



Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

Meeting and date: Overview & Audit Committee, 15 March 2023

Report title: Prevention Improvement Plan – November/December 2022

Lead Member: Councillor Simon Rouse

Report sponsor: Area Commander Simon Tuffley

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Action: Noting

Recommendations:

That the Committee note the Prevention Improvement Plan highlight report (November - December 2022) summarising the progress made against the measures required to secure long-term improvements to Prevention delivery in Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service (BFRS).

Executive summary:

The Prevention Improvement Plan was written and presented to the Overview and Audit Committee in November 2021, along with the finalised Phase One Prevention Evaluation Report which had commenced in July 2020 but was paused due to revised priorities during the Covid 19 pandemic.

The Prevention Improvement Plan contains 60 recommendations, drawn from the Prevention Evaluation, the findings of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Fire and Rescue Services and the areas required to meet the Prevention Fire Standard and associated National Operational Guidance.

Work to evidence attainment against the removal of the HMICFRS Prevention cause for concern is prioritised over other recommendations within the Prevention Improvement Plan, although the highlight report and dashboard demonstrate that work is also progressing on most other recommendations, noting that where this is not the case, work has been delayed by the delivery of externally led work from the Central Program Office Prevention Workstream.

Staff change has continued to impact upon the team in the period of this highlight report, with one new staff member recruited and one role becoming vacant again. This has understandably impacted on the team's ability to demonstrate attainment against the delivery periods originally identified.

However, subsequent to the period of the highlight report, the final vacant role has been recruited into and the team reached full headcount in January, noting that there is a six-month probationary period to competence.

As detailed in the highlight report (Appendix 1), seven recommendations have been completed within the two-month period covered, several of which related to the approval of the revised Prevention Strategy. The Prevention Strategy will however have to be revisited after the review of the Public Safety Plan.

Financial implications:

Amending communication methods and referral mechanisms in response to some of the Prevention Improvement Plan recommendations may introduce additional financial implications, however where appropriate, work completed by the NFCC on developing Online resources will be utilised.

Any requirement for growth will be submitted through the established internal governance arrangements for consideration.

Risk management:

This Prevention Improvement Plan is the most effective way of ensuring continued improvement to ensure the best possible service is provided to the communities we serve.

The provision of regular highlight reports is an assurance tool to ensure that we are ultimately working towards aligning to national best-practice and more effectively to reduce risk in our communities.

There remain reputational corporate risks to the organisation should we be judged as inadequate by HMICFRS. The Service had already taken steps to mitigate this through having extensive internal and external audits of a number of areas of the Service, notably, elements of our operational activity has been subject to external independent assurance. The prevention evaluation is another example of applying constructive internal scrutiny to drive improvement and reduce risk.

Key risks are identified in the highlight report, of which the staffing issue has already been seen to impact upon delivery.

Legal implications:

The key legislation, regulation, and duties linked to a Fire and Rescue Service's prevention function can include (but is not limited to) the following:

- The Road Traffic Act, Section 39
- Home Safety Act
- Housing Act
- Children's Act
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act and the Protection of Freedoms Act
- United Nations Human Rights Convention on the Rights of the Child

- Mental Capacity Act and Mental Health Act
- Police & Crime Act
- Modern Slavery Act
- Crime and Disorder Act
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act
- The Care Act
- Homelessness Reduction Act
- Anti-social Behaviour Crime & Policing Act

Privacy and security implications:

No privacy or security implications have been identified that are directly associated with this report or its appendices. The respective strands of the improvement plan will ensure Data Protection Impact Screening and full impact assessments are completed and reviewed where appropriate.

The report and its appendices are not protectively marked.

Duty to collaborate:

Collaboration with partners to ensure a collective and shared approach to identify and mitigating community risk is critical to ensure Prevention activity is effective. The evaluation identifies a number of areas where collaboration and partnerships can be developed for the benefit of community safety.

Health and safety implications:

There are no Health, Safety or Wellbeing implications arising from this report.

Environmental implications:

There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion implications:

Whilst there are no identified implications directly associated with this report or its appendices, elements of work contributing to the progressive of individual recommendations have a positive impact upon some groups, specifically those where age is the protected characteristic. The respective strands of the improvement plan will ensure impact screening and full impact assessments are completed and reviewed where appropriate.

Consultation and communication:

The Prevention evaluation involved extensive engagement with stakeholders to ensure an effective and thorough evaluation of all our activity.

Background papers:

23 January 2020 - Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) – Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (BFRS) Inspection Findings Report:

https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2020/03/230120_item_7_hmicfrs_cover_report_23012020_appendix-min.pdf/

10 November 2021 – Prevention Evaluation – Phase One Report

<https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2021/10/oa-item-17-17-10-21.pdf/>

12 October 2022 – Fire Authority – Prevention Strategy

[Fire Authority Meeting - 12 October 2022 - Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service \(bucksfire.gov.uk\)](#)

9 November 2022 – Overview and Audit Committee – Prevention Improvement Plan Update 2

[Overview and Audit Committee - 9 November 2022 - Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service \(bucksfire.gov.uk\)](#)

Appendix	Title	Protective Marking
1	Prevention Improvement Plan highlight report – November/December 2022	Not protectively marked