 2030, with a proposed ‘go live’ date of 1 April 2025.

The outline process and provisional timetable are set out at Appendix 1.

In proposing the timescale for production of the new IRMP, Service Officers have had regard to:

- The HMICFRS' findings in relation to the existing 2020 – 2025 Public Safety Plan following their most [recent inspection in 2021](#). This found, in particular, that the “...service’s integrated risk management plan (for 2020–25) doesn’t explore the broad range of community risks in enough detail. The information the plan used to identify risks is more limited than it used in its previous plans. And for those risks that it does identify, it doesn’t lay out what the possible impacts of the risks are or how it intends to use its prevention, protection and response functions to address them. Accordingly, our assessment of this specific area has dropped from ‘good’ in our previous report to ‘requires improvement’”.
- The introduction in 2021, by the Fire Standards Board (FSB), of a new Fire Standard for ‘Community Risk Management Planning’ (shown at Appendix 2) offering a good practice model for fire and rescue authorities to follow and that, amongst other things, “...can withstand the requirements of external scrutiny and inspection”.

These developments indicate preparation of the new 2025 – 2030 CRMP will be a more data and resource intensive process, requiring an earlier start to the planning cycle than has been the case for previous IRMPs, as set out at Appendix 1.

It is also proposed that the successor plan to the current 2020 – 2025 PSP be known as a ‘Community Risk Management Plan’ (CRMP), to align with the FSB Fire Standard and also in anticipation of a change to this being mandated in a future update to the National Framework as proposed in the recent [Fire Reform ‘White Paper’ consultation](#) (at pages 32-33).

Financial implications:

To be confirmed following agreement of the scope, objectives and associated resourcing requirements for the CRMP process. Regardless of this, there will be a requirement to insource specialist support to meet National Framework requirements relating to public consultation during the CRMP development process.

Risk management:

Key risks to delivering the 2025 - 2030 CRMP and associated Corporate Plan, as specified at Appendix 1, include:

- Potential loss of Service personnel with the expertise and capacity required to successfully deliver the plans to meet National Framework and FSB CRMP Fire Standard requirements;

- Competing priorities resulting in the diversion of key resources onto other projects or tasks.

Alongside existing Service succession plans, a project risk register will be established to capture, evaluate and identify mitigating actions for the above risks and any other risks identified during the project planning phase. These will be monitored via the Business Transformation Board and escalated to the Strategic Management Board if required, in line with the [Authority's Corporate Risk Management Policy and Guidance](#).

Also, any changes to the structure of fire authority planning, in particular any requirement for separate strategic and operational plans, as proposed in the Government's recent Fire Reform 'white paper' consultation, could have implications for the 2025 – 2030 CRMP planning process depending on the nature and timing of their introduction (most likely via an update to the National Framework). Officers will continue to monitor developments in relation to this and act accordingly if required.

Legal implications:

The requirement to produce an IRMP has a statutory basis as it is specified in the National Framework. Section 21 of [Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004](#) (FRSA 2004) requires that:

“(1) The Secretary of State must prepare a Fire and Rescue National Framework.

(2) The Framework—

(a) must set out priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in connection with the discharge of their functions;

(b) may contain guidance to fire and rescue authorities in connection with the discharge of any of their functions;

(c) may contain any other matter relating to fire and rescue authorities or their functions that the Secretary of State considers appropriate.”

Moreover section 21 (7) of the FRSA 2004 requires that: *“(7) Fire and rescue authorities must have regard to the Framework in carrying out their functions.”*

A key concept within the National Framework is the IRMP. For example, at paragraph *“3.6 Fire and rescue authorities are required to assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning. To do this effectively, fire and rescue authorities are expected to assess their existing capability and identify any gaps as part of the integrated risk management planning process. This gap analysis needs to be conducted by fire and rescue authorities individually and collectively to obtain an overall picture of their ability to meet the full range of risks in their areas.”*

Privacy and security implications:

None identified at this point in the process for preparing the 2025 – 2030 CRMP and Corporate Plan.

Duty to collaborate:

The National Framework requires every fire and rescue authority to produce its own IRMP / CRMP. However, officers share thinking on approaches to plan development and consultation practices with other fire and rescue services, including neighbouring services.

CRMP planning cycles across the three Thames Valley fire and rescue services are not currently aligned. Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue's [current CRMP](#) was approved by Oxfordshire County Council's Cabinet on 14 March 2022 and is of a four year duration (2022 – 2026). Royal Berkshire Fire Authority's [current IRMP](#) is also of a four year duration (2019 – 2023). A [successor CRMP](#) is due to be released for public consultation following consideration by Royal Berkshire Fire Authority at its 19 December 2022 meeting.

In addition, in constructing its IRMP / CRMP the Authority is bound to have regard to the requirements in the National Framework to conduct a gap analysis "individually and collectively to obtain an overall picture of their ability to meet the full range of risks in their areas" (per paragraph 3.6 above).

All neighbouring fire and rescue authorities would be included as part of the public consultation process associated with the production of the new CRMP.

Health and safety implications:

No direct implications arising from the production of the draft CRMP and Corporate Plan. Any proposals for change arising from the Plans will include evaluation of any health and safety implications.

Environmental implications:

None arising from the planning process itself. However, any changes to service provision proposed in the CRMP will be subject to environmental impact assessments where appropriate.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion implications:

These will be identified and evaluated as the plans are developed, in line with the FSB CRMP Fire Standard and relevant legislative requirements.

Consultation and communication:

All consultations will be undertaken in compliance with National Framework and FSB CRMP Fire Standard requirements. A consultation and communication plan will be

prepared as part of the project planning. All consultation findings will be reported to the Authority. The release of the draft 2025 – 2030 CRMP for public consultation will be subject to Fire Authority approval as specified at Appendix 1.

The outcomes of the consultation are not binding on the Authority. However, it is required to have regard to them in reaching decisions associated with the IRMP / CRMP planning process where relevant.

Background papers:

Appendix	Title	Protective Marking
1	2025 – 2030 Service Planning Timeline	None
2	FSB CRMP Fire Standard	None