

Community Risk Management Plan 2014-15 Consultation Results



Contents

Introduction and methodology	3
Brief synopsis of the four suggested projects.....	4
Feed back from external individuals interested in the consultation	6
Mayor of Burford (by email)	6
Councillor Harris during direct feedback to the Assistant chief Officer.....	6
Feedback from Operational crews	7
Banbury Green Watch	7
Banbury On Call Group	10
Faringdon On Call Group.....	11
Rewley Road Red Watch.....	13
Rewley Road, White Watch	18
Feedback from other Fire Service personnel	20
Responses from the E Consult portal on the Oxfordshire County Council Website .	22
CRMP 1 - Implement the Training Collaboration Review carried out in 2013	22
CRMP 2 Review our aerial appliance capability and implement changes to staffing supported by that review.....	26
CRMP 3 Review of Light Response Vehicle Capability and implement changes to staffing supported by that review	30
CRMP 4 Review of Prevention, Protection and Response Resources to meet the expansion and changing risk profile of Banbury, Bicester, Carterton, Wantage and the South of the County	32
Senior Management responses	38
CRMP 1 – Implement the training collaboration review carried out in 2013	38
Management Response CRMP 1	38
CRMP 2 – Review our aerial appliance capability and implement changes to staffing supported by that review	39
Management Response CRMP 2	40
CRMP 3 – Review of light response vehicle capability and implement changes to staffing supported by that review.....	40
Management Response CRMP 3	41
CRMP 4 – Review of Prevention, Protection and Response resources to meet the expansion and changing risk profile of Banbury, Bicester, Carterton, Wantage and the South of the County.....	41
Management Response CRMP 4	43

Introduction and methodology

Consultation on the draft Community Risk Management Plan 2014 – 2015 started on 18th October 2013 and concluded on 10th January 2014. In order to try and obtain the widest spectrum of results, several different means of capturing opinions and ideas were used in this year's consultation process:

- Oxfordshire County Council E Consult – Internet based software to survey a database of interested parties.
- Letters were sent to all Oxfordshire County Councillors, District, and Town & Parish Councils.
- Letters were sent to representative bodies.
- Letters were sent to all surrounding Fire & Rescue Services.
- Focus groups were held with operational firefighters both Wholetime & On-Call.
- An invite to participate in the consultation was promulgated in Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service weekly newsletter (Routine Orders).
- All Fire & Rescue staff were emailed with an invite to participate in the consultation.
- The consultation document was published on both the Intranet & Internet.

A total of 57 responses were received and are broken down as follows:

- 25 anonymous responses via E Consult
- 1 response via E Consult from Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service
- 1 external email
- 1 face to face response
- 3 firefighter focus groups (containing 24 people)
- 2 internal emails from operational Station Watches
- 1 internal email from an operational Firefighter
- 2 internal emails from OFRS Officers

Brief synopsis of the four suggested projects

Project 1: Implement the Training Collaboration Review carried out in 2013

Responsible Manager: Area Manager – Organisational and Technical Support

Following the review of training across four neighbouring Fire and Rescue services (Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Royal Berkshire and Warwickshire) a number of options have been identified for consideration. As a consequence, a programme of projects will be put together and implemented across the services with the aim of delivering further quality and efficiency improvements for all the services involved. Full details of the recommendations will be known later in the year when the initial report has been released and decisions have been made as to which areas to take forward. Any projects that are agreed will be resourced from across the Services within existing budgets, with the majority of work expected to be completed by March 2015.

Project 2: Review our aerial appliance capability and implement changes to staffing supported by that review

Responsible Manager: Area Manager – Operations and Resilience

Oxfordshire fire & Rescue Service will undertake a review of our current and future provision of high-reach capacity (i.e. a vehicle(s) designed to give safe access for rescue and firefighting purposes) to align with the planned replacement of the current vehicle which is scheduled for replacement in 2017.

We plan to review both the types of incident and the buildings that the high-reach vehicle is currently sent to, as well as analyse when and how it is being used – in order to ensure that all attendances we make in the future are appropriate for the operational needs of those incidents and any new vehicle is designed to meet the identified risks.

This review will also look at all alternative crewing arrangements for the vehicle(s) – as well as their location in the county - to ensure that we can have the appropriate capability to work safely at height when needed, but one that is still effectively and efficiently resourced.. This aspect of the project has the potential to release resources to support other priority areas of our frontline service delivery.

This review will be completed jointly between the Organisational Planning and Performance Manager, the Fire Risk Manager for the Oxford City (current location of the high-reach vehicle) and the Station Manager for the Oxford city – Rewley Road (managing the current workforce).

Project 3: Review of Light Response Vehicle Capability and implement changes to staffing supported by that review

Responsible Manager: Area Manager – Strategic Risk and Planning

Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service will undertake a review of our current emergency fleet (standard fire engines) to consider the introduction of a Light Response Capability.

This will involve analysing the more localised risks across a number of key areas of the county (e.g. such as restricted vehicle access, road access during periods of poor weather and the benefits of providing a 'first strike' emergency response capability where current crewing levels are proving a challenge to maintain) so that a risk-assessed approach to adapting current working practices and equipment is developed. In other words, we will look to have the right vehicle with the right levels of equipment and crew - in the right place, at the right time - to meet the changing risk profile of our local communities.

The ways these fire engines are staffed will need to be considered against our 'standard' arrangements and will need to be flexible to meet the needs of both the on-call and full-time stations across the county.

The introduction of such vehicles will primarily need to be assessed in terms of how they might improve and support our ability to respond to emergencies at any time of the day or night from all of our 24 fire stations – but they also have the potential to reduce the financial burden of renewing all of our fleet with standard fire engines, where the local risks of a community may be effectively met by providing a light response capability in the area. Early trials of the approach will commence in Autumn 2013, in order to provide an evidence base on which to make further decisions.

Project 4: Review of Prevention, Protection and Response Resources to meet the expansion and changing risk profile of Banbury, Bicester, Carterton, Wantage and the South of the County

Responsible Manager: Deputy Chief Fire officer

Oxfordshire is the most rural county in the South East with over 50% of the population living in small towns, villages and hamlets of less than 10,000 people. However the county is prosperous and is set to grow rapidly over the next few years. As a consequence, Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service needs to effectively plan ahead for the proposed increase in residential and business development in a number of key areas across the county.

This means that we need to review our current emergency response, prevention and protection arrangements in areas such as Banbury, Bicester, Carterton, Wantage and the South of the County to ensure we continue to effectively:

- Target our community safety advice and education to prevent accidents and injuries in the homes of our most vulnerable citizens, as well as at our places of work, in our schools and on our roads.
- Support and promote fire safety at work – particularly for those of us that are employed in higher risk environments – and help businesses to comply with their responsibilities under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- Maintain the appropriate levels for frontline emergency response resources in order to meet the changing and growing risks across Oxfordshire.

Feed back from external individuals interested in the consultation

Mayor of Burford (by email)

Consultations such as these are normally the prelude to a round of cost cutting, principally by way of closures and redundancies. Burford Fire Station (“BFS”) is an integral and much valued part of our community and its closure would be regarded as calamitous. It provides cover for a large swathe of West Oxfordshire including Conservation Areas and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty such as Burford. West Oxfordshire is the only one of the five Oxfordshire districts with neither a whole-time fire station nor a day crewed fire station and, as a result, needs to retain all its RDS fire stations if the OFRS level of cover is to be maintained. Burford has a large secondary school (1250 pupils) and a small primary school (120 pupils) and they deserve the protection and reassurance that BFS supplies.

John White
Mayor of Burford
Burford Town Council
20th November 2013

Councillor Harris during direct feedback to the Assistant chief Officer.

His comments were:

- 1) Simple English – he did not feel that the document was in plain English, which allowed the public to read and understand what is being proposed.
- 2) He felt that the purpose was too general in that if we fitted one smoke detector we had achieved our purpose.
- 3) He specifically did not like the term “ageing population”
- 4) He did not understand why we had moved away from the collaborative approach to training to now be moving back to a regional approach.
- 5) Consultation with Members – Cllr Harris felt that this should be a full council discussion as otherwise the only way of him engaging with the consultation was a member of the public.

Feedback from Operational crews

This consisted of one whole-time watch and two On Call units in a focus group and two brief reports by watches sent via email

Banbury Green Watch

Project 1

- Why are we looking at Northamptonshire and Warwickshire, surely we should be looking at Thames Valley partnerships in alignment with the control room project.
- Are we maintaining the links we have with Thames Valley?
- How does the Fire Service College fit into this project?

Project 2

- How are we looking at staffing this new appliances (jump crewing/mixed crewing)? Will this free up extra resources to solve other issues?
- Have we looked at the provision of aerial appliances from other services neighbouring ours?
- There are issues with access particularly in Oxford, is this being considered?
- Are risks being evaluated, i.e. what does it go out to and what does it actually do at those incidents?
- It is very important for working at height and safe means of working. This is an important asset.
- Have we considered a hire agreement with a private company, may be issues around insurance and training but this may be a more efficient option?

Project 3

- Is there BA provision on this appliance and will this lead to crews using rapid deployment in inappropriate situations. Is this putting our crews at unnecessary risk?
- If this is used for minor incidents such as fires in the open how do we guarantee that it is not redirected to more dangerous incidents on the way back to station?
- Have considered more radical options such as a mini bus, this would allow a cheaper second appliance getting the necessary numbers of crews to an incident without the risk of crews deploying inappropriately?

Project 4

- The risks in Banbury are increasing, has this been considered for this project and any reduction in fire cover would be inappropriate. We should maintain our response standards in Banbury.

- There are housing projects and new storage/industrial projects planned for Banbury.
- The new buildings being built in Bicester (that we are concentrating on for this project) are new with smoke alarms in the houses and modern standards of construction and fire safety in the commercial properties.
- Why do the extra resources for Bicester have to come from Banbury, have the service considered using the 14 people necessary for a Day Crewing unit from Kidlington, Slade or Rewley Road.

Email received from a Fire Fighter following this consultation event -

Guv.

After our meeting this evening about the CRMP I have thought of a suggestion to assist with assuring that OFRS maintains and provides appropriate fire cover, in keeping with the predicted growth of Bicester, whilst still maintaining the same level of protection and response that Banbury, as a town, has had for the last 65 years.

As Banbury are fairly isolated in the North, in respect of support and the nearest appliances can take some time to attend our incidents to support the whole-time appliance, I think it is inconceivable to down grade the station personnel and appliances, to a level that is sub-standard in proportion to the risks that the town has, coupled with the large area we cover and the hazardous roads that surround the station area.

As a resolution to keeping the cover as it is at Banbury, could I suggest that, as there are many pumps covering the city and surrounding areas I believe the Rescue Tender could be utilised better and would help improve the brigades fire cover if it was to be stationed at Bicester.

OFRS/OCC could sell all the houses at Kidlington, currently used by OFRS for day crewing staff, along with the existing fire station at Bicester. This could generate approx. £3.5 to £5 million.

In conjunction with the planning department for Bicester and a building firm, a new plot could be identified, possibly further towards the M40/A34 junction (junction 9). To build a new fire station and the same amount of houses that were sold at Kidlington, as part of a new development in Bicester. (I'm sure they would do a good deal as you would be buying approx. 14 houses and a fire station). This could allow for the Rescue Tender to be housed there, along with two appliances and the Dim unit.

Thus giving the Rescue Tender easy access to the A34 and M40, also it would still respond in an efficient manner should it be required to support either of the ERV's located in the north or south of the county.

As Bicester is growing and it seems that Kidlington is not, it would make sense to have 06's crews move there to allow for a more structured and constant response in respect of SSRI's/CFS/ Ops'B's etc. that need to be done by the organisation.

The £3.5 to £5m would I believe cover the costs of this move, but also bring the fire service in the heart of the county into the 21st century, allowing us to provide the people in this area with the best response we could offer for many years to come. This could also possibly put some money back into OFRS/OCC if it was not all spent in the development.

The organisation would in turn be able to give the crews at Kidlington and Bicester 3-4 years notice that this is going to happen so they can make arrangements to their domestic lives, in preparation for the move.

Make Kidlington a 1 pump retained station, which would cover the amount of fire calls (not Rescue Tender calls) the area receives, being backed up by Woodstock/Bicester/Rewley Road/Slade if required, depending on location of incident.

The rescue tender crew would run exactly the same shift pattern as they are now at the new station in Bicester. With a Bicester retained crew backing them up. This could also allow to bring Bicester to a 1 pump retained station thus making further savings for OFRS/OCC.

Also as you will remember from reading above, this will also allow for Banbury to maintain the level of cover it, as a town, deserves to be given due to the reasons given earlier.

Another idea I also had is to have the rescue tender crew stay where they are at Kidlington but when they report to duty in the mornings they drive the RT to Bicester and that is their place of work. Then at the end of shift they drive back to Kidlington and carry on as normal responding at night.

That way Bicester has the day to day running of a normal station i.e. CFS, Inspections, Day cover etc.

Then the retained from Bicester crew of a night.

Banbury On Call Group

Project 1

- Generally a good idea as long as it produces better quality training at a reasonable price.

Project 2

- We need an aerial appliance in the County due to the nature of the risks here.
- In reality it doesn't make too much difference to Banbury as alternative high reach appliances can come from over the border.
- Depends on the alternatives that are out there, will they have the same reach and manoeuvrability as the current vehicle?
- It is very important for working at height and safe means of working. This is an important asset.
- It is important to leave it in Oxford as it has the greatest number of high rise buildings and historical risk.
- We should consider sharing aerial appliances with other services.

Project 3

- This could be used as a vehicle for first responder / medical incidents.
- It would be good for early intervention, to stop incidents escalating to dangerous levels.
- This would be good for saving money; selective paging could be introduced to reduce costs.

Project 4

- This has been a long time coming.
- The varying sizes of the respective towns makes this a logical step to take.
- Banbury has gone from about 1500 calls ten years ago to almost half that which indicates a lower risk.
- Bicester has the added risks and advantages that it is close to the M40, A34 and A43.
- The proposal for Bicester has the added potential of adding another ERV to the fleet.
- Would it make sense to make this project a staged approach with the 14 people being stationed at Witney and Bicester for the first few years as purely day cover to carry out risk information visits and fire safety events, the logic being that Bicester will take many years to increase in size to the levels expected and we have this opportunity to reduce the risks by proactive work and good use of the current personnel resource.

Faringdon On Call Group

Project 1

- Why are we collaborating with these counties in particular? Why aren't we looking at a more Thames valley based approach in line with the control room project?
- On station training is better for the On call sections.
- Will this lead to shared procedures, PDAs and equipment?
- Will this lead to training situations with mixed groups (from different services)?
- This will potentially lead to us learning from other services.

Project 2

- This should be based on how often it goes to incidents and what it is used for at those incidents?
- It plays an important role in working at height incidents particularly chimney fires.
- Have the service looked at out sourcing this to another fire service or even a private contractor. We could look at this as part of special's provision as a whole – i.e. sharing ICU, ISU, Canteen, Hose layer, etc.
- Do not go for a CARP – they are a fire risk in themselves.

Project 3

- Have the service considered just using this second appliance as a personnel carrier to avoid the potential pitfalls of deploying BA into a risky situation? We could have 4x4s which would enhance our adverse weather response whilst providing a means of getting personnel to an incident without the expense of a fire engine?
- Care must be taken with a vehicle of this nature as the initial call may not be what the appliance actually turns up to i.e. fire in the open turns out to be a structure fire which could lead to moral pressure to commit crews into an unsafe environment.
- If this is used for RTCs has the service considered the highways procedure and how this would be adhered to with a vehicle of this nature with limited resources?
- Look for feedback from Buckinghamshire as their experience with smaller vehicles of this nature has not been very successful.

Project 4

- Has the option of a 9-5 system being operated at Bicester made up of crews from Bicester On Call being trained to a WT level.
- The service needs to consider where stations are located (particularly in the Carterton area) in order to get the best response times.
- The key stations concept needs to be rethought in order to provide better options for covering station grounds

- Recruitment projects seem to come in fits and starts, there does not seem to be an on-going process to recruit people and even plan for succession, when people retire this should have been considered two years in advance in order to employ and train up a replacement.
- The fire service needs to consider why people stay in the service rather than looking at the negative side (why people leave in exit interviews), we should be asking people why they have stayed in so long and then look at how this can be used to increase retention rates.
- Has the service tried to recruit people for the stations in the South – surely this needs to be improved with localised recruitment drives in order to make these stations better at staying on the run?
- Have we considered On call payment for covering at other stations, i.e. if you have two people at two stations send two to cover at the first station with hourly payments.
- Cover of On call stations should be at night too, there is no reason why you couldn't supply sleeping and welfare arrangements for fire fighters to cover at these stations (or even a local B&B) in order to keep pumps on the run.

Rewley Road Red Watch

Since reviewing the “Oxfordshire Community Risk Management Action Plan 2014-2015” and having discussed the 4 projects we, as a shift, have detailed a variety of responses to the questions posed in the “Your say” section.

These responses primarily deal with Projects 2 and 3; namely the review of the aerial appliance capability of the brigade and the review of the light response vehicle capability.

For both projects we have aimed to answer each of the posed questions in turn and have tried to gather reliable information when recalling specific incidents or occurrences.

The responses have been collated from discussions with a variety of fire fighters from a range of age groups, experience levels and backgrounds.

In the responses we have aimed to be as constructive as possible and have detailed our individual concerns and suggestions within the understood pressures and responsibilities posed by the current financial and political climate.

Project 2

“...do you feel Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service needs to provide a high reach capability at all?”

This question evidently deals with the question of usefulness; i.e. is the HP itself a “useful” unit that validates the need to have one in the county.

It is clear that the number of call-outs the Aerial Appliance (*from this point forward referred to as the HP – Hydraulic Platform - based at Rewley Road*) attends does not directly equate with the number of times it is actually used. Therefore referring to the number of calls it has attended is, by itself, pointless.

However within the last 3 years alone the HP could be recalled as having had a primary use (by our watch alone) at the following incidents;

- Blenheim Palace - fire (2011) : Used to extinguish fire, aid in incident viewing, protect crews
- Toni & Guys - fire (2013) : Used by BA crews to remove frontage of shop on fire, primarily responsible for preventing external spread of flame by early intervention
- Swalcliffe - thatch fire (2013) : Used by crews to extinguish fire and aid in removal of thatch and creation of fire break
- Bear & Ragged Staff - chimney fire (2011) : Used by crews as only means of extinguishing chimney from above
- Carfax Tower, Oxford - suicide attempt (2012) : Used by crews in resolving incident

- Rescue of injured worker from roof (2010) : Used by crews as stable platform for intervention by paramedics and removal of casualty from roof
- Masons Arms, South Lea - difficult chimney (2013) : Used by crews as stable platform to break and remove chimney sections
- Beaumont Industrial estate – chemical plant fire (2012) : Used by crews to access the roofline and inspect the structure after fire

These are merely a small cross-section of the incidents it has been used at, due to the fact the unit has *at least* the following main uses;

- Water Tower (either using attached branch or via crews working from platform)
- Rescue platform (from above)
- Rescue platform (from below/from water)
- Stable working platform (thatch removal/chimneys/dangerous structure)
- Scene inspection (OIC viewing, thermal imager use)
- Anchor point (Line rescue crews)
- Crane use (2 lifting eyes, 2 tonne lifting capability)

In a number of the incidents indicated above the fact that the HP was used at an early stage meant the difference between the incident progressing well and crews facing a drastically escalating scene.

The HP is obviously on the PDA for a variety of premises, meaning the number of times it attends incidents compared to the number of times it is used is greater than other specialist units such as Banbury's HVP. However, similarly to the HVP, when it is used it makes an enormous difference and has a drastic impact to how an incident is run. The unit arguably has a greater range of uses than other specialist units and, if anything, is possibly under-used at incidents where it could have vastly aided crews.

With solely the existing current range of buildings within the county – the JR hospital, Brookes Campus, the high rise towers in Slades area (to name but a few) – it is clear that having a high-reach capability is essential should there be a fire, rescue or incident requiring crews to work on an upper level. However looking to the future of the counties architecture – the new technology park in Harwell/Wantage area for example – the units use for future incidents seems also inevitable.

Within Oxford city itself a wide range of ancient buildings exist which are difficult to access at high levels. These buildings are also predominantly constructed of fragile wooden timber and, during a fire scenario, would require the use of the HP rather than ladders due to the possibility of early and sudden collapse. Should there be a fire there the HP will be needed and would be drastically missed if not available.

Outside the city the unit is used regularly at chimneys, dangerous structures and rescues where it also proves its worth on repeated occasions. Again, to remove this capability would mean changing the way OFRS train their JO's and leave OIC's with a large gap in their operational capability at a wide range of incidents.

For these reasons, as a shift we feel that our answer to the question “...do you feel Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service needs to provide a high reach capability at all?” is a resounding “yes”.

“Would you support the sharing of a high reach capacity vehicle?”

Royal Berkshire currently have cut their number of Aerial Appliances to 1 and have it based at Whitley Wood, Reading. Northamptonshire currently have 2 Aerial appliances, the nearest of which is at Moulton. Wiltshire’s closest ALP is based at Swindon. Hampshire have an ALP at Basingstoke, their nearest station to Oxfordshire.

Based solely around the incidents above, assuming we were sharing one of these counties ALP’s the response time for an incident that the HP has been used at could be;

Berkshire - Whitley Wood to Banbury : **1 hour 10 min response time**

Wiltshire – Swindon to Banbury : **1hour 18 min response time**

Northamptonshire – Moulton to Faringdon : **1 hour 24min response time**

Hampshire - Basingstoke to Banbury : **1hour 25 min response time**

All of these times are assuming that the vehicle is available in those brigades, not being serviced or used for training, is based at the station and is not already being used at an incident. These times are based around attending specific incidents that OFRS has been used at, and in some instances situations where its early use has been critical.

Due to the increased pressure on individual brigades to maintain their own protective cover, it is not just the travel time to an incident within Oxfordshire that would need to be considered but also the time spent at an incident (and subsequent return travel time) or the logistics of providing reliefs at incidents for cross-border crews. With most incidents where the HP has been used being protracted, the crew would need to remain in place for a substantial amount of time with no relief. Whereas if a fire appliance is used across the border another appliance from the host brigade can relieve it, with no HP within OFRS the relief for crews coming to attend an incident within Oxfordshire would not be easy to manage.

For these reasons our answer to the question “*Would you support the sharing of a high reach capacity vehicle?*” would have to be “no”.

“...do you think [staffing the vehicle in a different way]...is a better option than relying on a shared vehicle...”

Due to the reasons given above we feel that an HP is needed within OFRS. Because of the training requirements and maintenance of competence needed on both operating and driving the vehicle we feel that a whole time crew is also needed to use the appliance itself.

As an alternative to sharing a vehicle, evidently due to the reasons given above we agree that it is more desirable to alter the staffing requirement than to lose the appliance altogether.

A suggestion may be posed would be the procurement of Combined Aerial Rescue Platform vehicles. These may be seen to provide the requisite high-reach capability of an HP with the combination of a fire appliance capability.

High profile cases such as that of South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue service have placed CARPs into a negative light, however. The FBU condemned SYFRS' vehicles due to the instability, mechanical problems and risk of the vehicle itself catching fire. In addition, Humberside downgraded their CARP to a purely aerial capability due to their issues. They would also not provide the necessary reach capabilities that the HP currently provides.

In reality, as stated we feel that an HP is needed within Oxfordshire, run by whole time crews. We are however aware of the financial and political pressures currently being placed on the County Council and are also aware of the possible suggestion of altering the existing crewing arrangements of the shifts at Rewley Road. If these suggestions are agreed upon the crewing of the HP will shift to being cross-jumped rather than specifically manned at all times.

The provision of the HP as a response vehicle (i.e. a vehicle able to make an early and dramatic intervention at an incident) can only realistically work if both appliances at Rewley Road are therefore available for crews to cross-jump onto the HP and also attend incidents. The on-call crews at Rewley Road would also be required to be on-the-run to back-fill in this situation as well. If these provisions are in place then the HP can be used as we feel it best suits – as an important appliance that can have a wide-ranging impact at a number of different incident types.

To answer the question “do you think staffing the vehicle in a different way is a better option than relying on a shared vehicle?” we would therefore answer yes, however staffing the vehicle in a different way can never provide a better solution than having sufficient crew numbers to maintain a level of operational fire cover necessary to attend the PDA's and specialist incidents currently managed by the existing system of work.

Project 3

“...do you think OFRS should consider having a different type of vehicle on some stations that can improve the speed of our initial response?”

To properly begin to answer this question we feel that a host of additional questions would need to be adequately answered in order to gain a proper understanding of this vehicles role within OFRS. These questions are;

- What exact incident types would this vehicle be mobilised to?
- Would the mobilised calls be “stacked” as the calls to light vehicles in other brigades are?

- What exact equipment would be placed on the appliance?
- What exact crews would be mobilised with the appliance?
- What ICS limitations would be placed on the attending crews?
- Would there have to be a CM or WM on the crew?

Without knowing the answers to these, and additional questions it is difficult to adequately answer the primary question.

A paradox of sorts does seem to be in place within the vehicles remit, however. If the vehicle is designed with limited, light capabilities and is focussed on cutting the requirements of sending a front-line appliance to smaller, less critical incidents (bin fires, domestic flooding's, lift rescues etc.) how would they then be expected to focus on "saving life and holding back the spread of property damage" unless in actuality they were being mobilised to incidents far beyond the specifications of both their equipment and crew numbers? If the vehicle is designed to provide a swifter response to more critical incidents, then both the number of personnel and the safety systems that could be put in place (not to mention the enormous moral burden of "having to do something") would surely mean that the vehicle also couldn't be expected to "save life and hold back the spread of property damage". Would OFRS in fact simply end up sending one more additional appliance to incidents where a single appliance previously dealt with the situation?

We do agree, however, that this unit could have an important role to play within OFRS. At outlying stations with limited on-call crew numbers but a stationed RSSO this vehicle could cut both the attendance times and the requirement for whole time-retained cover by allowing the RSSO to attend smaller, less critical incidents with only one or two crew members. As long as no provision was made for more complex incidents to be attempted to be managed (by having no BA or larger RTC equipment for example) then the usefulness of these type of vehicles could definitely be seen.

In poor weather conditions, spate conditions, in order to cut the requirement for on-call crewing levels, cut the fuel costs, training implications and general finance drains made by fire appliances then these vehicles could prove themselves to be an additional asset within OFRS. They could attend incidents within rural or outlying areas and provide a much more rapid response to these, perhaps dealing with the incident themselves without the need for additional support. If additional support were needed then the nearest on-call station could attend.

In order to replace existing appliances within Oxford itself or any of the larger areas of the county these vehicles would not make a valuable addition though. Instead, due to the type of incidents attended they may end up placing crew members into unsafe conditions or loading OIC's with the burden to try and tackle incidents that should be dealt with by a fire appliance and its crew.

Therefore our answer to the question "*...do you think OFRS should consider having a different type of vehicle on some stations that can improve the speed of our initial response?*" is yes, however many questions still need to be answered regarding their use and their role should, in our opinion, be limited to the outlying regions of rural areas where on-call fire cover is not currently sufficient.

Rewley Road, White Watch

CRMP 1 - Implement the Training Collaboration Review carried out in 2013

- **Do you have any concerns that Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service wants to provide more training through collaboration with other services?**
- The collaboration way of training was a more efficient way to train Fire Fighters and in some cases allowed OFRS to learn new practices. It had Oxfordshire input throughout and was more than likely cost effective due to Trainees not having to undergo transition training when returning to OFRS for example Hertfordshire W/T Course.
- A counter point and a brief outline: An Internal OFRS Course, Monday to Friday with hotel accommodation for evening group study. This could be ran from Didcot, Eynsham and Rewley Rd. With very high standards in OFRS Training Team and more control over managing versions of training and a clearer learning environment for the trainee. Buildings will require modifying at a cost.

CRMP 2 Review our aerial appliance capability and implement changes to staffing supported by that review

- **Thinking about the current and future risks within the county, do you feel Oxfordshire Fire & rescue Service needs to provide a high reach capability at all (i.e. for access and firefighting at buildings that have more than three storeys)?**
- Yes for three main reasons
 1. OFRS Fire Fighter Safety
 2. Oxfordshire Public safety
 3. Efficiency to bring certain incidents within Oxfordshire to a resolve.
- **One option could be to share a high reach capacity vehicle with another fire and rescue service to save money. This could potentially increase the time taken for the vehicle to attend an emergency incident. Would you support the sharing of a high reach capacity vehicle?**
- More information is required to have the ability to give a definite answer for example location of the ALP's home station?
- **Alternatively, if the vehicle can be staffed in a different way to allow us move operational resources to meet the growing risks in our communities, do you think this is a better option than relying on a shared vehicle with a neighbouring fire and rescue service.**

- Yes if to achieve answers 1,2 and 3 above in the 1st ALP question

CRMP 3 Review of Light Response Vehicle Capability and implement changes to staffing supported by that review

- **Thinking about the changing local risks across the towns and villages of Oxfordshire, as well as the growing pressures on maintaining a 'standard' emergency response across the entire county, do you think OFRS should consider having a different type of vehicle on some stations that can improve the speed of our initial response (albeit that the crew will be providing a 'first strike' capability focussed on saving life and holding back the spread of property damage) but may require another fire engine to support it to bring the incident to a successful conclusion?**
- Until a more clear description is provided to exactly what types of incident this vehicle is likely to attend in a "first strike" capacity, numbers of crew, home station location and equipment stowed it becomes difficult to give a defining answer.
- It is quite clear that there could be high potential to place fire crews in positions of undue pressure/risk with limited resources present to achieve key objectives at time critical person reported incidents.

Feedback from other Fire Service personnel

CRMP 4

Hello

I have a suggestion for the Community Risk Management Plan 2014/15 with regards to project 4. Over the past few years we have taken legal action under the Fire Safety Order only a couple of times but in each case it was for sleeping accommodation above commercial premises and I believe we have several more possible prosecutions in the near future for the same type premises. Should we as the enforcement authority be looking and at such places county wide, as they clearly seem to be an issue?

We seem to be focused on sleeping risks such as care homes and hotels, but is this course of action backed up by statistics showing that these type of premises have more fires than other types of commercial premises in our county. I feel we could be focusing our small resources to types of premises which have proven to have a higher percentage of fires in the county, premises which we've now highlighted are not complying with the FSO, such as small restaurants with staff sleeping accommodation above and other sleeping risks which we have never audited such as public houses which now do B & B.

This type of themed inspection programme should be firstly focused in areas of the county where attendance times by the fire service are greater due to their remote location or in places where we know we are struggling to maintain sufficient crewing levels. This will show that we are providing extra fire safety measures to the areas of the county that could pose a higher risk of a fatal fire due to its location and the weight of operational response we are capable of deploying.

With the IRS and Aquarius systems we now should be able to provide historical data, to focus our small Fire Protection Team resources, to achieve the maximum effectiveness and support the local business community.

Regards

Matt

Matt Prentice
Fire Safety Inspector
Witney Fire Station

Water Training provision

There is an aspect in this guidance for IRMP inclusion. My opinion is that we don't meet it. It isn't a "must" and this is only guidance but a gap analysis will pick up the shortfall, see attached exert.

Regards,
Group Manager Heycock

Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP)

The IRMP may include a comprehensive risk profile for water related incidents. For flooding this assessment should identify the areas of potential inundation and the most vulnerable people at risk. The process should use risk mapping techniques from a variety of sources including local and national resilience community risk profiles and Environment Agency flood maps.

Assessment of flooding risk should include:

- Local flood maps including flash flood areas and specific risks such as fords and flooded roads, and specific hydrology.
- Geographic and demographic areas of highest need involving vulnerable members of the community and critical national infrastructure.
- Previous incident data.
- Links to weather patterns and historical flood data.

Each fire and rescue service (FRS) should assess the hazards and risks in their area. Site-specific plans should be considered for locations where these are significant. They should include:

- Response levels.
- Reference to relevant standard operating procedures.
- Tactical considerations, including rendezvous points, appliance marshalling areas and access points.

Responses from the E Consult portal on the Oxfordshire County Council Website

Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue received 26 responses to this consultation from this source. Below are the specific questions asked by the E consult web pages and all of the answers bullet point marked underneath.

CRMP 1 - Implement the Training Collaboration Review carried out in 2013

What sorts of training would you expect fire and rescue services to collaborate on (e.g. frontline operational, managerial, specialist operational, technical fire safety, health & safety)?

- All of the above
- Fire safety, specialist ops, H & S, managerial, technical training operations
- Collaboration should be considered for all areas of training provided the needs of Oxfordshire re are not diluted as a result.
- I would expect OFRS to collaborate on cross border training & where staff can be called upon to work together, where demonstrable savings & efficiencies can be made but am cognisant of travel distances for what are predominately rural FRAs. Use of the Fire Service College which is on our doorstep should be fully explored especially for realistic scenario training as I understand that real incidents are decreasing.
- All
- frontline operational
- I would expect Fire services to talk to and collaborate on all of these areas listed above. A Fire service should not be working within the constraints of boundaries and should be talking to each other as fires require assistance from each other. This should reduce duplication and effort.
- BFRS would expect all FRS' to seek to collaborate on all training aspects listed. This can not only provide advantages in terms of the costs of provision of training, but also benefit from the sharing of ideas amongst services and the reduction of obstacles to effective cross border working.
- Areas that are generic such as Technical Fire Safety, Health and Safety etc.
- Frontline firefighting and operational scenarios. Collaboration between specialist training understanding what each neighbouring brigade can/cant do. Demonstration of any specialist equipment that only the one brigade have but may benefit all if used.
- OFRS need to maintain and possibly upgrade the training for operational staff. RDS staff do not get enough in just 2 hours PW. They i believe do not have the required skills to deal with an incident such as the recent Oak cash and carry fire in Banbury. They could not replace full time fire fighters.
- As a tax payer I would expect you to collaborate at every opportunity.
- Everything. The more work is done together, then the more costs can be reduced and the easier and safer it will be to work across border.
- Perhaps more training in conjunction with SCAS, to familiarise them with

our approach to RTC for a more cohesive approach to the Level of Casualty care, raise awareness of our capability and make them aware of the safety aspects we can provide for them at such incidents. Also, they could help us with maintaining and overseeing our FPOS competency levels during such training.

- Implement training via guidance from national standard operating procedures and adapt to suit our specific needs within the county. If collaboration there could be considerable, travel costs and wasted time spent travelling.
- It makes sense to collaborate with other brigades to keep costs sensible as I'm sure, you should all be doing similar training in all areas.

Do you have any concerns that Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service wants to provide more training through collaboration with other services? If so, what are your concerns?

- This is a good thing.
- no as aligns us more in preparation for new fire control
- No
- No, if it achieves the above.
- Not if it is as efficient and successful as OFRS training alone
- No - it makes absolute sense to do this. Why aren't you doing this already?
- BFRS does not have any concerns over this. OFRS will carry out an effective assessment before entering into collaboration with other services and will therefore be well placed to identify whether the proposed collaboration is likely to realise the desired objectives. Collaboration with other (non- FRS') is also encouraged. BFRS are happy to continue to collaborate with OFRS and explore areas where this can be extended.
- Where there are differences in policies in different services. i.e.: Services differ in their working at height policy or PPV stages. Also, travel distances for individuals may increase drastically.
- Greater diversity means greater understanding of other agencies roles which can only be a good thing.
- The only concern would be losing the standards within the brigade and being brought down to other brigades levels, though in some instances, e.g. less strict radio message procedures, this might not be a bad thing.
- I feel that with the adoption of regional SOPs by most of our neighbouring brigades lessens the requirement for such training, which in turn is hard to achieve given the geographical issues of getting to such training, the logistical issues of getting cover and possibility of fire calls all contribute to sabotaging the effectiveness and quality of the training and lead to wasted efforts by exercise organisers. Though better understanding of equipment and capabilities of others is useful.
- It would be a positive move to introduce more joint training with SCAS, for operational staff.
- No concerns what so ever.
- No concerns as long as we learn from brigades that have tried a training

approach and glean off the bits that suit Oxfordshire.

- Just make sure we give the firefighters the correct training they need to perform their jobs.

Do you think this project should be a high or low priority for the Service?

- Medium priority.
- Low
- This depends on the expected benefits - it is difficult to answer either way unless the full risks and benefits of the project are known. Obviously, if benefits such as large savings can be realised then the project should be high priority.
- This depends on budget pressures - so will require the review paper to be fully costed to be able to discern
- Low
- Business as usual? Therefore low risk.
- BFRS believes that OFRS is best placed to judge the priority status of this review taking account of available resources and other priorities. It is also likely that some aspects of the review implementation will need to attract differing priority levels.
- Low
- As always training especially operational should be high priority.
- High. It has the potential to be a very simple cost saving measure.
- Given my previous statement I feel it should be medium to low
- This should be a high priority for the service as it would give both services a better understanding of each other's capabilities especially for the staff at Banbury, with the large number of RTC's they go to being an ERV appliance.
- High priority if it saves money and produces the same quality of training.
- Depends on your objective, if savings can be made then then use them but not at the expense of safety or poor quality.
- Surely you should have looked at it already! The fire service all do similar jobs all over the country.

Should this project be aimed at a) reducing costs b) improving public safety c) improving firefighter safety d) a combination of some or all of the previous (please identify).

- Combination of all 3.
- save money and enhance FF safety
- A combination of these should be the ultimate aim.
- d) as it would need to do all 3
- (b) and (c)
- All of the above plus improving communications across boundaries.
- BFRS believe that the review should aim to achieve all of these. It is accepted that some forms of training are likely to achieve some aspects more than others.

- d
- B and C always the priority and if joint training saves some money then bonus!
- In an ideal world, all our training would be in house, but in line with the aspects we like of what other authorities do, this however will be about saving money, with a slight improvement to FF safety when working over the border. Nothing to do with public safety.
- A combination of all
- If you reduce costs, you increase the chance of firefighters getting hurt and people suffering from injury or possibly worse at incidents. Therefore, as reducing the cover at Banbury is nothing more than a cost cutting exercise, you will indeed put both operational firefighters at risk and also members of the public. You should not down grade Banbury station but seek more money to upgrade Bicester.
- Combination of all 3.
- A combination to suit Oxfordshire.
- A combination, training is the backbone of any organisation to strive to deliver a better service to its end users. we want a fully trained professional firefighter who is fit enough to carry out their job when we dial 999.

CRMP 2 Review our aerial appliance capability and implement changes to staffing supported by that review

Thinking about the current and future risks within the county, do you feel Oxfordshire Fire & rescue Service needs to provide a high reach capability at all (i.e. for access and firefighting at buildings that have more than three storeys)?

- Yes, it needs to do so.
- Yes, as provides safe system of work
- Yes - the use of high reach appliances improves firefighter safety and provides the service an extra capability that could be of use in a number of unforeseeable ways including future commercial interests. Removal of this asset would need to be for very good reasons.
- I believe that OFRS should maintain its current Aerial Capability and maintain sharing arrangements for when this vehicle is temporarily out of service - I do not feel that it is appropriate to share this valuable specialist appliance permanently due to the nature of the high rise and other fire risks within the county and the increased travel times that would ensue
- Yes
- I currently work on the rescue tender based at Kidlington. For some years we have used the Hydraulic platform together with our rope rescue systems to create a high anchor point. This enables us to access areas where we cannot create an anchor point ourselves. Our current Hydraulic platform is not designed for this. It would be beneficial for future projects discussing a high reach capability to consider its use for rope rescue.
- The question is what is this piece of equipment actually used for - how many times has it been used to rescue people above this height? How many times has it been used for access to buildings above three storeys - is it used for other jobs or activities or is it not really used?
- BFRS believes that aerial appliances provide a very effective enhancement to standard pumping appliance capabilities. Aerial appliance technology has moved on significantly in recent years and the likely long term operational life of these appliances is beneficial to the whole of life costs. BFRS introduced a new aerial appliance in 2010 and will be replacing its other aerial appliance in 2014.
- Yes. A fire service needs to have an aerial appliance. When it is required in an emergency, to wait for a neighbouring fire service to provide one, restricts the crew on the fire ground. CARP's are not an acceptable alternative either. They are a good idea in principle but lots of evidence that they do not work.
- Keeping appliance will no doubt help turn out times and not sure other alternatives are reliable or cost effective to bring about change.
- Within the service the AP is probably the most useful special we have. Removing it will definitely be a backward step in both public and FF safety. Waiting an hour for an out of county one is too long.
- I think yes given the heritage value of some of the buildings in the City centre and for FF safety given that recent FF Deaths have occurred at High Rise incidents, though not as a result of not having an AP. Also the number of

Thatch properties in the surrounding villages and older properties with working chimneys. It's a matter for higher levels to decide if we can rely on other services to reliably supply this support.

- Following the recent Oak cash and Carry fire, it shows how important the aerial capability is in the county. Again reducing it would be a cost cutting exercise and put firefighters in more dangerous situations, therefore increasing the possibility of injury or worse still OFRS suffering fatalities.
- The county does not need a high reach capability, buildings of 3 storeys or more have protected escape routes via building regulations. Use the money to recruit more on call firefighters.
- As just seen at Oak cash and carry 3 aerial appliances were used to effect fire fighter safety by delivering water to the areas where cylinders were involved.
- If we have buildings in the county that require one then yes, we need one. We don't care where it comes from just get it there on time.
- Oxfordshire fire and rescue need to keep and maintain the ALP capabilities they already have and not down grade or loose it all together.
- Most definitely. A high reach platform that can provide water and perform rescues is a must.

One option could be to share a high reach capacity vehicle with another fire and rescue service to save money. This could potentially increase the time taken for the vehicle to attend an emergency incident. Would you support the sharing of a high reach capacity vehicle?

- Need to a cost-benefit analysis to see pros & cons of sharing.
- No
- No for the reasons outlined above.
- Whilst I am conscious that all organisations are looking to find savings, this is a bad idea. We are encouraging more use of W@H equipment so why would we look to lose capability of an aerial appliance. As it has been stated the response time for an aerial appliance will be increased enormously depending on where the shared appliance is based. Look to prolong the longevity of the current appliance.
- No (see above)
- It is morally reprehensible to save money at the expense of saving lives
- This would support the rope access availability as currently Oxfordshire's rope team supports all its neighbouring brigades for rope rescue so there would be a cost saving.
- Yes - but we are not informed how many times this happens or is used.
- There are significant cost savings to be achieved through this approach and BFRS would be happy to discuss details of how this could be facilitated. In addition to the likely additional time taken to arrive at an incident, it is also possible that the reduced staff familiarisation with modern aerial capabilities could negate their use when they could have provided operational benefits. Aerials are rarely used for rescues today and their scarce nature usually indicates extended attendance times.
- No. How would this be funded? What happens when the service we share it with decide they don't want to have one anymore. What happens when that

aerial appliance is off the run or deployed on an incident? How far is the next available one?

- Doing this loses familiarity with the appliance and familiarity within station ground which is a factor.
- Definitely not, please see my previous answer.
- Difficult, it needs an assessment to be made on the likelihood and probability of it not being available due to responding to other incidents in the sharing brigade and the turn out time for the next nearest available vehicle.....not sure, but suppose a moot point with fire control moving towards mobilising the nearest available appliances anyway.
- No. what if it was off the run, at another incident, or unable to attend. you would put firefighters and public at a higher risk, possibly waiting for some hours for one to attend from another county.
- No, the county does not need a high reach vehicle.
- Yes this could be an option, how many times was it used operationally? If it gets used over the border a lot could we charge to cover our costs or would another brigade be prepared to contribute to ours.
- Yes I'd support it from another area as long as it doesn't take longer to get there than what we already have.
- Sharing the ALP is not a good idea as what happens when both services need it at the same time? or there is a large incident and multiple ALPs are needed, as Banbury only just required three ALPs at the cash n carry last month
- No. We need one of our so we can get it there with speed. What happens if the one we are supposed to be borrowing is in use or not working

Alternatively, if the vehicle can be staffed in a different way to allow us to move operational resources to meet the growing risks in our communities, do you think this is a better option than relying on a shared vehicle with a neighbouring fire and rescue service.

- Yes, jump crewing
- I do not think the aerial appliance needs a dedicated crew day-to-day. The need for this appliance is not, in my view, time critical and therefore could be crewed in the same way as the Rescue Tender (which is perhaps more critical given its capabilities).
- As stated before, by alternating crewing rather than having a designated crew, this will also have an effect on response times. If it is being considered to use On Call staff the training implications would be wide ranging and difficult to maintain.
- Yes
- What sort of a "different way"?
- You need to use the right people in the right places to meet the risks in the communities. you are the experts and should be making these decisions for the public.
- BFRS believe that alternative staffing of aerial appliances (e.g. switch crewing) can provide significant cost savings without any real detriment to service. BFRS has operated this system at High Wycombe for two years

without any negative issues of consequence. This was implemented as part of our Public Safety Plan in 2012.

- This is too vague a statement to agree or disagree with. More details required.
- Yes.
- This definitely has to be a better option, if having it mobile in two minutes like it is now isn't an option (and it does seem like a waste of staff), and waiting an hour or more for it to come from another county is definitely too long, then somewhere in the middle, a turn out time of 10 minutes or less might be a good alternative.
- Yes
- How would it be staffed?? You would be reducing its attendance times for incidents, therefore putting both firefighters and public maybe in need of rescue at further or prolonged risk.
- Use the resources to crew another on call station in the west of the county.
- If staffed differently there should be no delay or competence of personnel delivering it to an incident.
- It makes sense to look at staffing in different ways but as long as you don't reduce the numbers of people you have! They must be up to the task that they have to perform
- No
- Obviously yes. As long as this not a detriment to any other appliances.

CRMP 3 Review of Light Response Vehicle Capability and implement changes to staffing supported by that review

Thinking about the changing local risks across the towns and villages of Oxfordshire, as well as the growing pressures on maintaining a 'standard' emergency response across the entire county, do you think OFRS should consider having a different type of vehicle on some stations that can improve the speed of our initial response (albeit that the crew will be providing a 'first strike' capability focussed on saving life and holding back the spread of property damage) but may require another fire engine to support it to bring the incident to a successful conclusion?

- This is a very long question but I think yes, a different type at some stations.
- Yes
- A light response vehicle should not in my view be provided at the expense of any fully equipped and fully crewed full size appliance within the same locality i.e. provided a full size appliance is present, a light response vehicle could be used to provide an additional asset, perhaps as a replacement for another full sized appliance.
- I do not fully understand why a light vehicle will improve response times unless coupled with reduced crew numbers. I believe that OFRS should explore non - standard vehicles and rapid or light ones especially where these have 4 x 4 capability in rural locations. I am happy with a tiered approach to skills and vehicles: sending a first then second and third strike etc.
- Yes. Towns and villages with narrow lanes need narrower wagons
- Yes absolutely - the public come first using the quickest vehicles to do it.
- BFRS support the consideration of alternative appliance types and designs to better reflect the risks and available resources that services have. Any "light " vehicle is not going to provide the capabilities of a "standard" appliance but this needs to be weighed against the cost advantages and frequency of requirement for the broader capabilities. BFRS would welcome the sharing of research on alternative appliances and, if feasible, joint purchasing.
- No. This is a dilution of the fire service and I fear people getting hurt - either members of the public or fire fighters pressured or tempted to undertake more than the light vehicle is capable of. For emergency calls, the public expect a fire engine to arrive at the scene, not a van. It is a cheap, unacceptable alternative and should not be pursued.
- If all retained stations are providing the necessary cover then there should not be a need for a small vehicle to mask the attendance times. Riding any appliance with minimum is a dangerous precedent and will on occasion catch crews out. Don't like the idea but if it is necessary to have a light vehicle keeping that station at some capacity then they should be as back up not first appliance.
- Having a smaller vehicle is only going to make response times quicker in that it can potentially drive slightly faster, but the difference would be negligible. And if you are looking at them being quicker because they can ride with less crew, why not just ride the main truck with less crew? as we already own

those assets. But I imagine this is not about response times but about them costing half as much to buy.

- There is a case for this in more rural areas where 'On Call' crewing is an issue.
- It is a good idea in theory, but what happens should persons be trapped in a fire and in need of rescue. how many firefighters would be crewing the LRV? could you commit B.A. wearers safely to perform a rescue? If not then it could cost people their lives. What price do you put on someone's life??.
- This is a great idea and should be considered at all 2 appliance fire stations.
- The vehicle should be capable of having a competent crew of firefighters focussed on saving life with no compromise to technical bulletin 1/97 so if breathing apparatus is in use there are the relevant safe systems to protect fire fighters carrying out there job. Also if they then get a redirection they are capable of going on to the next job with a full crew and adequate equipment for the incidents it may attend.
- Rubbish! If I call 999 for the fire service I want a fire engine with a full crew of firefighters on it! Not a council lorry with some bin men on.
- If this happens firefighters WILL be put in danger as they will feel compelled to go further than is safe for a minimal crew to do so. Minimum crew of five is an established and safe number and this should remain.
- It's a good idea in theory but butts a lot pressure on the crew that is crewing it.

CRMP 4 Review of Prevention, Protection and Response Resources to meet the expansion and changing risk profile of Banbury, Bicester, Carterton, Wantage and the South of the County

We currently work closely with our partners in Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Public Health, Thames Valley Police and the NHS to target our prevention work with the most vulnerable people in our communities. Do you think there is anything we could do differently (or other organisations we could work with) in relation to our approach.

- No, nothing think of to do differently.
- Better use of population profiling data like Mosaic lifestyles and origins data.
- No comment
- I believe that we should share more of this work and continue to collaborate
- Not enough info to comment
- The county age profile is getting older and there are lots of developments across Oxon. Why aren't you asking builders and developers to fit sprinklers in new homes like they did with hard wired smoke alarms - what is stopping this from happening?
- The community risk management action plan 2014-15 makes no mention of the provision of domestic sprinklers. Whilst it is accepted that they do not provide a full solution in all circumstances, they can provide significant safety and cost benefits. Working closely with stakeholders at the planning stage is key and would appear to provide some advantages, given the planned expansion in Oxfordshire.
- Biggest fatality rate down to deaths by driving especially 18-25. More needs to be done to target them as the figures aren't changing from year to year.
- In terms of cost saving, we could be far more choosy who we fit smoke alarms for. We fit a lot of alarms for people who are more than capable of paying for them on their own, which just seems like an unfair waste of public money.
- Though there is some exchange of information I think that this could be improved amongst all, including the relevancy and quality of information. Joint access system perhaps where all see the same thing.
- Have a better working relationship, this could mean less red tape and quicker actioning of safe guarding referrals. Thus saving more people being involved in fires in their homes.
- We could work in collaboration with the environment agency looking at prevention, assisting in topography of local areas when checking gullies/large storm drains, could also be opportunity for training.
- All prevention work is a great way forward to stop the need for you having to deal with vulnerable groups when it's too late.

In terms of commercial fire safety, we always look to work with businesses to support them to comply with their responsibilities under Fire Safety law, before we consider prosecution. What are your thoughts on how we carry out our enforcement role and do you believe we can do things better?

- Nothing to add.
- Enforce where necessary, but better to provide advice before and get out there in business promoting fire safety.
- No comment
- I believe a supportive approach is the best methodology to reduce the burden on industry. I feel Oxfordshire is a relatively safe place based on numbers of commercial fire instances, injuries, deaths and prosecutions, and this is perhaps an area for efficiency savings -particularly when you compare this work to the work and numbers of HSE staff.
- More successful prosecutions would save a lot more lives and prevent a lot more property damage
- You should be supporting business and helping them if they don't understand what they need to do. you should make examples of businesses that are not according to the law and highlight these because there are lots of businesses that are complying and its not fair on them.
- This is an area where it appears that there is scope for greater collaboration between services. This would not only support reduced costs but could improve efficiency and consistency in service provision. BFRS would be keen to examine this further with OFRS.
- If we discover something it gets reported and dealt with quickly so no.
- I think Fire safety is pretty good, but we could improve it by providing the crews with higher levels of training and allowing them to take more of the work load from the CFS teams. This would not only free up time for the CFS to concentrate on the more complicated/dangerous risks, but give crews an excuse to visit premises and thusly improve their local knowledge.
- No
- No Thoughts.
- A close working relationship with business can assist in understanding their needs and how they work, then work with them to guide them through before going down the prosecution route unless the risks/dangers are too great.
- You should be there for advice and to work with business to meet their obligations, but there comes a point where if they keep breaking the law then prosecute them.

Do you think that our current emergency response resources across Banbury, Bicester, Carterton, Wantage and the South of the County are suitable and sufficient to meet the changing risks of those local communities?

- Don't feel qualified to answer.
- They meet the risks but current on call resourcing issues mean things need to be done differently in the future
- Yes - despite possible development, with emergency incidents falling, existing resources are suitable and sufficient.
- I would like to see an increase in full time staff across the county to support emergency incidents especially during the hours of 0700 - 1900 when people are travelling or working and I understand part-time staff are difficult to secure.
- Not enough info to comment
- These are the areas in Oxon where there are population growths identified already - you should be putting your resources in place where they are needed most.
- No additional information or data has been provided to determine the effectiveness of the current arrangements. OFRS has a high reliance on RDS staff. This is not a problem if resourcing can be maintained but BFRS is increasingly finding that the traditional RDS model is difficult to maintain, particularly as existing staff retire.
- No. I believe with the numerous housing developments going on in the Banbury areas such as Longford Park (1092 houses), Land north of Hanwell Fields (350 houses) Southam Rd East (510 Houses), Southam Road West (90 houses) and Land west of Edinburgh Way (400 houses), we should be increasing our Emergency response resources in the Banbury area. We should be looking at changing Banbury fire station to a 2 pump whole-time station to cope with the inevitable increase in Fire calls.
- yes they are sufficient but resources currently available at Banbury must not be downgraded from an immediate response to an on call response that will delay the mobilization of the first fire appliance by 8 minutes and capabilities currently available will be lost during the night when risk of fire is highest. The guarantee of the whole-time response cannot be lost in such an urban town that contains heavy industry ,deprived housing and a 400 km station ground with limited neighbouring support.
- Due to the level of construction currently going on in the Banbury and surrounding areas, I believe it is imperative that we maintain a 24/7 whole-time response in the area. Any proposed downgrade in fire cover (to Day crewing duty systems) would be madness when considering the large number of major incidents that the Banbury area has witnessed in the last 12 months (99p store, Wobbly wheel, Cash and carry, Padbury Drive etc) as well as the weekly Road traffic accidents and house fires attended.
- No, I think the Fire Service needs to grow in proportion to the communities it serves. If the changes proposed were to be implemented there would be no guarantee of the attendance of a fire engine to an incident during the night which would risk lives. Population is growing everywhere and to downgrade Banbury to just "on call" at night is short-sighted. 2442 new homes, shops &

offices are being built in Banbury in the next 10 years. Bicester needs better fire cover but not at the expense of Banbury

- Banbury should remain a 4 Watch D D N N Whole-time shift station. If it is deemed that Bicester is growing rapidly then a recruitment drive and budget found in order to upscale the station to either Day Crewed or Whole-time. It is too ambitious to use the Banbury crew to cover both Banbury and Bicester.
- I believe the forecast is for greater risk/people etc and as such yes the brigade and people do need to be more flexible. However, any pattern that involves a greater role for the retained currently will mean a downgrade not necessarily in fire engines or people but in skills, and therefore there needs to be systems/shifts in place that allow whole-time firefighters to carry out front line operations where possible as much as possible.
- yes. I think the ideal solution to the problems comes in relocating Banbury station to a place where it could comfortably cover both Bicester and Banbury (Adderbury, where the ambulance station is?), not in any kind of day crewing system as this is too reliant on the retained, which is not enough of a reliable resource. I would also utilise the whole-time from Kidlington more, as there is no reason why they need to stay in Kidlington (where they ride 06P1 anyway, why not 07P1/10P1?)
- Though I appreciate that the current industrial, political & economic climates are challenging & things have to change I am sceptical of the faith & reliance placed on the On Call section to cover proposed plans. I feel that there would be a down grade in the service that the public receive, impact on FF & public Safety, simply because of limited training & experience of the On Call, it's the nature of the beast not meant a criticism, it's just not their profession. Crewing is an issue too.
- No they are not. However, the county's towns with whole-time stations should not have their establishment reduced to help cover other town's population increase. You should seek more money from the government to provide a cover suitable for the increasing risks that growing towns will face as the develop.
- There seems to be areas in the south, which are always struggling for staff/firefighters. As there is a large number of stations in that small area in relation to the north could some stations be amalgamated in the south to save costs. Bicester is growing rapidly in a short space of time but look further forward than 10 years Banbury is expanding in industry and dwellings by 2031 the risks will increase. Resources should not be diminished.
- Interesting after reading the county council budget and what was in the oxford mail. Bicester is growing but it seems the fire station is coping ok. If it doesn't, invest in recruitment for more firefighters, I'd support that in my council tax. I've looked at Banbury and this day crewing stuff, what a Victorian system and if the working time regulations change from Europe you couldn't have it anyway. In the south, amalgamate some stations together there is a lot of stations in a small area.
- Banbury MUST remain 24hrs 24/7 to enable it to support Cherwell and mostly Banbury and it small surrounding villages, as if it was to get retained or even day crewing these small villages will be put in great danger as it will take too long for their first fire engine to turn up. Also retained crews are a promise and

not a guarantee as many retained stations struggle to crew at times so what's to say this won't happen at Banbury?

- "I think the crewing at Banbury at the moment is good. 24 hour by a whole-time watch is great supported by a retained crew that supports them MOST of the time for bigger incidents. Bicester is growing community and I see that in time it would be advantageous to upgrade it to a 24hour whole-time station as well
- I just hope any other fire station is downgraded because of it. The council should recognise that Bicester is growing and employ more FF to deal with this not down grade cover at other stations"

Do you have suggestions that you feel would enhance Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Services provision of services to the county?

- No.
- Utilise whole time resources in a different way, for example day crewed plus stations instead of existing duty systems resulting in additional whole-time stations or flexible roving pumps available when needed to meet call demand i.e. early and late shift, but less crew at night.
- Due to seemingly ever increasing response times from the ambulance service I would like to see far greater use of OFRS staff first aid skills and equipment for attendance at life threatening incidents to bolster a struggling ambulance service especially across the rural towns and villages - I would however expect this to be financed by the ambulance service or the council or government as opposed to taking any costs from the fire budget
- Increase pay
- Recruit more fireman for the area.
- You should be flexible and put your resources and staff where they are needed most - as the population changes then you should change with it and keep the people in Oxon as safe as you can.
- OFRS already provides a very effective service to the communities that it covers. It is likely that future funding restrictions will require some re-organisation of the service that reduces cost whilst maintaining or enhancing service levels in line with risk. BFRS would be happy to share our experiences of how this can be achieved.
- Possibly moving Banbury Fire Station South to the Adderbury area, would enable the whole-time crews to respond to Deddington and part of Bicester station ground, removing the need to have a retained station at Deddington and saving roughly 150000 pounds per year (the approximate cost of a one pump retained station). It would also mean we could keep Fire cover at Banbury at its current Whole-time level to cope with the increase in population projected for the next 5 -10 years.
- yes recall to duty for firefighters during periods of high demand. This facility is not currently used. Greater use of on call staff covering shortages foreseen at retained stations currently trialled at Banbury with great success in support of Chipping Norton. Use whole time overtime to cover on call shortages, this was done successfully but was stopped. Day duty workers used for cover during the predictable summer on call shortages

- Sell the large development land that Banbury fire station occupies as well as the Deddington fire station site and with the proceeds build a purpose built Fire station in the adderbury area (preferably council owned land in the area) which could cover both the Banbury and Deddington areas. by losing Deddington fire station you would be saving roughly 150000 pounds and also increasing the fire cover in the Deddington area. Also this means the Fire cover in Banbury area is not compromised.
- Move Kidlington's appliance to Bicester (Kidlington only has a population of 13700 compared to Banbury's 44000) for the days proposed so that the attendance times improved. Alternatively, crew Bicester's first appliance with a nucleus crew of whole timers on a set shift pattern during the day. The other option is to say Oxfordshire is growing and with the current budget, fire cover could not be safely maintained
- To consider all possibilities and not be too narrow to current ideologies.
- To free up personnel, potentially ride with 4? Utilise Kidlington's Whole-time during the day or potentially permanently relocate them? Use the whole-time to support in larger areas, reduce the required competency or the retained to help them do what they need to do better and make it easier for them to become competent. Stop retained admin/checks and give it to whole-time staff (particularly on whole-time stations, cost saving). Offer cover on ret & WT stations to all staff (Inc. WT) for flat rate.
- "Seek more money, do not cut funding, budgets, or levels of service you have in place. You should increase what you have in place, not steal from Peter to pay Paul.
- Cuts as we know will ultimately cost lives."
- Looking on their website there is a large amount of management, in our company we look at having a pyramid to the top. There seems to be a big bulge in the middle in the fire service, could the management be trimmed down as this could be a massive saving as generally the managers are on more money. When I call 999 for a fire engine that's what I want not managers with pie charts and paperwork.
- Don't go down the route of cuts, everyone is cutting and we will only get a worse service. When I dial 999 I want you there as quick as possible with all the best kit to help me and my family. That's your job.
- "Employing more whole time firefighters and having them work at Witney and Bicester which are two busy towns and at the same time improving the retained cover at all stations.
- OFSR need to concentrate on the important thing and what they are there for (fire & rescue) if they need to make cuts surely they should look at office workers and other departments NOT frontline firefighters!
- OFRS needs to also maintain the best cover and not cut that either by down grading stations to day crewing."
- If Bicester need day cover the I think the minimum disruption will be for the rescue tender from Kidlington to stay doing their normal shift pattern but report to duty in the morning and then take the rescue tender over to Bicester for the day. then get back to Kidlington for end of shift.

Senior Management responses

We have tried to cover as many points in this section as possible, placed them in bullet points, and provided a response beneath. Much of this work will use many of the points in order to focus projects around the needs of the community and in order to provide the best solutions for Oxfordshire.

CRMP 1 – Implement the training collaboration review carried out in 2013

Many of the responses indicated that collaboration with regards to training was a good idea and there were no real concerns expressed. With regards to the priority of the project within the service the response was mixed. Some respondents indicated that it should be a low priority, however with little justification. Some respondents indicated that it should be a high priority because of the importance of training and the potential benefits with regards to efficiency.

The following bullet points indicate a cross section of consultation responses:

- Why are we not looking at a Thames Valley approach as this links in with the Thames Valley Fire Control Service?
- Will this lead to shared procedures, equipment etc.?
 - In instances where these differ, how will this be facilitated?
- How does the Fire service College fit in with this review?
- Will this provide good quality training at a good price?
- Have alternative solutions been considered?
- What subjects will this collaboration cover?
- Are we looking at other partner agencies to coordinate training?

Management Response CRMP 1

OFRS will continue to try & improve its training provision as part of an on-going process of improvement. We are committed to ensuring the safety of our firefighters as part of the 'Safe Person' concept. To this end we will engage with colleagues in neighbouring fire & rescue services to provide the best training possible.

Many of the points that have been raised will form part of the project including working closely with the Fire Service College as a training provider or via the use of its venue & excellent facilities. We already work closely with our Thames Valley colleagues and will continue to explore options of collaborative working. This will ensure that we are able to provide training and other

essential services that are cost effective in order to prevent front line efficiencies.

CRMP 2 – Review our aerial appliance capability and implement changes to staffing supported by that review

There was an almost unanimous response indicating that an appliance with a high reach capability was required within Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service. Many of the respondents also used examples of when the use of such an appliance was beneficial in a successful conclusion to an incident.

The majority of responses indicated that sharing a high reach capability vehicle with a neighbouring Fire & Rescue Service was not a good idea in relation to potential slower response times and the possibility of such an appliance not being available if it was already being used at another incident outside of the county. Some respondents also cited issues of familiarisation and training with the vehicle if it were to be shared.

Many of the respondents were supportive of an alternative crewing approach with regards to this type of vehicle. Some agreed that dedicated staffing of this vehicle was not strictly necessary and that resources could be freed up to provide alternative fire cover in other parts of the County. Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service cited that they had been operating an alternative staffing approach on this type of vehicle for two years without any negative consequences.

The following bullet points indicate a cross section of consultation responses:

- How will this free up staffing resources?
 - What plans would be in place to ensure that this vehicle is covered and that this does not affect the other appliances at Rewley Road Station?
 - Have OFRS looked at other services staffing arrangements for high reach vehicles?
- Have we looked at aerial provision from neighbouring services?
- Have we looked at private provision or sharing with other services of this appliance?
- Do OFRS really need a high reach appliance; don't modern building construction and the absence of large amounts of high-rise in Oxfordshire negate the need for such a vehicle?
- How does the risk assessment process work?
 - Are we looking at incident history data
 - What are its current and potential uses?
 - What are the premises that this is essential for?
- What sort of vehicle are we looking for and how will we evaluate this?
 - Are OFRS looking at the experiences of other services with regards CARPs? (Combined Aerial Rescue Pumps)
- Have OFRS considered rope rescue facilities for the new appliance?

Management Response CRMP 2

OFRS recognise the underpinning need for an appliance with a high reach capability within the county. Travel times and availability make it unlikely that we will rely on other counties to provide this however we will explore this option with our neighbours. As part of this project, OFRS will look at exactly what incidents this vehicle has attended, how often and for what duration. This will be cross referenced with the risk profile of the County. From this study, we will determine what vehicle would be most suitable for the needs of Oxfordshire.

We will also examine alternative crewing methods as part of this review in order to identify how we can utilise our resources more effectively within the whole County of Oxfordshire.

CRMP 3 – Review of light response vehicle capability and implement changes to staffing supported by that review

In the main there were some positive responses to the introduction of a 'Light Response Vehicle' (LRV) for example, in rural areas and small towns and villages where lanes were narrower. One respondent cited that there would be a case for these vehicles where 'On-Call' crewing was an issue. Another respondent cited that it was a great idea and that LRV's should be considered at all stations that have two appliances.

There were however some areas of concern from some respondents citing that it was a dilution of the service and that it would put moral pressure on crews attending an incident as they may feel compelled to "go further" than is safe for a minimal crew to do so.

Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service indicated that they would welcome the sharing of research into alternative vehicles and the potential for joint purchasing.

The following bullet points indicate a cross section of consultation responses:

- What incidents are being considered for this vehicle?
- What are the crewing numbers and arrangements for this vehicle?
 - Would this include a level one officer (a supervisory manager)?
- What equipment and capability will these vehicles have?
 - This could be used as a medical first responder unit?
 - Have the limitations been considered against aspects such as the highways procedure?

- Would OFRS consider limiting the equipment to remove the potential for dealing with incidents outside specific safety parameters (i.e. remove BA and RTC equipment)?
- If BA and Fire Fighting equipment are used will this not lead to dangerous situations arising where crews are tempted to enter burning buildings without the appropriate means of protection?
- Have we looked at alternative vehicles, this vehicle will predominantly be used to transfer personnel to incidents? If so, would a mini bus or a 4x4 be a cheaper and more multi-purpose vehicle leading to a more flexible response?
- Have we looked at other services use of these vehicles and was it successful?

Management Response CRMP 3

OFRS aims are for this project to enhance its current response capability by providing an alternative to the standard fire engine based fleet. We believe that this will improve response standards in some areas particularly where On-Call crewing is an issue. We know through incident history that some incidents do not require the attendance of a fully crewed standard fire engine however we recognise that this must not reduce the safety of our firefighters or members of the public. As such, a full risk assessment will be carried out detailing the types of incidents an alternative vehicle could attend, how this will be crewed and what support arrangements will be in place.

CRMP 4 – Review of Prevention, Protection and Response resources to meet the expansion and changing risk profile of Banbury, Bicester, Carterton, Wantage and the South of the County.

With regards to our prevention work some respondents cited that we could improve our approach by the use of improved data usage i.e. Mosaic lifestyles and Origins data to target particularly vulnerable groups. Others suggested better information exchange with relevant agencies and some cited that we should work closely with key stakeholders with regards to the provision of domestic sprinklers. One respondent cited that we could save money by adopting a means tested approach with regards to smoke alarm provision.

Whilst some respondents suggested a more robust enforcement approach with regards to commercial premises, the majority advocated that we should work more closely with local businesses in a supportive approach.

With regards to our current emergency response resources within Banbury, Bicester, Carterton, Wantage and the South of the County this provided the most number of responses. Whilst some respondents cited that our current resources were sufficient, others felt that we should increase our resources particularly Wholetime and that to do this we should seek more money from central government. There were a particular number of responses that cited that Banbury should remain as it is with regards to its fire crewing model and

indeed some cited that it should be increased due to housing developments for the future. Some respondents however recognised that the risk profile of the county is changing considerably and that resources should be placed in areas where they are needed most.

The following bullet points indicate a cross section of consultation responses:

- How are OFRS going to protect the risks in Banbury (both present and future)?
 - Won't new risks in Bicester will be limited due to modern construction and fire safety provision?
 - Don't the risks at Banbury warrant a Whole Time station?
 - Are On call staff competent, trained and experienced enough to cover this area?
 - Shouldn't the growth in Banbury lead to an increase in whole time resources?
 - Aren't Whole time resources needed in Banbury to cover the surrounding on call stations?
 - Couldn't a whole time resource be positioned between the two (Bicester and Banbury – maybe Adderbury Ambulance station)?
- How will OFRS maintain response standards in Banbury?
- Will the current proposal add another Enhanced Rescue Vehicle (a vehicle with greater capabilities for rescuing people from car crashes etc) to the fleet?
- Would a phased approach be a good idea for this, providing purely day staff at Witney and Bicester for a couple of years in order to provide fire safety advice and therefore lower any potential risks even before they come to fruition?
- Are OFRS looking at the Carterton area and the risks associated?
- Shouldn't the South of the County have more resources especially during daytime hours when they receive more calls?
 - Should stations be amalgamated in the South to save costs and pool resources?
- What have the service done in terms of recruitment for stations that struggle to retain enough personnel?
 - Are the service looking at why people stay (rather than leave) the employ of the Fire Service?
- Has a targeted approach based on sleeping accommodation above commercial premises been considered due to their increased likelihood of unsafe fire safety arrangements?
 - Would the service benefit from a historically driven targeted fire safety approach?
 - Have OFRS considered a joined approach with neighbouring services for commercial fire safety enforcement?
- Have targeted statistic driven community safety efforts been made in areas where appliances would take a long time to arrive at or are made up more vulnerable people been carried out?
- Are OFRS pushing fire suppression systems in homes and new buildings?
- What road safety measures are in place to combat the driving deaths and injuries sustained by young people (18-25)?

Management Response CRMP 4

OFRS recognises that Oxfordshire is changing in terms of population, demographics, housing developments, industry, traffic volumes etc. and this has to be reflected in future planning for the service. Fire stations and vehicles must be located in the most effective locations and staffed by the right people, with the most effective crewing models in order to protect areas of greatest risk whilst also protecting our front line services. Prevention activity must be focused where the risk is greatest and protection activity must ensure that our building stock provides the safest environment for everyone who works and lives in Oxfordshire. All of the factors raised during this consultation will be used to inform this project to ensure that OFRS produces plans that are able to lead us well into the future.