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**Hampshire
& Isle of Wight**
FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

NOTICE OF MEETING

<i>Meeting</i>	Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority	<i>Clerk to the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority</i> CFO Neil Odin
<i>Date and Time</i>	Tuesday, 14th June, 2022 10.30 am	<i>Fire & Police HQ</i> <i>Leigh Road,</i> <i>Eastleigh</i> <i>Hampshire</i> <i>SO50 9SJ</i>
<i>Place</i>	Room X - Hampshire Fire & Police SHQ, Eastleigh	
<i>Enquiries to</i>	<u>members.services@hants.gov.uk</u>	

The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations are in force, giving a legal right to members of the public to record (film, photograph and audio-record) and report on proceedings at meetings of the Authority, and its committees and/or its sub-committees. The Authority has a protocol on filming, photographing and audio-recording, and reporting at public meetings of the Authority which is available on our website. At the start of the meeting the Chairman will make an announcement that the meeting may be recorded and reported. Anyone who remains at the meeting after the Chairman's announcement will be deemed to have consented to the broadcast of their image and anything they say.

Agenda

1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

To appoint a Chairman until the Annual Meeting of the Authority in 2023.

2 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

To appoint a Vice Chairman until the Annual Meeting of the Authority in 2023.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies for absence.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To enable Members to disclose to the meeting any disclosable pecuniary interest they may have in any matter on the agenda for the meeting, where that interest is not already entered in the Authority's register of interests, and any other pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in any such matter that Members may wish to disclose.

5 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING - 12 APRIL 2022** (Pages 5 - 8)

To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting

6 **DEPUTATIONS**

Pursuant to Standing Order 19, to receive any deputations to this meeting

7 **MEMBER DEVELOPMENTS**

To receive any updates from Members of the Combined Fire Authority.

8 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

To receive any announcements the Chairman may wish to make.

9 **APPOINTMENTS REPORT** (Pages 9 - 24)

To consider a report from the Monitoring Officer, which seeks various appointments to the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority (HIWFRA) for 2022-23.

10 **FIRE REFORM: WHITE PAPER** (Pages 25 - 74)

To consider a report from the Chief Fire Officer regarding a White Paper, which consults on a series of reform proposals based around three headings: People, Professionalism, and Governance.

11 **2021/22 END OF YEAR PERFORMANCE AND SAFETY PLAN REPORT** (Pages 75 - 100)

To receive a report from the Chief Fire Officer, which explores how Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service performed against key operational and corporate health measures in the period 1 April 2021 through to 31 March 2022.

12 **FIRE CADETS PROGRESS REPORT** (Pages 101 - 108)

To receive a report from the Chief Fire Officer, which updates the Authority on progress made in relation to the expansion of Fire Cadet units across the Service since the Authority's decision to fund the project in 2018.

ABOUT THIS AGENDA:

This agenda is available through the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service website (www.hantsfire.gov.uk) and can be provided, on request, in alternative versions (such as large print, Braille or audio) and in alternative languages.

Agenda Item 5

AT A MEETING of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority
held at Fire & Police HQ, Eastleigh on Tuesday 12th April, 2022

Chairman:

* Councillor Rhydian Vaughan MBE

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| * Councillor Roz Chadd | * Councillor David Harrison |
| * Councillor Liz Fairhurst | * Councillor Gary Hughes |
| * Councillor Jason Fazackarley | * Councillor Derek Mellor |
| * Councillor David Fuller | * Councillor Roger Price |
| * Councillor Jonathan Glen | * Councillor Ian Stephens |

78. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

All Members were present and no apologies were noted, but apologies were received from Donna Jones, the Police and Crime Commissioner.

79. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3, Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Non-Pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 2 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

80. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed and agreed.

81. **DEPUTATIONS**

There were no deputations for the meeting.

82. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman confirmed that Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) commenced the fieldwork element of the inspection of the Service and the Chief Fire Officer welcomed it as an opportunity to develop and improve.

The Chairman was also pleased to announce that a team from Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service and Hampshire Constabulary had won a Best Emergency Services Collaboration award for their work in intensive care units at the Skills for Health, Our Health Heroes Awards on 24 March, which the Chief Fire Officer fully endorsed, thanking the teams for their valued work. Members also learned about a mission organised and led by charity Fire-Aid and the National Fire Chiefs Council saw more than 5,000 items of donated kit from across the UK taken to Poland for onward transport into Ukraine.

The Chairman confirmed that he had attended the LGA Fire Conference in Newcastle with Councillor Roger Price and Councillor Gary Hughes, and whilst there took the opportunity to meet with PFCC Roger Hurst to hear about the arrangements in Essex where there is joint police and fire governance. The information would be beneficial in forming a response to the Government's white paper once published.

83. MEMBER DEVELOPMENTS

Councillors Price, Hughes and Stephens confirmed their attendance at the LGA Conference and Cllr Stephens welcomed the opportunity for all services to come together again and how warmly received HIWFRA attendance was at the event.

Councillor Jonathan Glen shared that he had attended an 'LGA Building Safety course to further learn about the Building Safety Bill and Fire Safety Act and the information provided had been forwarded onto Members of the Authority.

Councillor Ian Stephens had welcomed Stew Adamson to the Isle of Wight and visited Newport Fire Station and Councillor Gary Hughes was planning to attend the Carbon Pathway Board at the end of April.

84. ANNUAL PAY POLICY STATEMENT

The Authority considered a report from the Chief Fire Officer (item 7 in the minute book) on the Pay Policy Statement, which Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service (HIWFRA) are required to produce and publish according to section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011 (openness and accountability in local pay).

It was confirmed that due to the difficult circumstances around the pandemic that had resulted in additional work and responsibilities, there had been a few exceptional payments made that did not qualify as a regular pay increase, and therefore pay rises had continued to rise consistently. The 2011 report on fair pay advised that the pay ratio should be no more than 1:20 and the ratio at the Fire Service was 1:8.9, which Members were happy with.

RESOLVED

The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority approved the Pay Policy Statement at Appendix A for publication on Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service's website.

85. **RETROSPECTIVE BUILDING DESIGN PRINCIPLES - HEALTHY AND INCLUSIVE WORKPLACES**

The Authority considered a report from the Chief Fire Officer (item 8 in the minute book), which requested approval for a proposed programme of works across the estate to ensure buildings remain fit for purpose and reflect the requirements of a modern public service.

The officer summarised the report, highlighting that all buildings were legally compliant, but some did not meet the aspirations going forward in terms of health and inclusion, especially in light of recent standard and design principle changes. Details of procurement and funding would return to the Full Authority should the programme be approved as it was anticipated that funding would come from multiple sources and needed further investigation.

Members shared their concerns on the timing for construction projects considering the high inflation, but accepted that this was not something that would necessarily improve in the short term and could risk delaying projects if plans were put on hold until this improved. The Authority agreed that some priorities were more important than others but that it was important to create an appealing work environment, particularly for new recruits into the Service.

Further investigation on funding the proposals was welcomed by the Authority.

(It was noted that the reference in paragraph 49 should be to 48, not 43.)

RESOLVED

a) Subject to provision and approval of funding, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority approved the programme of works set out in **Option 2** of the report, and the principles and priorities set out at paragraphs 15 to 21 to improve facilities to meet the Healthy and Inclusive Design Principle on fire station sites.

b) Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority noted the work would be undertaken by the Finance and Estates teams to develop proposals for funding the programme of works, and such proposals would be brought back for approval by the Authority as part of an update to the Medium Term Financial Plan later in the year.

86. **BLUE LIGHT COLLABORATION**

The Authority considered a report from the Chief Fire Officer (item 9 in the minute book) which summarised the progress Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service (HIWFRS) has made in collaborating with our Blue Light partners.

The report was summarised and newer Members of the Authority were taken through the history of the collaboration, which was a strong area for the Service.

Section 21 of the report was highlighted regarding fixed period agreements with the NHS and South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS) and the possible need for contractual changes going forward.

It was agreed that Members would be briefed at a future APAG on co-responding and how it worked, particularly around arrangements with SCAS.

RESOLVED

Progress of HIWFRS working with partners was noted by the HIWFRA Full Authority.

87. **OPEN MINUTES FROM THE STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE - 1 FEBRUARY 2022**

The minutes from the 1 February Stakeholder Committee were noted by the Authority.

88. **OPEN MINUTES FROM THE STANDARDS & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING - 11 MARCH 2022**

The minutes from the 11 March Standards & Governance Committee were noted by the Authority.

89. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The Authority did not go into exempt session.

90. **EXEMPT MINUTES FROM THE STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE - 1 FEBRUARY 2022**

The exempt minutes from the 1 February Stakeholder Committee were noted by the Authority.

Chairman,



Hampshire & Isle of Wight

FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

HIWFRA Full Authority

Purpose: Approval

Date: **14 JUNE 2022**

Title: **APPOINTMENTS REPORT**

Report of Monitoring Officer

SUMMARY

1. This report seeks approval to the proportional allocation of members to the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority's (HIWFRA) Standards and Governance Committee and to the Stakeholder Committee for 3SFire Community Interest Company (CIC). The report also seeks appointment of members and the respective Chairman and Vice-Chairman to serve on those Committees, as well as the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Firefighters' Pension Board, and to various other appointments.
2. The report also requests approval of various general dispensations for members of the Authority, to manage potential interests in respect of the precept setting and receipt of member allowances.

BACKGROUND

SIZE AND POLITICAL COMPOSITION OF COMMITTEES

3. Under the Combination Order, from 1 April 2021 the number of members of the Combined Fire Authority is 11. These are comprised of 8 from Hampshire County Council and one from each of the Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton City Councils.
4. Following the local elections held on 5 May 2022, the political composition of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority (HIWFRA) is attached at Appendix 1.

5. The political proportionality provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 apply to the Authority. These include a requirement that where one political group has an overall majority, that group must have a majority on any Committee. The proposed proportionality table for 2022/23 appears as Appendix 2. The Authority is asked to review and confirm the appointment of Members to the Standards and Governance Committee and to the Stakeholder Committee. A list of currently scheduled meetings can be found at Appendix 3.

PENSION BOARD MEMBERS

6. Firefighters’ Pensions Boards became mandatory from April 2015. Under the combination scheme, there was a requirement to have one Pension Board for the new combined authority from 1 April 2021. The membership of the HIWFRA Firefighters’ Pension Board, consists of four employer representatives and four scheme members to be appointed by the Fire Authority for a four-year term. The Terms of Reference for the Pension Board make provision for the Board to elect its own Chairman and Vice-Chairman and therefore this responsibility does not fall to the Fire Authority. Scheme management of the Firefighters’ Pension Scheme is delegated to the Standards and Governance (S&G) Committee. At the AGM in 2018, it was acknowledged that it could be considered a conflict of interest for a Member of the S&G Committee to also be appointed to the Pension Board. This was something that could be overcome by a Member declaring an interest in any item of business where there could be a conflict and not taking part in discussions.

For reference: current appointments to the Pension Board are as follows:

Employer Representatives:		Scheme Members:	
	Appointment effective from:		Appointment effective from:
Stew Adamson	1 April 2021	Richard North	1 April 2021
Cllr Roger Price	1 April 2021	Richard Scarth	1 April 2021
Dan Tasker	1 April 2021	Mark Hilton	1 April 2021
Sean Harrison	1 April 2021	Ross Singleton	1 April 2021

OTHER AUTHORITY APPOINTMENTS

7. Additional appointments are as follows:
 - (a) Authority Policy Advisory Group (APAG) – The Group meets as a preliminary sounding board with senior officers to develop policies, plans

and recommendations for subsequent presentation to the Authority. It is informal and was originally established to make progress with the Authority's Integrated Risk Management Plan (now referred to as the Safety Plan). It has also been used as a useful cross-party group to discuss and deal with matters of urgency. At the June 2020 AGM, the Authority agreed to appoint all Members of the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority and new Shadow Authority to APAG and it is proposed that all Members are re-appointed for 2022/23.

- (b) Principal Officer Pay Review Group – The Authority is asked to appoint three Members, and identify one of these as Chairman, to an informal working group which may be called upon when required (normally on an annual basis) to conduct a review of any proposed changes to principal officer pay and to make recommendations accordingly to the Authority. Councillors Fairhurst (Chairman), Price and Hughes were appointed to this Group for one year in June 2021/22.
- (c) Minority Group Spokespersons – A Minority Group Spokesperson's position is set out in the Members' Allowances Scheme. The Liberal Democrat Group is asked to confirm their appointment to this position and to inform the Clerk accordingly.
- (d) Independent Persons – At the Standards and Governance Committee meeting on the 24 February 2021 following a working group to recruit, it was formally proposed that two independent persons be appointed to HIWFRA at its AGM in June 2021 for a four-year term with an allowance of £100 per annum each. Members are asked to note this.
- (e) 3SFire CIC. Shareholder Representative – Pursuant to Article 42 of the Articles of Association of 3SFire CIC, the Authority is asked to appoint a Shareholder Representative, which is proposed to be the Chairman of the Stakeholder Committee.
- (f) 3SFire CIC Directors – Members should note that Article 22 of the Articles of Association require that the company shall have between three and seven directors. The company currently has 3 directors.
- (g) Members' Allowance Scheme – At its meeting in February 2022, the Authority adopted a new Members' Allowance Scheme for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2026. The allowances in the scheme were to be increased in line with increases to the national NJC pay framework. The pay award was finalised in February 2022 and members are asked to note the current allowances in the Members' Allowances Scheme as set out at Appendix 4.

GENERAL DISPENSATIONS FOR MEMBERS

- 8. Where members have a disclosable pecuniary interest in an item of Authority business then they are precluded from participating in either a

discussion or a vote on that item (Part 7 of the Localism Act 2011). A beneficial interest that a member or their spouse/civil partner has in land within the administrative area of the Authority must be registered as a disclosable pecuniary interest. Members who have such interests could be seen to have a prejudicial interest in a decision to set the precept. The Government has previously issued guidance stating that in its view, elected members of a Local Authority do not have a prejudicial pecuniary interest in a decision to set council tax (or by extension to a Fire and Rescue Authority, a decision to set a precept). However, many Local Authorities have chosen to err on the side of caution and grant a dispensation to all members in respect of setting council tax or precepts, to remove any doubt.

9. Members are also required to disclose as a pecuniary interest any 'employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain'. Whilst Members hold public office, such office is arguably not carried out 'for profit or gain' for the purposes of the legislation. The receipt of member allowances is compensatory (relating to time spent and expenses incurred) and therefore does not mean a Member's role is 'carried out for profit or gain'. On this basis, the fact that members receive allowances under the Authority's Members Allowance Scheme (or another Authority's Members Allowance Scheme) should not constitute a DPI and should not prevent a Member from participating in the business of the Authority. However, once again, to remove any element of doubt it is recommended that a dispensation is granted, so that there is no question Members in receipt of an allowance are able to participate or vote on any item of Authority business.

14. In the circumstances, it is recommended that the Authority approves general dispensations to members for the next year in respect of both interests in land and receipt of allowances, as set out in the recommendations below.

AUTHORITY MEETING SCHEDULE

15. The current schedule of meetings for the Authority and its committees for the coming year is set out at Appendix 3. The Authority is asked to approve this, noting that the Authority may at subsequent meetings decide to vary the dates of any meetings.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

17. There are no financial or resource implications from the content of this report.

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

18. There are no specific equality or other impacts arising from the proposals contained in this paper.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

19. The Authority's appointments and governance arrangements should be kept up to date in order to ensure lawful decision making and good governance. The proposals in this paper ensure that the Authority's governance arrangements are up to date and compliant with Local Government legal requirements.

OPTIONS

20. Option 1 (Recommended) – The Authority is asked to make the appointments and agree the suggested dispensations as set out above.
21. Option 2 – That HIWFRA does not make the relevant appointments or grant the suggested dispensations.

RISK ANALYSIS

22. Option 1 ensures that the Authority's governance arrangements are up to date, its committees are properly constituted and issues relating to conflicts are properly managed.
23. Option 2 would mean the Authority's governance arrangements are not compliant with local government legal principles which could ultimately lead to challenges to decision making.

CONCLUSION

24. It is recommended that the Authority makes the appointments for the reasons outlined in the report above and grants the suggested dispensations. This will ensure the Authority's governance arrangements are up to date and compliant with local government law. This will in turn ensure good governance and will also minimise the risk of challenge to the Authority's decision making.

RECOMMENDATIONS

25. That the Authority approves the current schedule of meetings of the Authority and its committees for the coming year at Appendix 3.
26. That, for the purposes of Part 1 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the allocation of seats on the Standards and Governance Committee, and the Stakeholder Committee of the Authority be as set out in Appendix 2 of the report.
27. That the Authority appoint members of the Standards and Governance Committee, and the Stakeholder Committee and their respective Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen following the agreed allocation of seats at paragraph 5 (above). That, with regards to the Pension Board, the Authority consider the position as set out in paragraph 10 of the report and confirm the appointments as set out in paragraph 10 of the report.
28. That APAG include all appointed HIWFRA Members as set out in paragraph 7a of the report, until the AGM in 2023.
29. That the Authority appoint three Members, and identify one of these as Chairman, to an informal working group for the review of principal officer pay, as detailed in paragraph 7b of the report, until the AGM in 2023.
30. That the Minority Group Spokesperson for the Liberal Democrat Party Group until the inaugural meeting of the Combined Fire Authority in 2022 is confirmed, as set out in paragraph 7c of the report.
31. That the Authority note the current appointments of the Independent Persons for HIWFRA as referred to in paragraph 7d.
32. That the Chairman of the Stakeholder Committee be appointed as the Shareholder Representative for 3SFire CIC pursuant to Article 42 of the Articles of Association of 3SFire CIC as set out in paragraph 7e of the report, until the HIWFRA AGM in 2023
33. That the Authority grants dispensations under Sections 33(2)(a) and (d) of the Localism Act 2011, expiring on 30 June 2023, in respect of the provisions of Sections 31(4)(a) and (b) of the Localism Act:
 - a) to all Members to enable them to participate and vote in any business of the Authority relating to the setting of Council Tax or Precepts, when they would otherwise be prevented from doing so

in consequence of a beneficial interest in land within the administrative area of the Authority; and

- b) to all Members in receipt of an allowance under the Authority's Members' Allowances Scheme or Members' Allowances Scheme, enabling them to participate and vote in any business of the Authority where they may otherwise be prevented from doing so in consequence of being in receipt of a Members' Allowance.

- 34. That members note the updated Members' Allowance Scheme as set out at Appendix 4.

APPENDICES ATTACHED

- 35. Political Composition – Appendix 1
- 36. Proportionality – Appendix 2
- 37. Current HIWFRA meeting schedule for 2022/23 - Appendix 3
- 38. Members Allowance Scheme – Appendix 4

Contact: Paul Hodgson, Monitoring Officer
paul.hodgson@hants.gov.uk

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Appendix 1:

Membership and political composition of Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority, following local elections and subsequent Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton and Isle of Wight annual Council meetings in May 2022:

Councillor:	Political Party/Group	Appointing Authority
Anthony Bunday	Labour	Southampton City Council
Cal Corkery	Labour	Portsmouth City Council
Debbie Curnow-Ford	Conservative	Hampshire County Council
David Harrison	Liberal Democrat	Hampshire County Council
Zoe Huggins	Conservative	Hampshire County Council
Gary Hughes	Conservative	Hampshire County Council
Keith Mans	Conservative	Hampshire County Council
Derek Mellor	Conservative	Hampshire County Council
Roger Price	Liberal Democrat	Hampshire County Council
Ian Stephens	Independent	Isle of Wight Council
Rhydian Vaughan	Conservative	Hampshire County Council

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Appendix 2

Proposed HIWFRA Proportionality from June 2022:

	Conservatives	Lib Dem and Ind	Labour		Seats
Members:	6	3	2		11
Standards & Governance Committee	3	1	1		5
(3SFire) Stakeholder Committee	3	1	1		5
Total	6	2	2		10
Entitlement	5.5	2.7	1.8		
Rounded	6	3	2		
Balance	0	-1	0		

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Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Authority (HIWFRA)

Meetings 2022-23

HIWFRA Full Authority

26 July 2022
4 October 2022
6 December 2022
21 February 2023
11 April 2023

HIWFRA Standards & Governance Committee

29 July 2022
28 September 2022
28 November 2022
23 January 2023
22 May 2023

HIWFRA Firefighter's Pension Board

5 July 2022
12 October 2022
31 January 2023
17 April 2023

HIWFRA Stakeholder Committee

26 September 2022
February 2023

(Some meetings may need to change or be rescheduled throughout the year. This list is correct as of June 2022)

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Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority Members' Allowances Scheme – 2022/2023

This scheme is made by Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority (HIWFRA) in accordance with the provisions of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 and is effective from 1 April 2022 until 31 March 2023.

1. A Basic Allowance of £6353 per annum shall be paid to each properly appointed Member of HIWFRA (excluding Deputy Members, where appointed).

2. A special responsibility allowance (SRA) shall be paid to those Members who hold the offices of special responsibility listed in the table below and the amount of each allowance shall be the amount specified.

2.1 Should a Member be appointed to more than one role for which an SRA is payable, only one (the higher) SRA may be claimed.

Role	SRA 2022/23
Chairman of the Authority	£12,706
Vice-Chairman of the Authority	£3177
Standards and Governance Committee Chairman	£1589
Standards and Governance Committee Vice-Chairman	£795
Liberal Democrat Opposition Spokesperson	£3177
Other Opposition Spokesperson	(£795*)

* Payable subject to the formation of any other opposition Group

3. Travel and other expenses, including childcare and dependent carers' allowances accrued whilst undertaking HIWFRA duties to be claimed by each Member through and in accordance with the Members' Allowances Scheme of their respective appointing Authority

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**Hampshire
& Isle of Wight**
FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

HIWFRA Full Authority

Purpose: Approval

Date: **14 JUNE 2022**

Title: **FIRE REFORM: WHITE PAPER**

Report of Chief Fire Officer

SUMMARY

1. On 18 May, the Government launched its Fire Reform White Paper: “Reforming Our Fire and Rescue Service: Building Professionalism, Boosting Performance and Strengthening Governance”. The White Paper is attached at Appendix A.
2. The White Paper consults on a series of reform proposals based around three headings: People, Professionalism, and Governance. The consultation will run until 26 July.
3. The purpose of this paper is to bring the White Paper to the Fire Authority’s attention. A discussion on the White Paper to inform a response will be held at July’s Authority Policy Advisory Group (APAG) meeting. It is proposed that the Full Authority delegates to the Chief Fire Officer, in consultation with the Chairman, the ability to finalise and submit a response to the consultation on behalf of the Authority.

BACKGROUND

4. Authority Members will be aware of the Government’s longstanding intention to publish a Fire Reform White Paper. It was first publicly announced in March 2021 as part of the Government’s response to Part 1 of the Home Office’s Police and Crime Commissioner Review.

5. The White Paper consults on a series of reform proposals. These include:
 - carrying out an independent review of the National Joint Council (a UK wide body which determines firefighter pay and conditions)
 - seeking views on the changing role of a firefighter
 - asking about whether a College of Fire and Rescue could be created to improve professionalism, as well as consider things such as data, research and standards
 - creating a statutory oath

6. In relation to Governance, the Home Office is consulting on transferring responsibility from “committee structures” (which the consultation implies includes Combined Fire Authorities) to an executive leader such as a Combined Authority Mayor, a Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner or some other elected individual such as a council leader. This will be alongside providing Chief Fire Officers’ operational independence.

7. The Home Office will consider responses and respond to the consultation in the autumn, clarifying what the future of Fire Reform will be. A number of the proposals (e.g. governance reform) will require primary legislation. We haven’t been given any indication when this will be, but it won’t be before the next Parliamentary session beginning May 2023 – this is likely to be the last session before the general election expected in 2024. We can therefore reasonably expect little change in the next two years.

8. Alongside the White Paper’s launch, the Government also formally commenced the Fire Safety Act 2021 and laid corresponding regulations.

SUPPORTING OUR SAFETY PLAN AND PRIORITIES

9. The White Paper looks to build on previous Home Office fire reforms to strengthen the fire system. While it isn’t clear what proposals the Home Office will proceed with, they should improve - to varying extents - the organisations and individuals within the sector, better equipping them to support their communities. In turn, this will enable us to better meet the requirements of our Safety Plan.

10. We will need to reflect the final recommendations in our ongoing work and ensure we take account of them in our next Safety Plan.

CONSULTATION

11. The White Paper is out for general public consultation, and anyone can respond, whether in a public or private capacity. This report seeks the Authority’s agreement for the Chief Fire Officer to respond on behalf of the

Fire Authority, in consultation with the Chairman and following discussion at APAG.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

12. At this stage there are no financial/resource implications for the service. Once the Home Office has determined its future reform programme, we will then be able to consider what impact the service is likely to face.

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

13. An impact assessment has not been completed at this stage. One will be completed once the Government has determined what proposals to take forward.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

14. There are no legal implications at this stage. This will be considered further once the Government has determined what proposals to take forward.

RISK ANALYSIS

15. The Government is only consulting on a series of proposals, no decisions have yet been made. This will be considered further once the Government has determined what proposals to take forward.
16. The Fire Brigades Union has publicly opposed the White Paper. We will continue to monitor their position and the stance of their local members and engage with local officials through our formal and informal routes.

EVALUATION

17. Not applicable at this point.

CONCLUSION

18. The Fire Reform White Paper provides the Government's vision for the next stage of fire reform. It is provoking debate across the sector and is certain to generate different views. It will then be for the Government to consider these views before determining what to pursue. It's in our interests to respond to the consultation to shape the discussion.

RECOMMENDATION

19. That the White Paper is noted by the HIWFRA Full Authority and authority is delegated to the Chief Fire Officer, in consultation with the Chairman, to finalise and submit a response to the consultation on behalf of the Full Authority.

APPENDIX ATTACHED

20. Reforming Our Fire and Rescue Service – Appendix A

Contact: Shantha Dickinson, Deputy CFO, Shantha.dickinson@hantsfire.gov.uk.



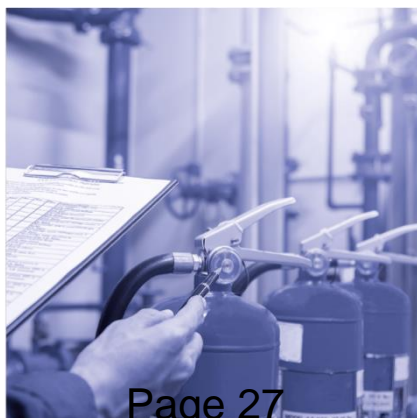
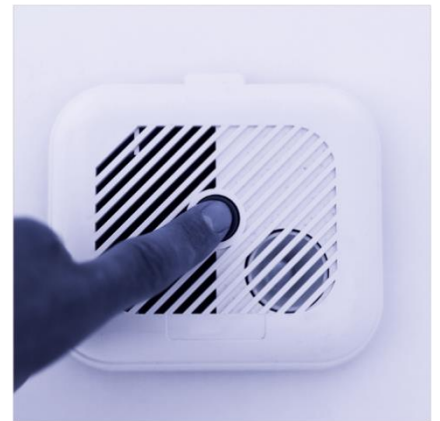
Home Office

Reforming Our Fire and Rescue Service

Building professionalism, boosting performance and strengthening governance

May 2022

CP 670





Reforming Our Fire and Rescue Service

Building professionalism, boosting performance and strengthening governance

Presented to Parliament
by the Secretary of State for the Home Department
by Command of Her Majesty

May 2022



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About this consultation

To: This white paper and consultation covers a package of proposals for the reform of fire and rescue services in England. The proposals cover three principal areas of the reform vision: People, Professionalism and Governance. Views are sought on the specific proposals and the wider package of reforms presented.

Duration: From 18/05/22 to 26/07/22

Enquiries (including requests for the paper in an alternative format) to: **Email:** firereformconsultation@homeoffice.gov.uk

Or

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How to respond: There are three thematic sections in this consultation. Each section is divided into topical chapters which provide background information to the lead question(s).

Respondents can answer as many or as few questions as they wish. You do not have to comment on every section or respond to every question in each section but can focus on where you have relevant views and evidence to share. If you wish to respond to all questions, you do not have to complete the whole form at once.

Please send your response by 11:59pm on 26 July 2022

Please respond to the questions in this consultation online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/reforming-our-fire-and-rescue-service>

Alternatively, you can send in electronic copies to: firereformconsultation@homeoffice.gov.uk; or,

Alternatively, you may send paper copies to:
Fire Reform Consultation
Fire Strategy & Reform Unit
4th Floor, Peel Building
2 Marsham Street,
London
SW1P 4DF

Additional ways to respond: If you wish to submit other evidence, or a long-form response, please do so by sending it to the email address or postal address above.

Response paper: A response to this consultation exercise is due to be published at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/reforming-our-fire-and-rescue-service>

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Ministerial Foreword

Home Secretary



I never cease to be impressed by the dedication of our fire and rescue professionals. As Home Secretary, I have always regarded the police as the first public service but I have come to realise that the fire and rescue service plays an equal part. Together they provide vital pillars of support in the mission to keep the public safe which is the first duty of any government.

It has been a challenging period for us all. Despite the difficulties that we have faced, I have been immeasurably proud to witness the efforts of fire and rescue services in responding to the needs of our communities throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. Fire and rescue professionals have taken on a number of the responsibilities that the emergency demanded. From driving ambulances, supporting the vulnerable, to managing food and distribution hubs and administering vaccinations, fire and rescue services have been ready, willing and able to play a critical role in protecting communities. I would also like to acknowledge the important role on call firefighters provide in keeping their communities safe. Looking beyond our borders, I was proud to be able to offer the expertise of our fire and rescue services to help their Greek colleagues in the fight against horrific wildfires in the summer of 2021.

We are immensely grateful for their efforts. We should strip away any barriers that hold our fire professionals back and provide them with the support they deserve.

Our fire and rescue services protect communities and save lives. It is imperative that they are fully supported to respond to the changing risks they face. This means building on the response to the pandemic, learning from major public inquiries, and responding to the challenges identified by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in relation to leadership, culture and collaboration.

Nonetheless, there is a compelling case for reform of our fire and rescue services. Both of Sir Thomas Winsor's HMICFRS State of Fire reports have concluded that significant reform is needed. The need to improve the emergency response of fire and rescue services to a major incident is compelling. The fire at Grenfell Tower was a national tragedy resulting in the greatest loss of life in a residential fire since World War 2. The Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 report made 46 recommendations for the London Fire Brigade (LFB), all fire and rescue services, other emergency services, building owners and the government. The government has committed to implementing all 46 recommendations in the most practical and proportionate way possible. An independent report (known as the Kerslake report) into the Manchester Arena bombing found that the Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service was "bought to a point of paralysis" as their response was delayed for two hours. The need to improve fire protection is also clear. Dame Judith Hackitt's review into building safety, alongside the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, has highlighted its importance.

Now the government must take action to enable fire and rescue services to perform and fulfil their core functions of prevention, protection, response and resilience effectively in a way that responds to the local needs, the changing risks and challenges faced, and that enables collaboration with other emergency services on a range of public safety challenges. This white paper sets out this government's vision for fire reform.

Fire Minister



The white paper concerns the reform and strengthening of fire and rescue services in England. This builds on fire and building safety system reform in recent years and the government response to the fire at Grenfell Tower. Our vision for the reform seeks to drive change and improvement in three key areas: People, Professionalism and Governance.

People

Our reform proposals seek to introduce changes that will allow fire professionals to further develop their skills and thrive in their work. We want to clarify the role of fire and rescue services and of the firefighter, unlock talent and improve diversity within services, take action to ensure that we are supporting the creation of a positive culture, and further develop schemes to consistently identify and nurture talent. Finally, we will commission an independent review into the current pay negotiation process and consider if it is fit for a modern emergency service.

Professionalism

Our reform proposals seek to modernise the fire and rescue service, to enable greater professionalism and to ensure that we are recruiting and training our fire and rescue services to be the best that they can be. We want to increase professionalism by moving from a Fire Standards Board (which sets clear expectations for the sector) to the creation of a College of Fire and Rescue. We want to develop a mandatory 21st century leadership programme for progression to senior roles, set clearer entry requirements for recruitment, and put in place a statutory code of ethics and a fire and rescue service oath.

Governance

Our reform proposals seek to strengthen governance arrangements across the sector. Out of 44 fire and rescue authorities, 38 operate a committee structure. We want to transfer fire functions to a single, elected – ideally directly elected – individual who would hold their operationally independent Chief Fire Officer to account. This person could be: a mayor who could delegate day-to-day oversight to a deputy mayor; or a council leader who could delegate to a cabinet member or a police, fire and crime commissioner. This effective political oversight would maintain and enhance public accountability.

Fire professionals put their lives on the line to protect and serve their communities. It is only right that they have our full support. This Fire Reform white paper is the first step towards reforms that will achieve this profoundly essential public interest objective.

Building on Success

The Case for Change

The government intends, through this White paper, consultation and future legislation to strengthen fire and rescue services across England.

Our ambition is to develop services with communities at their heart that provide excellent support and development for their teams. This will be underpinned by clear decision-making processes and operational leaders who are empowered to plan and respond quickly to new challenges held to account by a single executive leader, ideally a directly elected politician. We want to ensure that services play to their strengths in responding to emergencies, as well as sharpen their focus on their prevention and protection functions. This will allow service leaders and their professional teams to face the future with confidence, reduce the risk of harm, and help keep people safe.

Fire and rescue is already a highly skilled profession. We want to support staff further, ensuring that they are given the opportunities, development, and oversight to match their status. Our fire and rescue professionals and our communities deserve nothing less.

Fire and Rescue Reform to Date

The proposals in this white paper build on a legacy of reform of fire and rescue services introduced by the Home Office over recent years. Changes have been designed to make services and those working within them more able to work efficiently and effectively, and to adapt to the public safety challenges and emergencies we face, both now and in the future.

The reforms of the past five to ten years have seen the establishment of an independent inspection regime to report to the public on the efficiency and effectiveness of fire and rescue services, stronger national coordination amongst operational leaders, increased government funding for service improvement, and the development of clear and consistent expectations of fire and rescue services. We have supported fire and rescue services as they serve the most vulnerable in communities. We have done this by increasing both the focus and funding for fire protection, nationally and locally, by helping services across England to respond to the lessons highlighted by the Grenfell Tower tragedy, and by continuing to promote fire prevention, including through the national Fire Kills campaign.

We have also strengthened the governance of fire and rescue services by legislating to enable police and crime commissioners (PCCs) to take on responsibility for services, with the intention of improving their transparency, collaboration and accountability.

While meaningful national and local reform has taken place, recent inspections and inquiries have established that there is further to go to ensure both employees and the public are getting the support and service they should expect. That is why the government proposes to introduce a comprehensive reform programme, as set out in this white paper.

Stepping Up During the Pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic has been a huge challenge for all emergency services, and we are proud of how fire and rescue employees across the country stepped up to support their communities.

Last January, HMICFRS highlighted how services continued to respond to fires and other emergencies, while also supporting communities through one of the most difficult periods in our country's history. Most services were involved in proactive work through their local resilience forums (LRFs) – from supporting strategic coordination of the multi-agency response, driving ambulances and joining multi-agency teams responding to deaths in the community, to delivering food and medicines to the vulnerable and using their skills to help others to work safely.

However, the report also highlighted the barriers services face to becoming more effective and efficient, including the challenges posed by a sluggish national negotiation system for pay and conditions, between unions and employers. For example, during the early stages of the Covid-19 pandemic, service leaders were not able to deploy their staff to support communities in a timely manner. Instead, a series of national agreements (the 'tripartite agreement') had to be painstakingly negotiated before fire and rescue professionals could act. In the pandemic this process slowed down – and in some places, stopped – services fully supporting their communities.

Following the end of the restrictive national agreements, services were freed up to safely provide an even greater range of support to their communities. Chief fire officers were able to work with local partners to take a leading role in testing and vaccine logistics, and in administering vaccinations in many areas. This work is rightly a source of pride for service leaders and fire and rescue professionals who, empowered to make operational decisions and risk assessments at a local level, were able to step up to serve their communities.

Shining a Light Through Independent Inspection

Independent, expert, objective and fearless inspection is essential to the promotion of improvement. On the basis of rigorous analysis of evidence and professional judgment, it establishes where policies and practices are working well, so they can be adopted everywhere, and it explains to services, elected representatives and the public where things are not as they should be. Its analysis and the reasons for its conclusions and recommendations for improvement are fully explained, so that services, the public and others can see and easily understand them.

Since 2018, every service in England has been inspected at least twice. Her Majesty's Chief Fire and Rescue Inspector, Sir Thomas Winsor, has produced three annual State of Fire and Rescue reports that have provided clear assessments of the state of the sector and highlighted where reform is needed. They have been significant catalysts for our proposals to further strengthen services.

The inspectorate found that while the fire and rescue services have many commendable strengths, the system needs national and local reform. Based on the inspectorate's reports, it is clear that the strength of fire and rescue services is rooted in their operational response. When the public dial 999, services will respond with highly skilled and committed crews. While response is the most urgent function of a fire and rescue service, some services have unduly neglected vital protection and prevention work. And while some services have taken steps to improve productivity, more could and should be done to ensure that they are making the best use of public resources in ways that always put communities first.

Sir Thomas recognised that in recent years some reform and innovation has been implemented, but improvements have been sporadic. To date, the inspectorate has made six national recommendations. These include: improving the governance of services by granting chief fire officers operational independence to enable flexibility; providing greater clarity on the precise scope of the role of the fire and rescue service, improving the transparency and effectiveness of the negotiation mechanism for pay and conditions; and putting in place measures to improve the culture in fire and rescue services.

Lessons from Grenfell

The fire at Grenfell Tower, on 14 June 2017, is an indelible tragedy in the history of our country. The Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 report (GTI phase 1) made 46 recommendations for the London Fire Brigade, all fire and rescue services, other emergency services, building owners and the government. The government has worked alongside service leaders to ensure that action is being taken across the country, supported by legislative change and significant additional funding to drive improvement. The reforms set out in this white paper will complement the work already underway to strengthen fire safety and protection - building the capacity and capability within services that our communities deserve.

Last April, the government secured the passage of the Fire Safety Act 2021. The Act establishes that the scope of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO) applies to the structure, external walls and flat entrance doors. On 17 March 2021, the government published its response to the fire safety consultation which set out proposals to strengthen fire safety in all regulated buildings in England. Further changes will be introduced through the government's Building Safety Bill, which will enable the establishment of a Building Safety Regulator, as part of the overhaul of building and fire safety regimes for higher-risk buildings. Furthermore, the government held a consultation from 8 June to 19 July 2021 to seek people's views on proposals relating to the complex issue of Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs). While there was considerable support for the idea of PEEPs, the consultation also raised operational challenges to implementing PEEPs in high rise residential buildings which typically would have no staffing or very limited staffing. Concerns include the practical challenges of ensuring safety when evacuating using the stairs, both for the vulnerable persons with the PEEPs and for other residents using the same stairwell; and the operational impact on firefighters using the same space. Further, there are concerns that, if extra staff are needed to make PEEPs work, it would result in disproportionately increased costs for residents. We intend to shortly propose a collection of initiatives that

together seek to achieve our policy aim of enhancing the safety of residents in high rise residential buildings whose ability to self-evacuate may be compromised in a way that is proportional and implementable. While this package would not directly implement the PEEPs-related recommendations in the GTI Phase 1 report, we are confident that it will satisfy the principles of improved fire safety of vulnerable persons behind the recommendations. The government intends shortly to lay regulations that implement the majority of the recommendations made by the Inquiry's Phase 1 report which require a change in the law.

The need to strengthen fire protection is clear. Dame Judith Hackitt's review into building regulations and fire safety, the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, other fires and HMICFRS inspection findings have highlighted its importance. That is why we provided £30 million in additional funding during 2020/21 and have continued to provide further funding this financial year. This funding supports services to review or inspect every high-rise residential building in England by the end of 2021 and strengthen the response to risks in other buildings, including residential buildings under 18 metres, care homes and hospitals. £7 million of this funding helped services to implement Grenfell recommendations through new training, equipment (such as smoke hoods) and technology to support communications and control room systems. In addition, we have commissioned research to support the development of national guidelines on evacuations from high-rise buildings.

A Clear Role for Fire and Rescue Services

The role of the fire and rescue authority (FRA) is set out in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. However, the work of fire and rescue services has evolved over the years. The built environment has become more complex and the nature of the risk facing communities has changed. The vulnerability of occupants is having a tangible impact on how services manage and respond to risk. Prevention, legislation, regulation, innovation and better building and product design have mitigated some longstanding public safety risks, and communities are safer as a result. This major public service success story does not get the recognition it deserves.

Historically, services have managed their resources to meet foreseeable risks to the public. But cumbersome industrial relationships have limited chief fire officers' ability to flexibly use their resources to truly meet changing risk, for example, by changing working patterns to respond to changing demand. Services need to plan for instances where they may need to simultaneously respond to large scale emergencies and a range of smaller incidents. Furthermore, staff need to be trained to respond to incidents safely, adapting to the ever-changing nature of malicious risks, such as terrorist incidents. The challenge, then, is to ensure flexibility so that fire and rescue professionals can fully serve their communities in partnership with other services. Crucially, local flexibility must be available to operationally independent service leaders to make the best use of their people and assets, balancing innovation with the core functions established in statute.

The Way Forward - Strengthening our Fire and Rescue Service

The case for strengthening fire and rescue services is clear. We want to improve the offer to professionals and the public, ensuring that services can adapt and change.

Our Vision

We want to see services providing excellence in their core prevention, protection, response, and resilience functions, responding to local needs in line with national expectations and guidance. Services will be helped to make the best use of the resources available to them, with the ability to come together quickly and respond safely to local and national emergencies, based on good data and evidence. Services need to be more able to adapt to changing threats and risks, working flexibly with other local partners.

Chief fire officers will be skilled leaders and managers, with clear responsibility to run and manage their services effectively and efficiently, in order to meet their local risk. Strong political, executive oversight will ensure services are properly accountable to the communities they serve and run in the public interest.

Twenty-first century fire and rescue services will embrace an ethical culture that attracts and retains talented people, values diversity and reflects the communities they serve. Their employees will be well supported and trained to do their jobs. At the same time, services will embrace learning, use data and evidence to inform their decision-making, and share best practice and innovation.

Employment arrangements across the sector need to be modernised. They need to be more transparent and should recognise staff for their skills and competence and not just for time served. The interests of all parties will be fairly represented during discussions on pay, terms and conditions and other workplace matters.

People, Professionalism and Governance

Our reform agenda seeks to drive improvement in three essential areas: well-trained and supported **people**; high levels of **professionalism**; and strong and effective **governance**.

On **People**, it is vital that fire and rescue services create an environment where they get the best out of their people. Staff should feel confident that they will be supported to reach their full potential, with accessible development opportunities and structured learning available. As recommended by HMICFRS, the role of fire and rescue services needs clarification with greater local flexibility for firefighters and staff to add value; the proposals in this white paper seek to address this recommendation, amongst others. Furthermore, fire and rescue professionals should be supported by a professional pay negotiation process. The current National Joint Council has strayed beyond its original scope and into negotiation of operational response, which should be a matter for operational leaders.

On **Professionalism**, this white paper examines how we can continue to support fire and rescue professionals to help them better protect their communities. Our reform plans set out

our ambition for an independent College of Fire and Rescue focussed on the following five areas:

- Research
- Data
- Leadership,
- Ethics
- Clear expectations for fire and rescue services

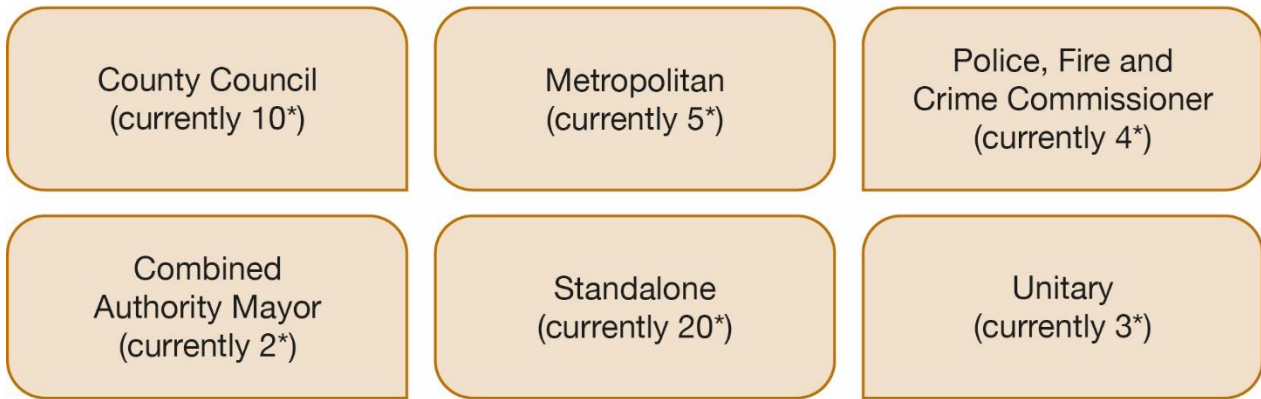
Subject to the response to the consultation, this College of Fire and Rescue could be located at an existing body such as a training provider, fire and rescue service or other professional body. This could include the Fire Service College (FSC) at potentially no cost, for example, given its historic links to government. The FSC is one of a number of training providers, all with a similar market share, available to fire and rescue services. We would like to hear from potential hosts to understand where the proposed college could be located given the potential benefit to both the host and the college of co-location. The proposed college should take on the functions carried out currently by the Fire Standards Board, which sets out clear expectations for the sector. Development opportunities for staff should include support for progression to leadership roles and development schemes to identify and nurture talent. Further, we want to examine the opportunity to support a consistently positive culture within services through the creation of a statutory code of ethics and a fire and rescue service oath.

On **Governance**, the lack of executive oversight in most FRAs and the variation and inconsistency between governance models have hampered accountability and transparency for the public. A review of the role of PCCs found that simplifying and strengthening the governance regime for fire services across England is critical to unlocking the wider reforms that are needed. We are setting out criteria for good governance and our ambition is to move governance to an executive leader, such as a combined authority mayor, a police, fire and crime commissioner (PFCC), or a county council leader. These options are illustrated in Figure 1. They, as ‘the Occupant’, would be able to delegate some or all of their day-to-day responsibilities to a deputy mayor, deputy PFCC or council cabinet member respectively. We also intend to implement HMICFRS’s recommendation to confer operational independence on chief fire officers. This will enable the chief fire officer to have direction and control over their resources to meet the executive leader’s priorities. We propose – whether in primary legislation or statutory guidance – to clearly define the role and responsibilities of both the executive leader and chief fire officer with clear demarcation between the two. Effective governance will ensure a publicly accountable figure can set clear priorities and hold the chief fire officer firmly to account for their performance in order to best deliver for the public.

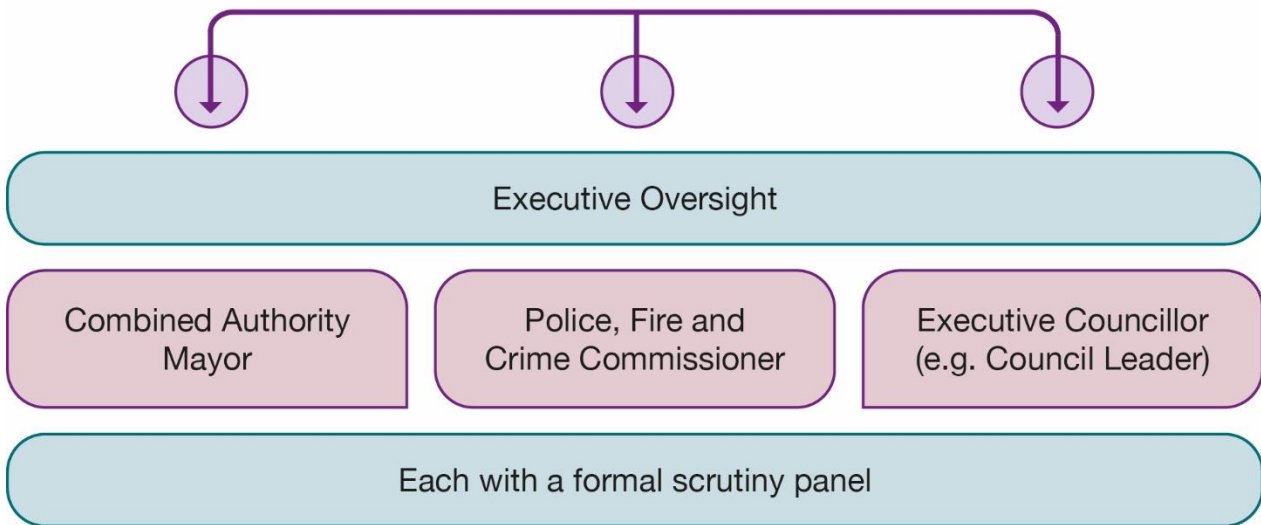
This could be alongside making chief fire officers corporations sole, thereby making them the employers of fire professionals.

We believe that these governance changes will enable effective executive oversight to hold an operationally independent chief fire officer to account with appropriate support and challenge. The executive would be required to produce a strategic fire and rescue plan listing their priorities while the chief fire officer would focus on their operational requirements to meet those priorities. Finally, we do not wish to lose the skills and experiences of existing councillors on the fire and rescue authority who could be used to scrutinise the decisions of this individual.

Current Types of Fire and Rescue Authority



Proposed reform



*fire and rescue authorities as at 1 January 2022

People

The biggest asset available to fire and rescue services is the people who work for them. Their dedication and skill, and the respect they command from their communities, make them a crucial part of the public safety system. We are committed to ensuring that fire and rescue employees are representative of the communities they serve and are equipped with the skills they need to reduce risk, save lives, and meet the challenges of the future.

However, current working practices are highly inflexible and, in some services, no longer reflect the range of incidents faced. In his 2020 State of Fire and Rescue report, Sir Thomas Winsor recognised that for services to better serve the public, they need to be able to adapt and do things differently. He noted substantial barriers to change and efficiency and recommended that the government takes an active role in clarifying fire fighters' true responsibilities and improves the mechanism for establishing pay and conditions.

The Role of Fire and Rescue Services

The principal role of fire and rescue services is to keep the public safe through prevention, protection and response work. The statutory functions of fire and rescue authorities are set out in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. Furthermore, the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 sets out their role as Category 1 responders in response to civil emergencies. This includes their increasingly significant role in local resilience forums, civil protection and in incidents where there is the threat of serious damage to human welfare or the environment.

The Cabinet Office's Integrated Review 2021 put an increasing focus on building national resilience and commits the government to consider strengthening the roles and responsibilities of Local Resilience Forums in England alongside a wider National Resilience Strategy. Fire and rescue services and senior fire officers play key roles in the operation and leadership of LRFs in preparing for emergencies and in responding to emergencies in multi-agency Strategic Coordination Groups.

The Cabinet Office's National Resilience Strategy Call for Evidence closed in September 2021. The Home Office has consulted with the National Fire Chief's Council (NFCC), to ensure the fire sector continues to play a strong role in both national and local community resilience, across the resilience cycle.

In carrying out their functions, services must work with the public and businesses to reduce incidents of fire and ensure that appropriate measures are in place to mitigate their impact. Firefighters need to be prepared, equipped with the right skills and expertise to attend, assess the risk and respond to a range of incidents, across the complex, built environment and national infrastructure. They are supported, where necessary, by expert fire safety inspectors and engineers.

HMICFRS inspections have highlighted that operational response is a key strength of services but reported that there is considerable variation in how prevention and protection work is carried out, understood and prioritised. The most effective services have protected and extended their reach in this area, and we will continue to work with the NFCC on the development and implementation of prevention and protection programmes.

Modern Working Practices

Just as society continues to change, so have public safety challenges to which services must respond: from the increased risk from terrorism and environmental challenges, to pandemics and the increasing demands on local authorities, given that people are living longer and vulnerability is better understood. The role of services, and of those who work for them, needs to continuously evolve. Fire and rescue services provide a skilled, capable and engaged workforce that is ready, willing and able to step into these challenges in the Community Risk Programme. It is right that the public can expect them to be deployed to assist their communities as the need arises.

However, the barriers to doing so were seen during the sector’s ongoing response to Covid-19, where the determination of fire and rescue staff to assist their communities was not always matched by flexible and modern employment practices. The national negotiation mechanism established by the National Joint Council has been recognised by inspectors and others as a barrier to a rapid and flexible response. These barriers have meant services have struggled to adapt and communities have not always been well served in the process. For example, previous collaborations with health partners have floundered in some places and in Greater Manchester, a team formed to respond to marauding terrorist attacks in the city withdrew their labour because of a dispute, leaving the community unacceptably vulnerable. While this capability has been restored through a local agreement that costs more taxpayer money, the government is clear that under current arrangements there is a role for services and their employees to respond to terrorism in all its forms.

Chief fire officers should be empowered to safely make decisions on the basis of risk and resources. While it is right that all relevant trade unions have a role to play in discussions on terms and conditions and the health and safety of their members, this must not come at the expense of safe and sensible progress and efficiency when communities need action.

We will work with fire and rescue leaders to ensure that services can fully support their communities. The need to identify emerging issues and continually assess risk extends to prevention and protection functions where services should ensure that they adapt to meet emerging issues and levels of risk, with their activity tailored to those they target.

Q1: To what extent do you agree/disagree that fire and rescue services should have the flexibility to deploy resources to help address current and future threats faced by the public beyond core fire and rescue duties?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Public Safety

Fire and rescue services play an important role in assisting communities with health and crime prevention and reduction. Services have already demonstrated their ability to support wider public safety. For example, StayWise is an NFCC-led partnership initiative that supports blue light and educational professionals in the provision of safety messaging to children. Some services have collaborated with local partners to help prevent crime and support their communities. For instance, a multi-agency partnership involving Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service, local councillors, Northumbria Police, a local housing company and Sunderland City Council led to the formation of SARA (Southwick Altogether

Raising Aspirations). SARA brings together partners to help the most vulnerable members of the community – from supporting those with mental health problems, helping victims of crime and working in schools to divert and dissuade vulnerable teenagers from a life of crime.

Other activity ranges from identifying and referring those at risk of domestic abuse, modern slavery and hate crime, to diverting young people away from trouble through fire cadets and other schemes. The new Serious Violence Duty in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, which proposes to bring together local agencies to prevent and reduce serious violence, will also apply to fire and rescue authorities.

As discussed later, as well as considering the merging of fire and policing governance under democratically elected combined authority mayors or police, fire and crime commissioners, we would also seek to strengthen the emergency service response to local issues and promote greater collaboration between agencies to support public safety needs.

Q2: To what extent do you agree/disagree that fire and rescue services should play an active role in supporting the wider health and public safety agenda?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Business Continuity

The first duty of any government is to keep the public safe. Unlike the police, firefighters and control staff can strike, which inevitably puts the public and non-striking fire professionals at risk. While we do not propose removing the freedom for staff to choose to participate in industrial action, we believe that public safety needs to be ensured.

Fire and rescue services are ‘Category 1 responders’ under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. This requires them to carry out specific civil protection duties, which chief fire officers must bear in mind when considering their business continuity plans. Requirements for business continuity are also set out in the fire and rescue service National Framework for England. The Home Office will work closely with the NFCC to ensure that each service has a robust business continuity plan that considers a range of challenges, including the impact of industrial action. Working with the NFCC, the National Resilience Assurance Team and HMICFRS, we will commission that the plans are independently assured. As outlined later in this white paper, the operational independence of chief fire officers plays a crucial role in allowing them to manage risk within their service.

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 is also under review, alongside the wider National Resilience Strategy and includes the duties on fire and rescue services in relation to civil emergencies and in collaboration with key local partners. As part this review, we will consider strengthening the basis on which all Category 1 and 2 responders cooperate and support local resilience structures, with FRS services being central to this.

Q3: To what extent do you agree/disagree that the business continuity requirements set out in the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 provide sufficient oversight to keep the public safe in the event of strike action?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Pay Negotiation

Everyone is entitled to be treated fairly. When it comes to public sector pay, those who provide public services, and those who pay for them, deserve no less. The process for determining pay should be open to scrutiny, so that all concerned can understand the decisions that are made.

The effectiveness of the National Joint Council (NJC) – the body that oversees decisions on firefighter pay and terms and conditions – has long been questioned. Adrian Thomas, in his review of conditions of service in 2015, concluded that it needs to be modernised and in the State of Fire and Rescue 2020 report, Sir Thomas Winsor called for fundamental reform. The negotiation of annual firefighter pay awards is a closed process until after any decisions is effectively made, with the views and agreement of only one union being sought and considered. HMICFRS have made recommendations on the current pay negotiation structure, including a suggestion to review its current operation and effectiveness. We welcome this recommendation and will consider how best to take it forward as part of our package for reform. The independent review would consider whether the current pay negotiation process is dynamic enough to respond to changing priorities. It could consider evidence from other employment models and sectors.

Q4: To what extent do you agree/disagree that the current pay negotiation arrangements are appropriate?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q5: Please provide the reasons for your response.

Nurturing New and Existing Talent

There is more to do nationally to stimulate the debate about talent and to ensure that services open and modern employers who value diversity and nurture talent. Fire and Rescue professionals deserve development and support to achieve their full potential. Inconsistent identification and management of talent limits the scope to specialise and professionalise, and means that high-potential individuals may be overlooked.

HMICFRS found that services need to do more to support future leaders, and that diversity in senior leadership positions is even more limited than in the wider workforce. They also found that services often do not actively manage talent, relying on traditional models of development and progression, often linked to time served.

Some services have talent and development schemes, but there are no standardised national progression routes or consistent levels of education or experience required for entry into roles, in contrast to comparable public services including health and policing. We seek views on whether we should explore clearer, consistent entry requirements for fire service roles, so that a consistent approach is applied across the country. In doing this, we need to consider the impacts not only on professionalising services, but also any unintended consequences on the recruitment and retention of people from the widest possible talent pool. Consistent entry requirements, along with consistently applied personal development and progression, could be key to developing the management and leadership cadre of the future.

We want to ensure that fire and rescue is open to the best and brightest. As well as a focus on developing the talent already working in the fire services, there have been positive recent steps to bring in people with experience from other sectors at a range of levels. The NFCC leadership hub is leading a project on direct entry schemes at station and area manager level, as well as developing a coaching and talent-focused culture. This is a welcome development and should be supported by all services. We will also explore the potential to learn from national talent and recruitment schemes such as Teach First, Police Now, Unlocked and the civil service’s Fast Stream scheme model to establish high-potential development programmes. Such schemes could be open to both new entrants and existing staff and would offer a structured development programme. Skills could be tested and extended through placements in a range of roles and projects.

Q6: To what extent do you agree/disagree that consistent entry requirements should be explored for fire and rescue service roles?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q7: Please provide the reasons for your response.

Q8: To what extent do you agree/disagree that other roles, in addition to station and area managers, would benefit from a direct entry and talent management scheme?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Professionalism

The vision in this white paper is for fire and rescue services to continue to be a vital asset to our communities, and a great public sector profession with a focus on continuous improvement and professional development. Services will continue to attract talented people who understand the communities they are serving. This will be supported with clear and consistent expectations and training opportunities that build on the effective use of data and evidence. To realise this vision, we need to have the right support structures at the head of the profession to ensure that the improvement cycle functions well, with clear expectations, strong implementation, and a robust inspection regime.

Leadership of the Profession to Date

The National Fire Chiefs' Council (NFCC) was established in 2017 with the goal of supporting operational leaders to transform services, thereby maximising effectiveness and partnership working. The independently chaired Fire Standards Board (FSB) was created in 2019 to produce and maintain a suite of national professional standards for fire and rescue services. Eight fire standards have now been published, ranging from operational matters such as community risk management planning to issues related to culture and ethics. Fire standards are intended to drive consistency and have a positive impact on the performance and professionalism of services, supporting continuous improvement and setting clear expectations for the service the public should receive. HMICFRS have regard to these expectations in their inspections.

This first wave of reform has clearly moved the fire and rescue profession forwards and government has provided significant financial support, totalling over £15 million over the last four years. The NFCC has provided leadership that the sector was lacking and is in the process of carrying out a significant programme of work. We want to explore how we can build on this success to further support professionals and strengthen fire and rescue services across five key areas of leadership, data, research, ethics and clear expectations.

Leadership

In several reports and inspections, leadership has been found to be problematical. Twenty years ago, an independent review (the Bain Report, 2002) reported “a lack of leadership throughout the service at the political, institutional and operational levels”. The report also detailed the need for senior staff to receive “more training in general and personnel management,” that “a proportion of officers should come from outside the Service” and the importance of sector organisations to provide “a body of expertise on technical matters and business processes.” By 2019, inspections identified that only 12 out of 45 services were ‘good’ at developing leadership and capability.

Effective leadership is not only about strengthening the role of the chief fire officer, but about building capability, embedding values and nurturing talent within services. Indeed, there are many accomplished individuals in the current leadership cadre, but there is no current structure or assessment that ensures that this is consistent. The work of chief fire officers is vital and could become even more complex and challenging if they are provided with operational independence, as recommended by HMICFRS.

Senior operational leaders require a range of skills. They must take on-the-spot decisions in highly pressurised circumstances, which can be matters of life or death. The aftermath of

such decisions can also present leadership challenges both in terms of public confidence and achieving organisational learning. Fire and Rescue leaders are also required to manage complex organisations through change, building positive and inclusive teams as well as taking account of contextual issues such as industrial relations.

A 21st Century Leadership Offer

In December 2020, the Home Office surveyed chief, deputy and assistant fire officers' views on leadership in three domains of command, leadership and organisational management. Around four in ten (42%) thought that services were 'not very' or 'not at all' effective at both identifying and developing high potential or talent and while most were at least 'fairly satisfied' nearly 70% said they would value a mandatory and standardised training programme for senior leaders.

In some sectors, a standardised assessment to reach levels equivalent to assistant chief officer and above provides greater national consistency, transparency and clarity. A new, statutory leadership programme designed for the challenges of the 21st century could allow for a standardised approach in how services identify and prepare the leaders of tomorrow. Officers completing the course should also find it easier to move between leadership roles in fire and rescue services. The police Strategic Command Course provides a model we wish to explore. As with policing, we will need to consider how direct entrants would be able to demonstrate comparable experience and competence gained outside fire services, particularly in relation to command, and how the skills and competence required could be developed in a fair and consistent way.

Q9: To what extent do you agree/disagree with the proposed introduction of a 21st century leadership programme?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q10: Please provide reasons for your response.

Q11: To what extent do you agree/disagree that completion of the proposed 21st century leadership programme should be mandatory before becoming an assistant chief fire officer or above?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Smarter Use of Data

Data is a vital asset in helping services to deploy resources and manage services more effectively and professionally. While there are undoubtedly services where data is being used well, in his State of Fire and Rescue report in 2019, Sir Thomas Winsor identified that

“the sector is missing opportunities to use data and technology effectively” and lacks an overall national strategy to bring consistency and promote innovation.

We have provided funding to the NFCC for them to help set a common direction for services and to consider how best to provide central digital and data support. We want to explore how best to offer further data support to fire and rescue services. This could include improving national data analytics capability and developing data-focused training for those working with data in services and a consistent approach to structuring data. In addition, this could include setting expectations for data governance and for securing data-sharing agreements.

Central to this should be the capacity and capability of fire and rescue services to cooperate with other responding organisations under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and share data, when appropriate with local and national partners, including LRFs. This will support activity across the resilience cycle including preparation, response and recovery to ensure we make the best use of the data we have.

Q12: To what extent do you agree/disagree that each of the activities outlined above are high priorities for helping improve the use and quality of fire and rescue service data?

- A national data analytics capability.**
- Data-focused training.**
- Consistent approaches to structuring data**
- Clear expectations for data governance**
- Securing data-sharing agreements.**

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q13: What other activities, beyond those listed above, would help improve the use and quality of fire and rescue service data? Please give the reasons for your response.

Research

It is vital that the work of services is supported by the best available evidence and research to ensure that services can effectively serve their communities. The current landscape, with a variety of organisations pursuing research activities, presents the risk that research is not co-ordinated to an optimal degree. Further, many individuals in services who conduct research work are doing so alongside other pressing roles.

We want to explore whether central fire and rescue research personnel, working closely with services, could help to ensure that research carried out within the physical and social sciences is effectively prioritised, co-ordinated, quality assured, and disseminated.

A central fire and rescue research capability could undertake the following activities:

- **collaborating** – providing a permanent set of skilled analysts to collaborate with others, including services, to promote good quality research that will provide benefits to services
- **commissioning** – commissioning other organisations to conduct research on behalf of the central fire and rescue research function when national-level research is appropriate
- **conducting** – directly undertaking research, including reviews of existing evidence, using staff permanently housed within the central fire and rescue research function
- **collating** – identifying emergent issues, opportunities, and ongoing fire-related research undertaken across services, academia, industry and other organisations, ensuring that priorities are being addressed and learning is being shared to avoid duplication of effort

Q14: To what extent do you agree/disagree that each of the activities outlined above are high priorities for improving the use and quality of fire evidence and research?

- Collaborating
- Commissioning
- Conducting
- Collating

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q15: What other activities, beyond those listed above, would help improve the use and quality of evidence and research on fire and other hazards? Please provide the reasons for your responses.

Clear Expectations

A hallmark of professionalism is the creation and implementation of clear expectations. While local flexibility is important, robust and consistent national standards help improve the quality of service provided to the public.

Currently, the independently chaired FSB is tasked with creating and maintaining fire standards (the documents through which the FSB sets clear expectations for services) for fire and rescue services. Eight fire standards have now been published, ranging from operational matters such as community risk management planning to issues related to culture and ethics. A 9th fire standard on safeguarding is due to be published imminently. The FSB is supported in this work by the NFCC’s Central Programme Office. The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England requires services to implement these standards. HMICFRS will have regard to them in their inspections.

We want to build on the successes of the FSB and ensure we continue to set clear expectations. We want to ensure effective implementation in support of the fire and rescue

profession. We also want to consider how best to ensure that there is a continued close link between these common expectations and the guidance that supports their implementation, including National Operational Guidance.

Ethics and Culture

We want to see fire and rescue services where everyone is welcome, treated with respect and able to thrive. The need for more consistent application of a robust ethical framework is clear. HMICFRS found in their 2019 State of Fire report that “the culture in some services is toxic”, that 20 out of 45 services required improvement and that a further three were inadequate.

Code of Ethics

In response to the HMICFRS recommendation, the Local Government Association, the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, and the NFCC developed a core code of ethics that all services should embed in their work. This is a positive first step, but we want to consider whether more is needed to ensure we have a consistently positive culture in all fire and rescue services.

The current code has no legal status but is supported by a fire standard (the documents through which the Fire Standards Board sets clear expectations for services) which requires services ‘adopt and embed’ the code. The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, to which fire and rescue authorities must have regard, provides that all authorities must adhere to these clear expectations. The duty on fire and rescue services to adhere to the core code is therefore indirect and we are seeking views on whether to place a code on a statutory footing (a ‘statutory code’) to ensure its application in every service. This could involve the creation of powers in legislation, when parliamentary time allows, to create and maintain a statutory code. These powers could enable a statutory code to be created or amended via secondary legislation. If follow the outcome of this consultation the government proceeds with this proposal, the core code could be subject to review before being placed on a statutory basis.

Q16: To what extent do you agree/disagree with the creation of a statutory code of ethics for services in England?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q17: To what extent do you agree/disagree that placing a code of ethics on a statutory basis would better embed ethical principles in services than the present core code of ethics?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

If a statutory code were to be created, a duty would need to be placed on services to follow it. We are consulting on this duty being placed on chief fire officers who, under proposals outlined in the governance section of this document, could be operationally independent and therefore best placed to ensure their services act in accordance with the statutory code. We believe fire and rescue authorities would retain an important role in holding chiefs accountable for the discharge of their duties to ensure they and their services adhere to the code. However, we do not propose that the statutory code would apply to elected representatives in fire and rescue authorities.

We do not believe that the duty to adhere to the statutory code should be placed on individual employees of authorities as this would not address the need for a service’s policies, as well as its people, to adhere to the statutory code. The need for individuals to adhere to ethical values is considered below in relation to the fire and rescue service oath.

We are consulting on the enforcement of the statutory code – and the related oath – being an employment matter for chiefs to determine within their services, in accordance with the proposal for operational independence contained elsewhere in this document.

Q18: To what extent do you agree/disagree that the duty to ensure services act in accordance with the proposed statutory code should be placed on operationally independent chief fire officers?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q19: To what extent do you agree/disagree with making enforcement of the proposed statutory code an employment matter for chief fire officers to determine within their services?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Fire and Rescue Service Oath

We are also consulting on introducing a fire and rescue service oath (‘the Oath’) in England. The Oath would be a promise to uphold the principles in the statutory code while undertaking tasks on behalf of fire and rescue authorities, to help address the cultural challenges identified above and provide a positive expression of the role services can play in their communities. A mandatory duty to take the Oath would need to be placed on all FRA employees although it would not apply to the elected representatives in the authority as separate ethical standards arrangements are already in place. As is the case with police officers and PCCs, the Oath would be specified and provided for in legislation. We consider that a requirement for all FRA employees to consciously affirm ethical principles through an Oath would make it more likely that the principles would be adhered to. We think this would be preferable to a voluntary option because it would provide a more consistent approach across all services.

As noted above, the core code may be subject to review before being placed on a statutory basis, if that option is pursued. However, by way of example, an Oath based on the core

code may include affirming such principles as acting with integrity, and supporting equality, diversity and inclusion. As we anticipate the Oath and the statutory code to be intrinsically linked, subject to the outcome of this consultation, we will continue to work closely with interested parties on the content and process associated with the statutory code and Oath.

If a breach of the Oath occurred, we believe it would be most appropriate for it to be dealt with by each service as an employment matter. Managers should exercise their professional judgment, reflecting service disciplinary procedures and the circumstances of the individual case. We consider that, in the absence of congruent criminal offence, it would be disproportionate for breach of the Oath alone to be a criminal offence.

Q20: To what extent do you agree/disagree with the creation of a fire and rescue service oath for services in England?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q21: Please give the reasons for your response.

Q22: To what extent do you agree/disagree that an Oath would embed the principles of the Code of Ethics amongst fire and rescue authority employees?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q23: To what extent do you agree/disagree with an Oath being mandatory for all employees?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q24: To what extent do you agree/disagree that breach of the fire and rescue service oath should be dealt with as an employment matter?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Professionalism Summary

We consider that action in these five key areas of improvement could help facilitate further professionalisation of fire and rescue services. Drawing on responses to this consultation, we intend to continue building capacity and capability across these five areas of leadership, data, research, ethics and clear expectations. It will be vital to make efficient use of resources in supporting services. We will therefore seek to prioritise those areas of delivery that are most beneficial in strengthening services and protecting the public.

Q25: To what extent do you agree/disagree that the five areas listed above are priorities for professionalising fire and rescue services?

- Leadership
- Data
- Research
- Ethics
- Clear Expectations

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q26: What other activities, beyond the five listed above, could help to professionalise fire and rescue services?

Independent Strategic Oversight

We believe there could be an opportunity for an independent body to build on the foundations laid and continue to drive forward the further professionalisation of services.

A key benefit of creating an independent professional body could be to provide an organisation independent of fire and rescue services and at arm's length from government to lead the continuing development of the fire and rescue profession. It could comprise and be led by staff working in the organisation as their primary role and providing a dedicated resource to support services rather than by those who also must undertake pressing operational roles. This would help it carry out important activities not currently conducted on a sustainable basis. While we see benefits to independence, it would be vital for any new organisation to work with services, employers, the NFCC, the unions, HMICFRS and others, to ensure that work is fully informed by the views of the sector.

A College of Fire and Rescue

We therefore want to explore our ambition for the creation of a College of Fire and Rescue (CoFR) to be the independent body to support our fire and rescue professionals to best protect their communities. Through providing a permanent body of independent expertise and sharing the outputs of its various proposed strands of work, the independent CoFR could provide a vital aid to services in implementing the reforms outlined in this white paper.

Reforming Our Fire and Rescue Service: Government Consultation

We will carefully consider the creation and appropriate remit of a CoFR using the views gathered through this consultation. We would want to ensure we prioritise areas of work that add greatest value to services, making best use of available resources. We are therefore seeking views on which of the five opportunities for further professionalisation should be priorities for the proposed independent CoFR.

By way of example, the proposed independent CoFR could have the following remit:

- on **Leadership**, developing and maintaining courses such as Leadership Programmes and direct entry schemes
- on **Data**, providing a home for a strategic centre of data excellence
- on **Research**, housing a central research function to ensure that research is prioritised, conducted effectively, and shared
- on **Clear Expectations**, taking on responsibility for the creation of fire standards, building on the work of the Fire Standards Board
- on **Ethics**, the proposed independent body could be provided with powers to create and maintain the proposed statutory code of ethics and fire and rescue service oath, and also keep practical implementation of the code and Oath under review

The remit outlined above could help ensure that these vital activities are conducted in a sustainable and independent manner by an organisation dedicated to undertaking this work. Placing multiple strands of work in the same organisation focused solely on their delivery would allow each strand to be supported by the others. Taking the examples above, a CoFR could allow expectations of services to be informed by the latest research and help leadership programmes to be imbued with strong ethical principles.

We also want to make sure that the proposed independent CoFR has the power to effect further improvement in fire and rescue services. We therefore wish to consider whether it should be given legislative powers to support its work. These could mirror the powers held by the College of Policing under the Police Act 1996, as amended by the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime & Policing Act 2014, or could involve the extension to the College of Fire of the powers held by the Secretary of State under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. For example, legislative powers provided to the CoFR could include the power to issue statutory codes of practice with the approval of the Secretary of State.

It should be noted that the remit of the NFCC extends significantly beyond the functions outlined above. Therefore, if the independent College of Fire were to be created, a strong co-operative working relationship with the NFCC would be vital in achieving the aims of both organisations.

Q27: To what extent do you agree/disagree with the creation of an independent College of Fire and Rescue to lead the professionalisation of fire and rescue services?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q28: Please provide your reasons for your response

Governance

Governance Structures

There are 44 FRAs across England operating under a range of different governance models. We believe this variation in the operation of models is unhelpful and leads to problems in relation to accountability and transparency.

Unlike FRAs overseen by PFCCs or combined authority mayors, the majority of authorities still operate a committee structure comprising many members (in the case of one authority, nearly 90). This can slow decision making and impair accountability. And across most of England, the public do not have a direct say in who is responsible for their fire service. In most areas, while members are elected (for example, as a councillor), they are not directly elected with a clear mandate in relation to fire.

Public awareness of FRAs and their members is not high. Our public polling as part of the review of PCCs found that the majority (89%) could not name a member of their FRA. In contrast, the awareness of PCCs (including police, fire and crime commissioners) is growing since the first candidates were elected in 2012. In the same polling, nearly two thirds (65%) of the public in these areas said they were either aware of their commissioner, or aware that they were responsible for policing (this figure is in line with other recent estimates from the Crime Survey for England and Wales). The 2021 PCC elections saw a significantly increased turnout – provisionally up 6.5 percent more than in 2016 - and more than double that of the 2012 elections. This shows the model is maturing and public awareness is growing.

After considering the conclusions of the PCC review, and reviewing inspection and other reports, the government view is that oversight of fire services needs to change. Our preferred governance model is one that meets the following criteria:

- there has a single, elected – ideally directly elected – individual who is accountable for the service rather than governance by committee
- there is clear demarcation between the political and strategic oversight by this individual, and the operationally independent running of the service by the chief fire officer
- that the person with oversight has control of necessary funding and estates
- decision-making, including budgets and spending, is transparent and linked to local public priorities

Therefore, to strengthen governance across the sector, we believe there is a strong case to consider options to transfer governance to an elected individual.

We seek views on this approach and who the most appropriate person may be. Options will need to be discussed options with each local area. There are a number of options for who this person could be. These include a directly elected combined authority mayor or a PCC. Each is a single directly elected individual who can provide the accountable leadership that we envisage, enabling the public to have a say in who oversees their local service. But there may be other options, including retaining fire in county council's under a designated leader. We seek views on who else could provide this executive leadership.

Q29: To what extent do you agree/disagree that Government should transfer responsibility for fire and rescue services in England to a single elected individual?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q30: What factors should be considered when transferring fire governance to a directly elected individual?

Please provide the reasons for your response.

The Mayoral Model

An option to achieve directly elected oversight of fire could be through the combined authority mayoral model. The government would like to see more combined authority mayors exercising public safety functions.

As set out in the Home Secretary’s response to the PCC review (2021) and the Levelling Up white paper, combined authority mayors could also take on public safety functions where boundaries allow.

Of the eight existing MCAs without fire and rescue functions currently, four (Cambridgeshire & Peterborough, Sheffield City Region, West Midlands and West Yorkshire) are already coterminous with fire and rescue boundaries. Subject to this consultation, we will explore options for transferring the fire functions directly to the MCAs for exercise by the mayors in these areas at the earliest opportunity. The four remaining existing MCAs (Liverpool City Region, North of Tyne, Tees Valley and West of England) are not currently coterminous with fire and rescue boundaries and so, subject to this consultation, we will need to consult with those in the local areas to establish the way forward.

Q31: Where Mayoral Combined Authorities already exist, to what extent do you agree/disagree that fire and rescue functions should be transferred directly to these MCAs for exercise by the Mayor?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Police and Crime Commissioners

Another option could be to transfer responsibility to a police, fire and crime commissioner. In 2017, measures were introduced through the Policing and Crime Act 2017 to enable PCCs to take on oversight of their local fire services.

It is for each commissioner to determine whether they want responsibility for fire. If so, they need to produce a proposal for the Home Secretary that demonstrates how a governance transfer meets the statutory tests of economy, efficiency and effectiveness, and that it does not have a detrimental impact on public safety. To date, four areas have made the transition to a police, fire and crime commissioner.

The PCC review considered how PCCs' accountability could be strengthened, and their role expanded in line with the government's manifesto commitment, and considered the benefits of directly elected oversight of fire services. Those interviewed from both policing and fire in the review were broadly supportive of the benefits of bringing policing and fire governance together under a directly elected individual, particularly to maximise the benefits of emergency services collaboration and strengthen accountability and transparency to the public. To achieve a more consistent approach to fire governance, many were strongly in favour of mandating governance change across England, rather than the current bottom-up piecemeal approach.

We have seen the immense value in what PFCCs in the four areas who have responsibility for fire have provided, including strengthened local accountability, enhanced collaboration and improvements in what their fire services provide the public. The business cases for the first four PFCCs estimated savings of between £6.6 million to £30 million over the first ten years. In Northamptonshire, the financial autonomy provided by the commissioner enabled the service to recruit new firefighters and replace equipment and facilities, thereby improving the support it provides to people and businesses. In North Yorkshire, the 'Enable' service brings together police and fire back-office staff to work as one team, under one roof, improving efficiency and affordability for all. The enhanced collaboration driven by commissioners is not only improving organisational efficiency but is saving lives. In Staffordshire, the commissioner agreed a missing persons support protocol between Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service, Staffordshire Police and West Midlands Ambulance Service in which 90% of relevant incidents attended by fire and rescue crews were lifesaving or injury preventing.

The PCC review crystalised our proposals on fire service governance which the Home Secretary set out in her Written Ministerial Statement of March 2021. We therefore seek views on whether this is another acceptable option.

Q32: To what extent do you agree/disagree that Government should transfer responsibility for fire and rescue services in England to police and crime commissioners?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Other Options, such as an executive councillor

We recognise, reflecting the circumstances of each local area, that it may be preferable for somebody a different option other than a PCC or mayor to be given responsibility. This may be where a fire service is currently part of a county council or local boundaries aren't aligned. We are therefore filling to consider other options, although any option will need to meet our

criteria for good governance as listed above, in particular the need for clear executive – rather than committee – leadership.

Q33: Apart from combined authority mayors and police and crime commissioners, is there anyone else who we could transfer fire governance that aligns with the principles set out above?

Yes	No

Q34: If yes, please explain other options and your reasons for proposing them.

As part of any governance change, we could take the opportunity to strengthen and clarify the legal basis against which fire and rescue authorities operate. The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 requires fire authorities to make provision to provide ‘core functions’ (for example, fire safety, firefighting, rescuing people from road traffic accidents, functions in emergencies). While the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England provides a little more in terms of defining the role of authorities, further work could be done to define their scrutiny and oversight function.

In transferring responsibility to a single individual, we could also put good governance principles in statute. For example, legislation could expressly set out the role and function of the FRAs including its oversight and scrutiny functions, specifying how transparency objectives should be met, and clarifying the relationship between political oversight and operational decision making. If not in statute, this could also be included in the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England.

Q35: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the legal basis for fire and rescue authorities could be strengthened and clarified?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q36: Please provide the reasons for your response.

Should we decide to bring forward governance change and transfer governance from existing fire and rescue authorities, we do not want to lose the skills and expertise built up by FRAs. And regardless of who the executive leader is, each would need a body to scrutinise their decision making. Part 2 of our PCC review is assessing the current scrutiny arrangements for PCCs in more detail and how they could be improved. In the light of this, we will consider carefully what may be the appropriate arrangements for fire, including the findings from Part 2 of our PCC review which considered how the current scrutiny arrangements for PCCs could be improved.

Boundaries

In order to transfer fire governance to an elected official, the boundaries of the fire and rescue service and the police force/combined authority/county council must align. This is to ensure that there is a consistent electoral mandate across the whole of the area concerned. Across most of England, the boundaries for fire and rescue services and police forces/combined authorities (where present) are coterminous, making the transfer of governance to combined authority mayors and PCCs practicable. In areas where there is more than one fire and rescue service within a police force area (for example, Sussex Police covers the area of both East Sussex and West Sussex fire and rescue services) a transfer of functions is still possible as the PCC can take responsibility for each fire and rescue service that falls within their area. We would not seek to combine services unless there was local appetite to do so.

However, in other parts of the country such as the south-west of England, fire and police boundaries do not align. This means the transfer of fire governance to someone like a PCC would not be practicable unless steps were taken to bring about coterminous boundaries. We will discuss options for these areas with interested parties to determine how to achieve the necessary change.

Q37: To what extent do you agree/disagree that boundary changes should be made so that fire and rescue service areas and police force/combined authorities (where present) areas are coterminous?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Fire Funding

We are aware that any governance change will have funding implications. This will be particularly acute in services that are part of a county council or unitary authority. Should any governance transfer be made, we will need to assess that impact, for example on staff, assets and revenue transferred, and council tax precept. We are keen to ensure that both the financial sustainability for all local authorities and the operational capabilities of fire services are maintained throughout, including during any transition period. The government's aim is that we will keep council tax bills low and this will not be adversely affected by our governance proposals.

Where fire is part of a county or unitary authority, we have seen that fire and rescue does not always receive the resources it might otherwise be allocated due to competing priorities within the parent authority. As a result, fire and rescue can see its budget reduced mid-year to meet pressures elsewhere in its parent authority. The fire and rescue service also must compete with other parts of the local authority for capital funding to replace essential equipment. Subject to the results of this consultation, should fire stay within a county council or unitary authority rather than be transferred to a PCC or mayor, we propose taking steps to ring-fence the operational fire budgets within all county councils and unitary authorities who run fire services. This will enable the executive leader and chief fire officer to have certainty at the start – and throughout – the financial year over what resources they have available to them in order to meet the requirements of their local plan.

On conclusion of this consultation, we will work with national and local government representatives to consider these issues further. Should any changes to governance be given effect, we will consider options to ensure that authorities in all their forms continue to take effective decisions on their service provision ahead of any governance change.

Q38: To what extent do you agree/disagree with ring-fencing the operational fire budget within fire and rescue services run by county councils and unitary authorities?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q39: Please provide the reasons for your response.

A Balanced Leadership Model

Chief fire officers, properly held to account for performance by stronger governance, must also be able to make operational deployments and use their resources in the most efficient and effective ways to meet known and foreseeable risks. Yet in many cases, they are required to engage in prolonged negotiation at both the national and local levels on matters that should be within their operational responsibility.

In their first inspections, HMICFRS found that the lack of clear operational independence of chief fire officers created a barrier to services becoming more effective and efficient, and they found examples where chiefs were prevented by their authorities from implementing operational changes. HMICFRS recommended that the Home Office should take steps to give chiefs operational independence, including issuing clear guidance on the demarcation between governance and operational decision making. We agree with this recommendation and will legislate to do so when parliamentary time allows. While good governance, accountability and robust political decision-making is critical, it should be for the chief fire officer to determine the operational deployment of their staff.

We want to move to a consistent position where the political, executive leader of the fire and rescue authority will be responsible for their fire service and will be accountable – ultimately at the ballot box – for the service’s performance. This will be alongside the chief fire officer being accountable for operational decisions, with the two working effectively together to ensure the best service to the public.

The table below illustrates the possible demarcation of responsibility between the political (executive) leader and the chief fire officer. For example, the chief fire officer would make decisions in relation to the appointment and dismissal of staff, and the configuration, deployment and organisation of fire service resources. They would also make decisions to balance competing operational needs aligned to the strategic priorities set by the executive leader, to which they must have regard; including operational decisions to reallocate resources to meet immediate and ongoing demand and allocate staff to specific duties to reduce risk and save lives. We will work with those in the fire sector and local government to define this further ahead of making the required legislative changes.

Task	Responsible
<u>Setting priorities</u>	<u>Executive leader</u>
<u>Budget setting</u>	<u>Executive leader</u>
<u>Setting precept</u>	<u>Executive leader</u>
<u>Setting response standards</u>	<u>Executive leader</u>
Opening and closing fire stations	Executive leader*
<u>Appointment and dismissal of chief fire officer</u>	<u>Executive leader</u>
<u>Appointment and dismissal of other fire service staff</u>	<u>Chief fire officer</u>
<u>Allocation of staff to meet strategic priorities</u>	<u>Chief fire officer</u>
<u>Configuration and organisation of resources</u>	<u>Chief fire officer</u>
<u>Deployment of resources to meet operational requirements</u>	<u>Chief fire officer</u>
<u>Balancing of competing operational needs</u>	<u>Chief fire officer</u>
<u>Expenditure up to certain (delegated) levels</u>	<u>Chief fire officer</u>

*Opening and closing of fire stations could be a joint decision; operationally fire chiefs could be responsible for decisions on moving teams, whilst ultimate political and executive responsibility lies with the executive leader.

There will be a bright, clear line demarcating the nature and extent of the chief fire officer's operational independence against the role of the executive leader. We will consider best practice in local government to develop this, as well as learning from the relationships between PCCs and their chief constables. We could consider producing something akin to the Policing Protocol to clarify roles and responsibilities and provide safeguards.

To support that, the declaration of the acceptance of office of PCCs and mayors could be extended to respect the operational independence of chief fire officers in the same way it presently applies to the independence of police officers.

At all times, the strengthened governance model of an executive leader will hold the chief to account for their decisions and performance.

Q40. To what extent do you agree with this proposed approach (as outlined in the table above)?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q41. Do you have any other comments to further support your answer?

Q42. Are there any factors we should consider when implementing these proposals?

Q43: What factors should we consider when giving chief fire officers operational independence?

Please provide the reasons for your opinions.

Legal Entity of Chief Fire Officers

When considering the role of chief fire officers in the context of transferring governance to a PCC, the extent of operational independence granted to them becomes even more relevant.

In the PCC model for policing governance, chief constables have operational independence from their commissioner in relation to the running of their police forces. The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 provides that a police force and its civilian staff are under the direction and control of the chief constable. The 2011 Act also makes each chief constable a corporation sole. That means that the chief constable is a legal entity in their own right, occupying a single incorporated office. It makes the chief constable the employer of all those who work for the police force, and gives them legal authority over certain decisions and functions.

We therefore will consider whether to legislate to make chief fire officers corporations sole. This could clarify their role and responsibilities, and make them the employers of all fire personnel. This would mirror the arrangement in policing, although we will ensure these new arrangements are appropriate for fire. Subject to the views of the consultation, should we decide to proceed, we recognise specific arrangements may need to be put in place for chief fire officers employed by fire and rescue services run by county-councils and unitary authorities due to how closely fire professionals and assets are embedded in those organisations. We will work with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and others in local government to consider this further.

Q44: What factors should we consider should we make chief fire officers corporations sole?

Clear Distinction Between Strategic and Operational Planning

Fire and rescue authorities are required by the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England to publish an Integrated Risk Management Plan (or similar for mayors and PFCCs). Put simply, the plan should assess all foreseeable fire-and-rescue related risks the service may face, and list how they will be met or responded to.

We are seeking views on how best to clarify the distinction between strategic and operational planning. We believe there should be a clear distinction between a strategic fire and rescue plan established by the fire authority and for which it is responsible, that sets priorities for the service on behalf of the public, and an operational plan which would become the responsibility of the chief fire officer and would deal with how strategic priorities will be met and risks mitigated.

Regardless of whether we require a new strategic plan, we propose to change the title of the operational plan to ‘the Community Risk Management Plan’. This better reflects the focus that these plans should have on risks to communities and more closely aligns to the newly established Community Risk Fire Standard introduced by the Fire Standards Board.

Q45: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the responsibility for strategic and operational planning should be better distinguished?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q46: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the strategic plan should be the responsibility of the fire and rescue authority?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q47: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the operational plan should be the responsibility of the chief fire officer?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q48: Please provide the reasons for your response.

--

About you

Please use this section to tell us about yourself

Full name	
Job title or capacity in which you are responding to this consultation exercise (for example, member of the public)	
Date	
Company name/organisation (if applicable)	
Address	
Postcode	
If you would like us to acknowledge receipt of your response, please tick this box	<input type="checkbox"/> (please tick box)
Address to which the acknowledgement should be sent, if different from above	

If you are a representative of a group, please tell us the name of the group and give a summary of the people or organisations that you represent.

Contact details and how to respond

Please respond to this consultation online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/reforming-our-fire-and-rescue-service>

Alternatively, you can send in electronic copies to:

firereformconsultation@homeoffice.gov.uk

Alternatively, you may send paper copies to:

Fire Reform Consultation

Fire Strategy & Reform Unit

4th Floor, Peel Building

2 Marsham Street,

London

SW1P 4DF

Complaints or comments

If you have any complaints or comments about the consultation process you should contact the Home Office at the above address.

Extra copies

Further paper copies of this consultation can be obtained from this address and it is also available online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/reforming-our-fire-and-rescue-service>

Alternative format versions of this publication can be requested from:

firereformconsultation@homeoffice.gov.uk

Publication of response

A paper summarising the responses to this consultation will be published online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/reforming-our-fire-and-rescue-service>

Representative groups

Representative groups are asked to give a summary of the people and organisations they represent when they respond.

Confidentiality

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA), the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals, amongst other things, with obligations of confidence. In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Home Office.

The Home Office will process your personal data in accordance with the DPA and in the majority of circumstances, this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.

Impact Assessment

The Government is mindful of its duty to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and the need to assess the potential impact of any proposal on those with protected characteristics. In each part of the consultation, we invite views and evidence on the potential impact of the proposals and the package of proposals as a whole on such persons.

The impact assessment for this consultation can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/reforming-our-fire-and-rescue-service>

Consultation principles

The principles that government departments and other public bodies should adopt for engaging stakeholders when developing policy and legislation are set out in the consultation principles.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consultation-principles-guidance>



**Hampshire
& Isle of Wight**
FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

HIWFRA Full Authority

Purpose: [Noted](#)

Date: **14 JUNE 2022**

Title: **2021/22 END OF YEAR PERFORMANCE AND SAFETY PLAN REPORT**

Report of [Chief Fire Officer](#)

SUMMARY

1. The End of Year Performance Report (**Appendix A**) explores how the Service has achieved our core purpose over the last year of making life safer. Performance is described against each of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire Authority's Safety Plan priorities. The report explores how the Service performed against a range of measures, with comparisons made against previous years and to national trends, where relevant and applicable.
2. This report explores how Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service performed against key operational and corporate health measures in the period 1 April 2021 through to 31 March 2022, our first year as the new combined fire authority.
3. We use performance and assurance reporting to assess our effectiveness, efficiency, and financial position. Our performance measures help us find areas for improvement, as well as identify successes and good practice to be shared, where applicable, across public services and the fire sector. We also assess progress against our Safety Plan improvements and the national fire standards.

HIGHLIGHTS – SERVICE PERFORMANCE 2021/22

4. Staff sickness increased from 10.7 average shifts/days lost in 2020/21 to 11.9 shifts/days lost in 2021/22. This is owing to increases in musculo-skeletal, mental health, and respiratory sickness. Despite Covid-19 still being a leading absence type, this declined compared to 2020/21 when the pandemic was at peak levels. However, it is important to emphasise that sickness has returned to 2019/20 levels.
5. Sickness absences, staff turnover and other factors, such as our provision of support to partners, have affected availability levels, which reduced compared to 2020/21. Whole-time availability decreased to 89.3% (a decrease of 4.3% points from 2020/21) owing to our planned move in degradation procedure; and on-call availability was 62.4% - down 18% points versus 2020/21 when availability was at unprecedented high levels, partly owing to the furlough periods in the early pandemic. As we resume more normal activity (and sickness levels) following Covid-19 we anticipate on-call availability will improve over the year ahead, moving closer to pre-pandemic levels (2019/20 on-call availability: 75%).
6. Our average critical response time in 2021/22, with a refined set of critical call types, was 7 minutes 35 seconds - up 26 seconds, from 7 minutes 9 seconds in 2020/21. Response times increased towards the latter half of this year, driven by rises in some Road Traffic Collision (RTC) response times in more remote (rural) or difficult to access locations. We have seen increasing response times over the last 2 years, although improvements overall over a 3-to-5-year period. It is also important to note that our response time performance when compared nationally remains strong. National figures are split by incident types and by urban/rural locations. Home Office statistics (February 2022) showed that predominately rural Services had an average response time (including call handling) for dwelling fires of 9 minutes 18 seconds compared to 7 minutes 57 seconds in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. We also compare favourably versus the non-metropolitan average response time of 8 minutes 39 seconds for this incident type.
7. In terms of a core part of our Prevention activity, the number of Safe and Well visits completed was 9,247, a significant increase (+29%) compared to 2020/21, while the proportion of visits where we were refused entry or could not contact the individual remained stable (around a quarter) compared to last year. This is reflective of our extensive and ongoing focus on prevention activity.
8. Following the easing of Covid-19 restrictions we have also been able to increase our protection activity, including fire safety audits - of which we

undertook 1,351 between April 2021 and March 2022, significantly more (+753, 126%) compared to the previous year when 598 audits were completed. Similarly, following the easing of lockdown restrictions, we have seen a significant increase in business regulation and licensing consultations – maintaining high levels of performance in this area.

HIGHLIGHTS – SAFETY PLAN IMPROVEMENTS AND FIRE STANDARDS ASSURANCE

9. The five-year HIWFRS Safety Plan was launched in April 2020, setting out our priorities, values, how we will build on our strengths, and how we will address the areas that require more focus and improvement.
10. For Year 2, we originally committed to completing 34 improvements. We have completed 28 of these activities, as detailed in **Appendix B**. However, whilst the planning and preparation has been completed, owing to Covid-19, sickness and our support to partners, the implementation of four Year 2 activities will now take place in 2022/23. Furthermore, 2 other improvement activities have of been delayed and will both be completed by the end of July 2022.
11. The Fire Standards Board has published 10 national fire standards, covering a wide range of areas, with a total 119 requirements ('desirable outcomes') underneath the 10 standards. The Service has undertaken a significant amount of assurance activity to assess our compliance with the standards, which has shown that we have 'reasonable' or 'substantial' assurance in 97% (116) of the 119 desirable outcomes. One of the remaining three desirable outcomes is also not applicable to HIWFRS.

SUPPORTING OUR SAFETY PLAN AND PRIORITIES

12. The End of Year Performance report provides a view of performance in all the Safety Plan priority areas, with specific progress against the Safety Plan improvements reported in Appendix B. We regularly check and report progress against the Safety Plan – across our Directorates and within our Executive Group.

CONSULTATION

13. There has been a wide range of internal consultation and collaboration to help develop this report. External consultation has not been required.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

14. The cost associated with the production of the End of Year Performance report is within existing resources.

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

15. This report does not lead to any change activity, so no impact assessments are required. However, we have ensured we utilise dyslexia and colour-blind friendly fonts and colours in our appendices to ensure the reports are as accessible as possible.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

16. There are no legal implications resulting from this report.

RISK ANALYSIS

17. Failure to regularly report on and scrutinise our performance and progress against our Safety Plan could result in no action being taken to address reducing deficient performance which may affect the outcomes for our communities and our people. The information may, in some cases, show increasing (or reducing) risks for the Authority.

EVALUATION

18. Monitoring and assessing performance and progress against the Safety Plan are a key part of various evaluation activity that the Service carries out – it also used by the Service to identify areas for continuous improvement and to flag and share good practice across public services and the fire sector.
19. Evaluating performance, and change activity more widely, are core activities of the Integrated Performance and Assurance Group and of Directorate Boards and management teams across the Service. This is aided by an increasing amount of data and reporting available, with the breadth and depth of real-time performance and assurance information accessible to our staff increasing.

CONCLUSION

20. The last two years of the pandemic has had a significant impact on our people, our communities, and on our partnership working; and we also combined to become Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service on 1st April 2021.

21. We are incredibly proud of what the Service has achieved over this last year – even with increased staff sickness – improving performance or returning to pre-Covid levels many areas. We have also supported partners through a wide range of activities, including:
- ambulance driving;
 - falls and cardiac arrest response;
 - vaccinating (150,000+ vaccines and an estimated 200 lives saved) at Basingstoke; and
 - ongoing pop-up vaccination clinics at stations – with over 2,800 vaccines administered between January 2022 and the end of March 2022 – while maintaining their operational response capacity.
22. We have also delivered various Year 2 Safety Plan improvements; and demonstrated strong compliance against the new national Fire Standards and National Operational Guidance.
23. As we now emerge from the pandemic, we have seen a slight reduction to our incident volumes, but the balance of incident types has changed. Following the trend identified in the mid-year performance report of December 2021, we have seen a reduction in fires and Special Service Calls, but an increase in false alarms. However, there are early signs the cost-of-living crisis is impacting our demand, with a slight increase in domestic fires, particularly in the latter part of 2021/22 – we will continue to monitor, mitigate and manage this risk in the year ahead.
24. There was also a significant increase (29%) in the number of Safe & Well visits we delivered, and we have undertaken detailed risk analysis and mapping using a wide range of internal and external data to support the introduction (on 1st April 2022) of a new risk-based Safe & Well programme. Excellent Protection work also continues with our High- Risk Residential Inspection, Risk Based Inspection and Local Based Inspection Programmes and we continue to exceed targets in licensing consultations, fire safety audits and building regulation consultations.
25. We recognise that we have seen a reduction in on-call availability, increases in critical response times, and increases in fire fatalities and casualties. However:

- Our response performance is still below 8 minutes for critical incidents, remaining very strong compared to national benchmark data.
- Increases in casualties is owing to reduced lockdown restrictions, pandemic-related behaviour change and emerging risk factors, such as post-pandemic health challenges, home-working and increased use of electrical devices, and rising energy/cost of living impacting behaviours. We will continue to monitor these closely and flow any data and insights into our ongoing strategic assessment, and management, of risk.
- Most casualties have slight (not severe) injuries or are treated on scene.

RECOMMENDATION

26. That the 2021/22 End of Year Performance Report be **noted** by the **HIWFRA Full Authority**
27. That the 2021/22 Safety Plan Year 2 Improvements Report be **noted** by the **HIWFRA Full Authority**

APPENDICES ATTACHED

28. [Appendix A – 2021/22 End of Year Performance Report](#)
29. [Appendix B – 2021/22 Safety Plan Year 2 Improvements Report](#)

Contact: Shantha Dickinson, Deputy Chief Fire Officer,
Shantha.dickinson@hantsfire.gov.uk, 07918 887986



**Hampshire
& Isle of Wight**
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

End of Year Performance

1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022

This report focuses on our performance in 2021/22 (1st April 2021 - 31st March 2022) across key areas aligned with our Safety Plan priorities, as well as other crucial areas including the progress of our Year 2 Safety Plan improvements and compliance with national Fire Standards

**Together We
Make Life Safer**



The last two years of the pandemic has had a significant impact on our people, our communities, and on our partnership working; and we also combined to become Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service on 1st April 2021.

We are incredibly proud of what the Service has achieved over this last year – even with increased staff sickness – improving performance or returning to pre-Covid levels many areas. We have also supported partners through a wide range of activities, including **ambulance driving, falls and cardiac arrest response, vaccinating (150,000+ vaccines & an estimated 200 lives saved) at Basingstoke, and ongoing pop-up clinics at stations (2,800+ vaccines since January 2022) while maintaining their operational response capacity**. We have also delivered various Year 2 Safety Plan improvements; and demonstrated strong compliance against the new national Fire Standards and National Operational Guidance.

As we now emerge from the pandemic, we have seen a slight reduction to our incident volumes, but the balance of incident types has changed. Following the trend identified in the mid-year performance report of December 2021, we have seen a reduction in fires and Special Service Calls, but an increase in false alarms. However, there are early signs the cost-of-living crisis is impacting our demand, with a slight increase in domestic fires, particularly in the latter part of 2021/22 – we will continue to monitor, mitigate and manage this risk in the year ahead.

There was also a significant increase (29%) in the number of Safe & Well visits we delivered, and we have undertaken detailed risk analysis and mapping using a wide range of internal and external data to support the introduction (on 1st April 2022) of a new risk based Safe & Well programme. Excellent Protection work also continues with our High-Risk Residential Inspection, Risk Based Inspection and Local Based Inspection Programmes and we continue to exceed targets in licensing consultations, fire safety audits and building regulation consultations.

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- Most casualties have slight (not severe) injuries or are treated on scene.

DCFO Shantha Dickinson
Director of Policy, Planning and Assurance





Staff sickness increased from 10.7 average shifts/days lost in 2020/21 to **11.9 shifts/days lost** in 2021/22. This is owing to increases in Musculo-skeletal, mental health, and respiratory sickness. Despite Covid-19 still being a leading absence type, this declined compared to 2020/21 when the pandemic was at peak levels. It is also important to emphasise that **sickness has returned to 2019/20 levels**. See [page 7](#) for more details.

Sickness absences, staff turnover and other factors, such as our provision of support to partners, have affected availability levels, which reduced compared to 2020/21. Whole-time availability decreased to 89.3% (a decrease of 4.3% points from 2020/21) owing to our planned move in degradation procedure; and on-call availability was 62.4% - down 18% points versus 2020/21 when availability was at unprecedented high levels, partly owing to the furlough periods in the early pandemic. As we resume more normal activity (and sickness levels) following Covid-19 we anticipate on-call availability will improve over the year ahead, moving closer to pre-pandemic levels (2019/20 on-call availability: 75%). See [pages 5 and 6](#) for more details.


Our average critical response time in 2021/22, with a refined set of critical call types, was **7 minutes 35 seconds** - up 26 seconds, from 7 minutes 9 seconds in 2020/21. Response times increased towards the latter half of this year, driven by rises in some Road Traffic Collision (RTC) response times in more remote (rural) or difficult to access locations. We have seen increasing response times over the last 2 years, although improvements overall over a 3-to-5-year period. It is also important to note that **our response time performance when compared nationally remains strong**. National figures are split by incident types and by urban/rural locations. Home Office statistics (February 2022) showed that **predominately rural Services had an average response time (including call handling) for dwelling fires of 9 minutes 18 seconds vs 7 minutes 57 seconds in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight**. We also compare favourably vs the non-metropolitan average of 8 minutes 39 seconds. See [page 6](#) for more detail.





The number of Safe and Well checks increased by **+29%** compared to 2020/21, while the proportion of visits where we were refused entry or could not contact the individual remained stable (around a quarter) compared to last year. This is reflective of our extensive and ongoing focus on prevention activity. See [page 6](#).


Following the easing of Covid-19 restrictions we have also been able to increase our protection activity, including fire safety audits - of which we undertook **1,351** between April 2021 and March 2022, significantly more (+753, 126%) compared to the previous year when 598 audits were completed. Similarly, following the easing of lockdown restrictions, we have seen a significant increase in business regulation and licensing consultations – maintaining high levels of performance in this area. See [page 6](#) for more detail.



21,358  **Incidents attended** -213 (-1%) vs 2020/2021, and -1040 (-5%) vs the same period in 2019/20
The rolling 3-year average for incidents (2019/20-2021/22) is 21,776
2021/22 figures represent a decrease of 418 from the rolling average.

3,808  **Fires** -420 (-10%) vs 2020/21
3-year rolling average for fire incidents is 4,054
Influenced by a reduction in secondary grass fires. Continued dry warmer conditions may continue, however strong communications supported by local campaigns for safer use of BBQs has reduced this incident type. We also note a slight increase (+9%, +73 incidents) in domestic fires compared to last year, impacted by a variety of factors, such as accelerated energy costs giving rise to further seasonal influences in domestic fires, where alternative methods of heating are sought.

8,125  **False Alarms** +508 (+7%) vs 2020/21
3-year rolling average for false alarms is 7,860
Influenced by an increase in apparatus (smoke alarms) for domestic flat/maisonette, house (single occupancy) and educational facilities. This is partly due to fluctuations in use (educational), increases / changes to apparatus installed. We may see further rises owing to economic factor influencing behaviour changes relating to increased levels of cooking or heating device use.

9,425  **Special Service Calls (SSC)** (includes RTCs) -301 (-3%) vs 2020/21
3-year rolling average for SSCs is 9,862
Influenced by a reduction in co-responder calls, which were higher in 2020/21 owing to our additional medical response support to partners. However, increases were seen for the majority of other incident types, such as assisting other agencies, effecting entry/exit, lift release and RTCs; owing to C19 restrictions easing in 2021/22 and partners under additional pressure.



Fire fatalities & casualties by all incident types

9 fire fatalities

vs a three (and five) year average of 7 fatalities per financial year



8 fire fatalities (including RTC fires and suicides) were recorded on IRS this year (with a further 1 changing to a 'fire death' following investigation) **vs 7 in 2020/21**.

The majority of the recorded 9 fatalities had **physical, sensory or cognitive impairments**. This year also marked a shift change in cause, seeing electrical heating/wiring equalling smoking materials as the primary cause.

This does not mirror the national trend which has seen a decrease in fire-fatalities year-on-year since April 2017 to March 2018 to April 2020 to March 2021. However, the national figures are now showing a slight increase with 243 fire-related fatalities in year-end September 2021 compared to 231 year-end September 2020.

A recent 5-year analysis showed 62% of fire fatalities were **male (61%)** and those **aged between 41-64** had a higher number of fatalities compared to other age groups.

The pandemic has also exacerbated risk factors, such as health, finances and behaviour changes (alternative sources of fuel, heating and lighting); these will be intensified by the current financial climate with additional pressures expected with the October 2022 energy cap increase.



103 fire casualties

53% male, 24% related to cooking
47% female, 37% related to cooking
Up 20% from 86 in 2020/21
vs a 3-year average of 95
vs a 5-year average of 99

50% (52) went to hospital with injuries that appeared slight, overcome by gas smoke or slight burns. This was followed by 29% (30) of casualties given first aid at the scene. This is mirrored in previous years. **Cooking** remains the main cause of fire casualties **Income and deprivation** remain significant influencing factors for fire casualties.



475 RTC casualties

No change vs the 3-year average of 475
-2% vs the 5-year average of 487

Analysis over a 5-year period shows the majority of RTC casualties were male (61%) and within the 17-40 year old age range. 19% suffered back / neck injuries and 11% from lacerations – 58% of these injuries were 'slight' over the 5-year period.

There has been changes to patterns of RTC critical response. Response times have been extended over the latter half of 2021/22 due to the rural, remote and challenging location of some incidents.

240 SSC casualties

-10% vs the 3-year average of 267
-8% vs a 5-year average of 260

+13% vs April – March 2021
influenced by 82% increase in assisting other agencies (52 to 95)





62.4%

On-call availability

vs 80% in 2020/21 and 74% in 2019/20 . This illustrates the impact the early stages of the pandemic had on on-call availability in 2020/21, as it reached unprecedented levels partly due to furlough periods.



89.3%

Whole-time availability

vs 93.6% in 2020/21 and 94.9% in 2019/20 . This illustrates an increase in performance from September 2021 (+2%), and overall is reflective of the impact of the pandemic (in terms of sickness and the detachment of staff to support partners)

7 mins 35 secs (all in), +26 seconds vs 7:09 in 2020/21

Critical response



Urban (all in) **7 mins 22 secs** Rural (all in) **11 mins 00 secs** vs Urban 6:58 & Rural 9:59 in 2020/21. Response times have also been impacted by the need for some appliances to travel into other station grounds due to incident location and availability.



9,247 Safe & Well

visits carried out

vs 7,143 (+2104) April 2020 – March 2021
Increase by 29%

The rolling average for 2019/20 - 2021/22 is 7,156

Furthermore, the proportion of closed Safe & Well jobs where individuals have refused entry by HIWFRS personnel or where individuals have not replied to four attempts to contact them (so the job has been closed) has remained at around a quarter of closed jobs over the last two years. These figures are monitored on an ongoing basis with the aim of reducing this proportion over time.

1,351 total audits

+753 (+126%) vs Apr 20 – Mar 21

-102 (-7%) vs Apr 19 – Mar 20

Three year rolling average: 1,134

80% (1,078)

Fire Safety Audits completed on time

vs 78% (468) April 2020 – March 2021

vs 82% (1196) April 2019 – March 2020

The rolling average for 2019/20 - 2021/22 is 80% (914)

1,859 total consultations

+626 (+51%) vs Apr 20 – Mar 21

+ 184 (+11%) vs Apr 19 – Mar 20

97% (1,795)

Building Regulation Consultations completed on time

completed on time vs 96% (1189) April 2020 – March 2021

vs 83% (1,396) April 2019 – March 2020

completed on time rolling average for 2019/20 - 2021/22 is 92% (1,460)

711 total consultations

+123 (+21%) vs Apr 20 – Mar 21

+138 (+24%) vs Apr 19 – Mar 20

95% (673)

Licensing Consultations completed on time

completed on time vs 88% (516) April 2020 – March 2021

vs 69% (398) April 2019 – March 2020

completed on time rolling average for 2019/20 - 2021/22 is 84% (529)



11.9

average shifts/days lost to sickness +1.2 shifts lost (+11%) vs 2020/21 +0.1 shifts lost (+1%) vs 2019/20

Sickness absence

Sickness has reverted to 2019/20 levels. The highest absence type being Musculo-skeletal (26%), followed by Covid-19 (24%). And then stress-related mental health (13%). Respiratory sickness accounted for a lower proportion of overall sickness (6%) but had the largest increase amongst sickness types year-on-year (up from 345 shifts lost to 1,123).

Musculo-skeletal was an increase of 6% points compared to the previous year and was mainly attributed to whole-time and on-call staff members.

The rolling average for the previous 3 financial years is 11.5 average shifts/days lost, but sickness in 2021/22 reverted to the pre-pandemic levels of 2019/20.

The upward trajectory of sickness, and changing nature of sickness types, correlates with national trends and benchmarks, both within the Fire and Rescue sector and in other sectors.

Health & Safety

123

+24 vs 2020/21 3-year average: 113

Leading (near miss/cause for concern) cases have increased during this period and although higher than the previous year they still exceed the laggings. These figures have increased compared to pre-Covid levels (2019/20: 106 leading cases).



122

+35 vs 2020/21 3-year average: 112

Lagging (injury) cases have increased in line with more people using the reporting system which in turn allows for learning and improving our training and techniques. Although an increase, the injuries are deemed minor and not requiring a RIDDOR. Lagging cases have returned closer to pre-Covid levels (113 in 2019/20).

17

-6 vs 2020/21 3-year average: 17

RIDDOR incidents have decreased when compared to the same period last year. RIDDOR incidents have increased compared to pre-Covid levels (2019/20: 11).

Injuries have increased since returning to normal working practises with more training courses and people in the workplace. Through learning we are changing the behaviour and culture of staff resulting in more injuries being reported. It is also important to note that, positively, leading indicators outweigh lagging indicators by 1 case. Most injuries happen during training and operational incidents, because of the environment they are more at risk. These mostly involve strains, sprains, slips, trips & falls, manual handling and burns.

There have been 17 injuries reported under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) preventing Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) staff from working 7 days or more, subdivided as follows: slips/lifting/handling, fall from height and another kind of accident. These injuries occurred during attended fire incidents, gym/PT sessions and drill yard/training. This is a positive reduction of 26%.

CIPFA FRS net revenue expenditure by population



£39.42

2021/22, estimated cost per population

HIWFRS are 9th highest out of 22 combined fire authorities who provided data

£36.39

2020/21 cost per population

Hampshire ranked 13th of 24 Combined Fire Authorities

£44.81

2020/21 cost per population

Isle of Wight ranked 9th out of the 11 county authorities

Source: HIWFRS finance data; and CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy) is an institute and accountancy standards body for public service. Owing to CIPFA publication dates only estimated data is currently available for 2021/22.

Cost breakdown & indication of how our communities' council tax is spent

The Fire Authority received an update on the forecast financial performance for 2021/22 at its meeting of 15 February 2022 as part of the budget setting report. This report anticipated a net underspend of about £0.87 million, or about 1% of the net current expenditure budget.

The forecast position was the result of a combination of good financial management in reducing reliance on the use of fixed term contracts as well as the impact of some difficulties in filling specialist roles offset partially by increases in fuel costs and reactive maintenance costs.

The finalised financial position will be reported to the Fire Authority on 26 July 2022 as part of the outturn report.

The Fire Authority's gross budget for 2022/23 is **£90.2 million**. About 60% of this is funded by Council Tax, 37% from government funding including business rates, and 3% from income generated by the Authority. About 70% of our budget is spent on our people – our most valuable resource.

Gross budget	£m
Wholetime firefighters	37.3
Retained firefighters	8.3
Staff	14.6
Other employee costs	2.2
Total employee costs	62.4
Premises	8.0
Transport	1.7
Supplies and services	7.6
Third party payments	2.0
Capital financing	1.3
Contribution to reserves	6.7
Contingencies	0.5
Gross budget	90.2

Band D Council Tax <i>How is it spent</i>	£
Wholetime firefighters	31.24
Retained firefighters	6.96
Staff	12.17
Other employee costs	1.81
Total employee costs	52.18
Premises	6.69
Transport	1.43
Supplies and services	6.28
Third party payments	1.7
Capital financing	1.1
Contribution to reserves	5.63
Contingencies	0.42
Total	75.43



Learning & Improving

Year 2 Safety Plan improvements

We committed to completing 34 improvements. We have completed 28 of these activities (see Appendix B):

- 28 improvements completed.
- 4 of the improvements have been carried forward into Year 3 – with planning completed but implementation happening in 2022/23.
- 2 improvements were incomplete at year end – see Appendix B for more details.

National Fire Standards compliance

10 national fire standards have been published, covering a wide range of areas, with a total 119 requirements ('desirable outcomes') underneath the 10 standards.

The Service has undertaken a significant amount of assurance activity to assess our compliance with the standards, which has shown that we have 'reasonable' or 'substantial' assurance in 97% (116) of the 119 desirable outcomes.

Health Heroes Award March 2022

In total, 27 firefighters assisted frontline medics at four of Hampshire's hospitals by helping to care for some of the most vulnerable patients. While volunteers from Hampshire Constabulary stepped in to help at University Hospital Southampton. To alleviate pressure on NHS staff at the peak of Covid-19, hospital leaders trained up the multi-agency team in proning, which involves putting patients onto their front to relieve pressure on their vital organs and assist breathing.



New recruits successfully graduate January 2021: Fifteen newly-qualified firefighters celebrated the completion of their 20-week training course with a graduation ceremony, as they get set to join their new stations. Following a successful recruitment drive and thorough application process in 2021, **eight female** candidates were offered a place on the course, more than ever before.



Support for Ukraine

Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service is one of many services across the UK donating thousands of items of kit and equipment to Ukraine, to support firefighters on the frontline. This has included additional support from our **Fire Cadets** within communities and **Princes Trust**.

2021 Regulatory Excellence Awards, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service – NatWest Bank: Highly commended. NatWest Group struggled to maintain sufficient staff numbers at their sites to cover fire marshal roles due to flexible working arrangements because of Coronavirus. They worked with their primary authority partner Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service to carry out a review and explore solutions. It was decided to implement a national evacuation strategy of a last person tag system in line with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 reference to a buddy system for lone working. The new evacuation strategy is also being implemented globally in NatWest Group Poland and India sites.

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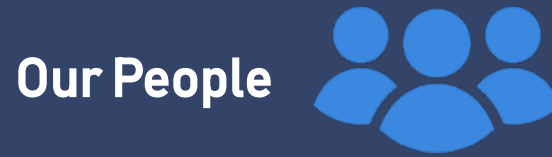
Together We Make Life Safer

HAMPSHIRE & ISLE OF WIGHT FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE



**Hampshire
& Isle of Wight**
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

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Background

The 5-year Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service (HIWFRS) Safety Plan was launched in April 2020, setting out our new priorities, our values, how we will build on our strengths, and how we will address the areas that require focus and improvement.

Year 2 Safety plan committed improvements:

Improvements	Completed	Carried forward	Delayed
34	28	4	2

The two delayed activities are expected to be completed by the end of July 2022 and are:

- Review and implementation of new FDS Arrangements: the review has been completed with a co-design approach with our staff being taken over the coming months to implement changes. A report with specific recommendations is being taken to our Operations Management Board by the end of July 2022.
- Deliver a new Availability & Competency Management System: all four Gartan modules have been rolled-out but some further system requirements will not be implemented until June 2022.

Four activities carried forward due to the impact of the pandemic, sickness, and our support to partners. Planning and preparation has been undertaken in these Protection-related activities, but the implementation phase of this work will now be in 2022/23.

This report contains information on what has been achieved throughout Year 2 (2021/22) of the delivery of the Safety Plan, and provides a look ahead to Year 3 (2022/23) improvements.

Our improvements are underpinned by a renewed focus on outcomes and benefits realisation, as well as impact assessments and change management more widely.

The five priorities are:





Our Communities

We work together to understand different community needs and deliver accessible, local services which build safer places.

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Main areas of focus:

- Focusing on the most vulnerable individuals in our communities
- Considering our impact on our workforce and communities
- Reducing fire safety risk in our communities.

In 2021/22 we undertook the following activities:

Safe and well

New systems in place that increase referrals for safe and well prevention activity and response across high risk communities

Risk planning

Refreshed Strategic Assessment of Risk enabling improved insight to better inform and evidence effective community risk management planning

Risk model

New risk model and map to support a new targeted approach to prevention activity

Carbon reduction

Continuation of our ambitious carbon reduction strategy, ensuring HIWFRS' alignment with government targets

Risk management tool

Implemented to dedicated Risk Management Tool to support the service in embedding the risk management framework

Community insight

Strengthened our community insight of under represented groups; Providing assurance our activity is tailored to target those who will benefit most



Our People

We look after each other by creating great places to work and promoting the health, wellbeing and safety of our people.

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Main areas of focus:

- The health and wellbeing of our staff
- Recruiting staff based on our values
- Ensuring our people have the right skills

In 2021/22 we undertook the following activities:

Wellbeing

Implemented wellbeing survey outcomes, including sessions on nutrition, rest, and recovery plus digital wellbeing guidance

Health and safety

Achieved a substantial internal audit rating, and positive feedback from an external Health and Safety peer review undertaken by Kent FRS

One service

New Service branding and a joint press office, plus continued alignment of BAU processes. We continually share and embed the new identity and 'one service' ethos into and across our service and our communities

ICT

Introduction of Office 365, and two factor authentication for enhanced ICT Security, a desk booking App and embedding use of MS Teams, enabling the service to provide a flexible working practices

Hybrid working

Introduction of hybrid working has positively impacted the environment, and experience of our staff through reduced commute and travel time, fuel use and associated costs

Values

Continued focus on embedding the service values and behaviours, integrated into our recruitment and promotion processes in addition to management training



Public Value

We plan over the longer term to ensure our decisions and actions deliver efficient and effective public services.

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Main areas of focus:

- Delivering efficient and effective long-term public services
- Preparing for new and emerging risks

In 2021/22 we undertook the following activities:

Estates optimisation

Optimised use of our estates through provision of vaccination clinics at stations and vaccinators, ambulance driving, cardiac arrest and falls response

Station investment

Continued to invest in our stations, including estate on the Isle of Wight to ensure longevity and fit for purpose facilities

Review of flexi duty system

Align our resources across Hampshire and Isle of Wight and ensure we the right number of officers with the appropriate skills

Special appliance review

Ensure an efficient and effective use of our specials fleet is in operation with best use of our people and financial resource and future procurement opportunity



High Performance

Our diverse teams are trusted, skilled and feel equipped to deliver a leading fire and rescue service today and into the future.



Main areas of focus:

- Diversity and inclusivity in our teams
- Using our data to better understand our work
- Ensuring our people are competent to undertake their work
- Responding to incidents

In 2021/22 we undertook the following activities:

Page 95
Review directorate structures
Supporting alignment with our strategy that saw the Strategic Engagement and Relationships team move to the Policy, Planning and Assurance directorate

New Organisational Development function
Focused on the design and delivery of focused leadership and management development to drive high performance and effective leadership

Live fire training
Business case approved which will ensure HIWFRS has a facility that better aligns to modern firefighting needs

ICT App development programme
New apps including on FOI requests, Health and Safety reporting and room booking

Data sharing
Improvements to the way we share data, both internally and externally to improve availability, transparency and effectiveness of published information

New community risk policy
To determine how HIWFRS will deal with the risk we find in our community, defining the level of risk we will accept and an appropriate response if the risk is outside these parameters

Management of staff competencies and availability
Integrated system launched linking to command and control systems enabling effective and efficient mobilisation of resources



Learning & Improving

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We have the support of policy and guidance with the freedom to use our discretion to do the right thing, learning from ourselves and others.

Main areas of focus:

- Learning and improving
- Evaluating our work to improve services
- Prioritising the learning and development of our people
- Research and innovation to drive forward improvements

In 2021/22 we undertook the following activities:

New policy, procedure and guidance metrics

Reporting on the the effectiveness of the framework. Monitoring and sampling of published PPGs will support embedding a policy led culture

Maturing our internal processes

To drive continued improvement, good practice and enable visible links with internal policy as well as national fire standards and operational guidance

Refining the operational learning process

Tactical and strategic ownership, including performance metrics, underpinned by an Operational Assurance Framework. HIWFRS is now feeding into and acting timely upon NOL and JOL notices

Evaluation of shared services partnership

To provide assurance and identify any learning, there was review of Shared Services Partnership to assess performance and compliance against the Joint Accession Agreement

Review against NFCC maturity models

To identify the benchmark focusing on talent management and equality. Based on the outcomes a new EDI strategy and talent management change activity have been initiated

New performance dashboards

As well as prevention risk maps, to enable effective and targeted delivery of our Prevention, Protection and Response



Year 3: a look forward

For our third year of the delivery of the Safety Plan 2020-25, we are committing to deliver 23 activities across our five priorities. An overview of the key activities is presented below

Focus on learning and improving:

- Fully embed our learning app and processes to ensure optimised opportunity to drive improvement.
- Deliver and progress activity to support our EDI strategy to achieve the objectives set by the FRA. Review our response to automatic fire alarms. Review our systems and remove any barriers to continue to attract and recruit the best applicants. Begin to implement findings of Y2 reviews and our 2022 HMICFRS inspection.

Continue to drive High Performance:

- Implementing ISO 17020, the Quality Assurance System for Fire Investigation.
- Deliver regulatory inspection regime for firefighters.
- Embed our Service Behaviours within recruitment and promotion processes, and leadership and management development.
- Define management responsibilities and expectations for supervisory and middle managers in respect of people activities
- Across all Directorates, progress our maturity and compliance with Fire Standards.

Continue to focus on our people:

- Conclude the crewing trials to create consistency for our teams.
- Improve communities' ability to access our services and our ability to protect them.
- Continue alignment of on call Terms and Conditions through development of a single contract, pay and conditions for on-call firefighters in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.
- Develop a broadened set of health and wellbeing services and support for example financial wellbeing, enhanced health surveillance and psychological screening.

Focus on Risk Management:

- Engage with emerging Integrated Care System to understand the challenges we all face and work together to protect our communities.
- Publish and promote the procedure for using FF for Regulatory activities.
- Develop and publish our Community Risk Management Plan and approach through identification of risks in our different communities, using sector best practice.

Invest in our estate and environment:

- Continue with our carbon reduction plans, including investing in electric vehicle charging points across our estate.
- Deliver the year 2 estate maintenance programme for our Isle of Wight estate, adopting the five estate design principles.
- Invest in our buildings, improving facilities for a diverse workforce and to better provide for the management of fireground contamination.
- Deliver the provision of improved Live Fire Training facilities for HIWFRS.

Make better use of our technology:

- Optimise our technology offering to continue to support outcomes and contribute to the On Call (retained) review project. Considering Gartan changes, Alerting and Radio requirements.

Ensure HIWFRS offers Public Value:

- Continue value for money (VFM) exercises with FRS partners and supporting a community of best practice.
- Develop an efficiency and effectiveness financial plan for the Service.

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**Hampshire
& Isle of Wight**
FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

HIWFRA Full Authority

Purpose: Noted

Date: **14 JUNE 2022**

Title: **FIRE CADETS PROGRESS REPORT**

Report of Chief Fire Officer

SUMMARY

1. Fire Cadets is a nationally recognised youth organisation, fully supported by the National Fire Chief's Council (NFCC). Fire Cadets is for young people aged 13-17.
2. The vision for Fire Cadets is "to be a nationally recognised, inclusive and progressive uniformed youth organisation, delivered through Fire & Rescue Services, which inspires and empowers young people to be the best they can be". This is achieved by providing fun and challenging opportunities for young people to reach their full potential contributing to safer, stronger and healthier communities.
3. The programme focuses on the development of operational firefighting drills, knowledge of the Service and its safety messages and the completion of social action projects and a BTEC qualification. Fire Cadets complete a one-year programme.
4. The purpose of this report is to update the Authority on the progress made in relation to the expansion of Fire Cadet units across the Service since the Authority's decision to fund the project in 2018. It also seeks to highlight opportunities and challenges for the future.
5. This report is for noting purposes only and no decisions are required from the Authority at this time.

BACKGROUND

6. Fire Cadets is a core Children & Young People (CYP) programme supported by the NFCC. 38 Fire Services across the UK deliver Fire Cadets. Nationally there are 250 units and 4,500 Cadets. The NFCC Fire Cadets Board continues to encourage Services to expand their provision.
7. In December 2018, the Authority approved the decision to expand the number of Fire Cadet units in Hampshire from one to seven over a three-year period. The plan was to open two new units per year between 2019 – 2021.
8. The Authority agreed to fund this at a total cost of £131,000 to facilitate the set-up costs of six new units and the ongoing costs for seven units for four years. The plan thereafter was that external funding be sought to fund Cadet units.

PROGRESS TO DATE

9. Four new units have opened to date and two others will open in September 2022/January 2023:

Unit Location:	Date opened/due to open:
Eastleigh (SHQ)	June 2019
Gosport	June 2019
Southsea	April 2021
Rushmoor	April 2021
Isle of Wight (Ryde – TBC)	Due to open September 2022
Basingstoke	Due to open January 2023

10. COVID19 had a significant impact on the opening of six units by 2021. Covid lockdowns meant Cadets had to be delivered online utilising Microsoft Teams for several months and the opening of new units in 2020 and 2021 were delayed.

11. Whenever Covid restrictions allowed, the Service returned to face-to-face engagement in line with a robust Covid risk assessment and Government, Service and National Youth Agency guidance. HIWFRS was one of the first Services nationally to return to face-to-face Cadet delivery.
12. In July 2021, the Lord-Lieutenant of Hampshire became the Patron to HIWFRS Fire Cadet units, attending a Covid secure event at Rushmoor Fire Station. Deputy Lord Lieutenants attended the first pass out parades of Gosport and Eastleigh units in December 2021. The Lord-Lieutenant/ Deputy Lord-Lieutenants have been very complimentary of the Fire Cadets and their achievements.
13. Fire Cadets have assisted at Service events such as Station Open Days, Service exercises, Trainee Graduation ceremonies and Celebrate Success. They also attend remembrance parades. In November 2021, three HIWFRS Cadets represented the Service at the Cenotaph parade in London. This was the first time Fire Cadets nationally were represented.
14. Cadets have completed social action projects in their local communities. Most recently this has been the significant support to collecting, sorting and packaging of donations for Ukraine, with Southampton Polish Club. Other social actions include a makeover of a local school garden, Christmas tea parties with the elderly, community litter picks and donating care packages to the elderly and vulnerable families during Covid.
15. Fire Cadets complete the BTEC Level 2 Award Fire Service in the Community and a First Aid qualification.
16. Currently we are working towards an Investing in Volunteers accreditation to further support, engage and retain volunteers in the Service.

SUPPORTING OUR SAFETY PLAN AND PRIORITIES

17. Fire Cadets aligns to the Safety Plan in relation to the priorities of our people, our communities and public value.
18. Our Communities - Fire Cadets enables us to empower and personally develop young people from our local communities and potentially see the Service as an employer of choice for the future. By utilising volunteers from the community, we are attracting diverse adults with varied skillsets and backgrounds into the Service. The community benefits from the social action projects Fire Cadets complete and Cadets develop citizenship skills.
19. Our people - volunteer instructors are a diverse range of people attracted to the organisation by being a Volunteer Fire Cadet Instructor. Currently a

third of our Cadet Instructors are female and two thirds male. We are currently undertaking an Investing in Volunteers accreditation process to improve the experiences and retention of our volunteers.

20. Public Value - Fire Cadets is delivered cost effectively through a volunteer model. By attracting sponsorship and external funding, the plan is to increase the sustainability of Fire Cadets, reducing its financial impact to the Service.

COLLABORATION

21. We collaborate with other Cadet networks through the Lord-Lieutenant's patronage. In May 2022, Fire Cadets, alongside other Cadet groups, will attend Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee Service at Winchester Cathedral, being organised by the Lord-Lieutenant.
22. In partnership with Eastleigh Borough Council's Emergency planning team, a Hampshire Young Persons Emergency Response (HYPER) network has been created. Approved by the Local Resilience Forum Delivery Group, this allows for Fire and Police Cadets and Scouts, supervised by their instructors, to be utilised in the response and recovery phase of an emergency (e.g. flooding).
23. We work collaboratively with Hampshire Constabulary to provide mutual visits between Fire and Police Cadets. The Children & Young People Manager has been asked to be a member on the Hampshire Constabulary Police Cadet Executive Board. This will further enhance collaboration.
24. Children & Young People (CYP) staff work collaboratively with other Fire Services nationally and through the NFCC Fire Cadet Board in relation to governance and sharing of best practice. HIWFRS Fire Cadets are represented at national Fire Cadet events.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

People

25. Fire Cadets is managed by the Children & Young People (CYP) Team. Two full time permanent posts support the delivery of the programme. The Fire Cadet Lead provides ongoing support to units and volunteers and specifically works alongside new units for the first year to ensure they are set up effectively. The Fire Cadet Manager provides direct management to the volunteer instructors and is responsible for the governance and quality assurance of programme delivery. The Service's Volunteer Manager supports these staff with the recruitment of instructors.

26. If the Service or the Authority wishes to expand the number of units beyond seven, there will be a need to source another Fire Cadet Lead post to provide sufficient employed staff to support the units and volunteers. This would be additional staff cost of £34,095 (including oncosts). There is currently no capacity within the CYP budget to pay for this additional role and so funding for a new post would need to be identified. There would be an opportunity to expand units to 10, by 2026 if this further post could be sourced. The CYP Manager has expressed an interest to the NFCC Fire Cadet Board to set up two further units in 2023 with an application being made to seek national funding for new units from Youth United.
27. Across the county, there are currently 45 Volunteer Fire Cadet Instructors. A small minority are operational Firefighter volunteers, and the rest are community-based volunteers, trained in drill yard supervision training with the support of Academy.

Finances

28. As outlined above, the Authority approved a total spend of £131,000 to expand our Fire Cadet provision in 2018. To date £45,344 has been spent on the project due to careful spending. Spending has also been significantly impacted by Covid. Covid delayed units opening and meant that for a significant duration, units were delivered online, reducing costs. Whilst young people are due to attend the programme for one year, due to Covid our first cohorts on the first new units were retained for 2.5 years, further reducing costs.
29. The funding has been utilised to provide full uniform, personal protective equipment and helmets for all the Fire Cadets and Instructors. Specialist cadet firefighting equipment, such as light-weight hoses, BA sets and ladders have been purchased for each unit. Funding has also been used to source BTEC qualifications, first aid courses and Fire Cadet Pass out parades.
30. 3SFire financially supported the work of Fire Cadets through a grant of £4,879 in July 2021 to purchase two ladders, Fire Cadet sliders and some helmets and uniforms for volunteer instructors. 3SFire funding will be applied for in the future.
31. The remaining balance of £85,656 will be used to set up the last two units and to meet ongoing costs for all units. Most units have not been running for the 3 years the ongoing funding was intended to sustain them for.

32. The existing project funding provided by the Authority to fund units until March 2023, will be sufficient to fund units until March 2024, due to the reduced spending and time delays in opening new units due to COVID19.

FUTURE FUNDING

33. The CYP Manager and Partnership Officer are seeking to attract external sponsorship and funding for units. It is not yet known how successful applications for external sponsorship and funding this will be, as the market for this will be competitive.
34. It is believed that the strongest financial position for Fire Cadets would be for it is be sourced through a variety of funding streams post April 2024. This may be further Fire Authority funding, if this was approved, alongside 3SFire grants and external sponsorship and funding. It is proposed that a further paper be provided to the Authority in April 2023, once external funding options have been explored and the success of these is known, to make recommendations for the funding of the units post April 2024.

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

35. Impact assessments for data protection, equality and health and safety have been completed for Fire Cadets and Children and Young people activities.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

36. There are no significant legal implications identified.
37. CYP policies, procedures and guidance notes and risk assessments are in place. Specific Fire Cadet governance has been written to ensure safety, standardisation and compliance.

BENEFITS

38. Fire Cadets benefits young people by equipping them with work, life, social skills, qualifications, and volunteering experience to achieve their full potential, and assists with college and employment applications.
39. Fire Cadets are educated in Service safety messages, empowering them to be advocates for the Service by sharing these messages with their peers, families and at community events.
40. Community volunteers benefit by developing leadership skills and confidence. Many report they feel a sense of pride in being part of the Service and the young peoples' development journey.

41. The benefits to HIWFRS include a positive impact on workplace diversity, enabling both young people and instructors to see the Service as an employer of choice for the future. Two Fire Cadet Leads and two community-based instructors were successful in joining wholtime in 2020/21 and 6 instructors applied for the current recruitment process.
42. Allowing operational and civilian staff to volunteer on units, provides the opportunity to develop their leadership skills and support community safety work. This is helpful to trainee firefighters in development and those seeking promotion.
43. The Service benefits from being able to deliver a high quality CYP programme cost effectively through volunteers. From social action projects, pass out parades and the Lord-Lieutenant's patronage there are positive promotion opportunities for the Service. Fire Cadets also support Service events.

RISK ANALYSIS

44. All risks for CYP activities, including Fire Cadets, are recorded, regularly reviewed and managed through JCAD, the Service's risk management system.
45. Fire Cadet activities are fully risk assessed.
46. All those involved in delivery of the Cadet programme are subject to Safer recruitment processes and enhanced DBS checks.
47. HIWFRS' safeguarding policy and procedures will be utilised to protect, support and report any safeguarding matters.
48. Fire Cadets is a nationally recognised programme governed by the NFCC Fire Cadet Board. This board provides governance and minimum standards in relation to the programme's delivery, which assists HIWFRS.

EVALUATION

49. Fire Cadets is evaluated through evaluation forms completed by young people and volunteers. Case studies of young people and volunteers are also utilised to show the powerful effect the programme has on the personal development of both parties.
50. Work is to be completed moving forward to ensure performance outcomes are measured more robustly to ensure the benefit of Fire Cadets can be demonstrated – e.g. demographic data, social action hours, retention and achievement rates.

CONCLUSION

51. Although COVID19 had significant impact on the opening of units to the original timescale, all six units will be open by January 2023 and the project fully delivered.
52. Existing funding underspend will be utilised to fund units until March 2024. External funding sources and sponsorship, as well as funding through 3SFire, will be explored to ensure a strong financial position for Fire Cadet funding moving forward, whereby units are funded through a variety of funding streams, rather than being reliant on one stream.
53. A paper will be submitted to the Fire Authority in relation to funding post April 2024, in April 2023.

RECOMMENDATION

54. That the progress the Fire Cadets project has achieved to date be noted by the HIWFRA Full Authority

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