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Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Services: Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP) Consultation

Report of findings by

Opinion Research Services

December 2019



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The ORS Project Team

Project design, management
and reporting

Kelly Lock

Alastair Layne

Focus Group Facilitator

Kelly Lock

Data analysis

Peter Maggs

Joseph DeMarco

1. Executive Summary

Summary of Main Findings

The Commission

- 1.1 In 2019, Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service (HFRS) and the Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service (IWFRS) published an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) that identified risks within Hampshire and the Isle of Wight and assessed those risks to see how likely they are to occur. The IRMP is designed to ensure HFRS and IWFRS can make plans to manage these risks.
- 1.2 In order to understand views on these plans, a formal consultation period was undertaken between 23rd September to 24th November 2019. HFRS and IWFRS commissioned Opinion Research Services (ORS) to undertake a programme of key consultation activities and to report respondents' views, gathered through an open consultation questionnaire and four public focus groups across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. 653 questionnaire responses were received, and 41 residents attended the focus groups.
- 1.3 The following paragraphs summarise the main findings. However, readers are referred to the detailed chapters that follow for a full account of people's views.

Main Findings

Communities

There was support for different ways of working with vulnerable people, providing it is done in partnership and does not detract from the Services' core functions

Open questionnaire

- 1.4 Three quarters (75%) of respondents think it is very important that HFRS and IWFRS continue to identify and target vulnerable groups and communities; a further fifth (21%) think it is fairly important. Less than 1 in 10 (4%) do not think it is important; only 1% think it is not important at all.

Focus groups

- 1.5 Though initially somewhat confused as to why HFRS and IWFRS would seek to involve themselves in working with, say, young people with low self-esteem, many focus group participants tended to support such activity once they understood its long-term benefits. Importantly, though, support often came with a caveat that this work must be done in partnership with others - and that it should not in any way compromise the core functions of the Service. A minority of participants did not feel the FRSs should be involving themselves in this sort of work at all, particularly in light of diminishing resources that must be prioritised.

The built environment: non-domestic properties

There was support for HFRS and IWFRS continuing with their risk-based inspection programmes for non-domestic properties

Open questionnaire

- 1.6 The vast majority of respondents (98%) think it is very or fairly important that HFRS and IWFRS identify and inspect their highest risk buildings to help make them safer; more than four fifths (81%) of respondents think it is very important. Only 2% of respondents think it is not very important or not important at all.

Focus groups

- 1.7 Risk inspections of non-domestic properties were considered essential because the consequences of an incident in premises of this nature can be significant, especially in terms of life and economic risk. Nonetheless, while in an ideal world they would prefer to see the FRSs inspecting every single relevant property, focus group participants generally accepted that this is impossible in the current economic climate, and that a risk-based regime is thus both inevitable and sensible.
- 1.8 There was, though, some concern that reducing inspections has and will result in more incidents - as well as a suggestion that increasing the number completed may be more economically efficient in the long-run if they have the effect of preventing fires.
- 1.9 Some other, more specific suggestions in this area were to: lengthen the time between inspections of high-risk properties to enable more premises to be checked; and work in partnership with other organisations (such as the Building Control and the Health and Safety Executive [HSE]) to complete these inspections.

The built environment: key risk sites

Open questionnaire

- 1.10 More than three quarters (76%) of respondents think it is very important that HFRS and IWFRS support their key risk sites to reduce their fire risk. More than one fifth (22%) think it is fairly important. Less than one in ten (3%) do not think it is important.

The built environment: heritage sites

Heritage risk is important to manage, but perhaps a lower priority than other risk types

Open questionnaire

- 1.11 Nearly nine in ten (89%) respondents think it is important that HFRS and IWFRS support work to protect heritage sites, with half thinking it is very important. Just over 1 in 10 (11%) think it is not important.

Focus groups

- 1.12 Though not universal, the predominant view among focus group participants was that protecting heritage sites should be a lower priority for the FRSs than, say, managing life, building and environmental risk. Indeed, several comments were made to suggest that as organisations such as English Heritage and National Trust are so well-resourced, they should either make a significant contribution toward, say, the

retrospective fitting of fire suppression systems - or should be required to establish their own official fire safety divisions to manage heritage risk.

- 1.13 It should be noted, though, that several participants placed high priority on protecting heritage sites, which were described as “irreplaceable” and essential in the context of tourism and economic benefit.

The built environment: economic risk

Opinion was somewhat divided (especially in the focus groups) on the extent to which HFRS and IWFRS should consider economic risk within its plans

Open questionnaire

- 1.14 Over one third (34%) of respondents think it is very important that HFRS and IWFRS consider economic risk when considering their strategies; just under half (47%) think it is fairly important. More than one eighth (15%) think it is not very important, whilst less than one in ten (6%) think it is not important at all.

Focus groups

- 1.15 Some participants stressed the need for the FRSs to consider economic risk within their plans given the potential impact economic harm can have on people’s lives. In considering relative priorities, though, others felt this should be secondary to other types of risk - especially as many of the more high-risk sites (COMAH sites for example) operate to such high standards of safety, despite the hazards they present on paper.

Landscape and Geography

The FRSs are expected to respond to environmental incidents, but some focus group participants felt responsibility for their prevention should lie elsewhere

Open questionnaire

- 1.16 95% of respondents consider it important that HFRS and IWFRS prioritise preparations to be ready for and respond to the risk posed by severe weather, whilst less than 1 in 10 (5%) do not think it is important. Moreover, more than 9 in 10 (91%) respondents think it is important that HFRS and IWFRS prioritise environmental protection work through preventative and response activities.

Focus groups

- 1.17 There was general expectation that, given their skills and capabilities, HFRS and IWFRS would form a significant part of any response to incidents within the natural environment - though a few people sought more information about relative risk to life and resource demands before making a firm judgement on this. However, working to prevent such incidents was typically thought to be the responsibility of others like the Environment Agency and local authority Environment Protection Officers - though a minority supported FRS involvement insofar as it would prove cost-effective in the long-run if resulting in fewer incidents.

A diverse workforce

Improving workforce diversity is important, but may not be a priority in times of economic constraint

Open questionnaire

- 1.18 More than a third (38%) of respondents think it is very important that the workforces of HFRS and IWFRS represent the makeup of the communities they serve, and more than one quarter (26%) think it is fairly important. One fifth (20%) feel it is not very important, whilst more than one eighth (16%) feel it is not important at all.

Focus groups

- 1.19 Focus group participants generally acknowledged the desirability and importance of HFRS' and IWFRS' attempts to diversify their workforces, and many supported investment in this area. Indeed, it was considered an especially important issue to address in on-call areas, where it is imperative to maximise the recruitment pool within the four-minute radius around the fire station. However, since the FRSs have no difficulty attracting applications more generally, many others wondered whether spending significant additional money on targeted recruitment campaigns was a top priority in times of financial constraint.
- 1.20 In terms of possible strategies, more engagement with schools and colleges (by offering career talks for example) was suggested - as was the expansion of 'young firefighter' schemes, targeting places with diverse customers such as gyms and the provision of more information about exactly what the firefighter role entails to overcome perception barriers.

Prioritising risk

Life risk is prioritised above all other types

- 1.21 Following discussion around the issues reported above, focus group participants were asked (in pairs or threes) to rank the following different risk types according to the priority they should be afforded by HFRS and IWFRS: life risk; buildings; the environment; heritage risk; economic risk; and key risk sites. They were then given 20 'counters' and asked to assign these to demonstrate how much resource they would give to each area. Below are some examples of participants' completed exercises.
- 1.22 Overall, the table below shows that life risk was clearly prioritised above all other types. Life risk was followed by the environment, buildings and key risk sites (which are separated by two percentage points in terms of overall counter distribution, so to all intents and purposes afforded equal priority). Economic risk and especially heritage risk were considered the least important focuses for the FRSs.

Risk Type	Rank	Number of counters assigned (345 in total)
Life risk	1	108 (31%)
The environment	2	58 (17%)
Buildings	3	56 (16%)
Key risk sites	4	52 (15%)
Economic risk	5	43 (12%)
Heritage risk	6	28 (8%)

Measuring Performance

Speed of response remains an important performance measure, but the public want to know more

Open questionnaire

- 1.23 More than half (52%) of respondents strongly agree that response standards are an important measure of performance for HFRS and IWFRS, whilst more than one third (35%) tend to agree, and less than 1 in 10 (9%) neither agree nor disagree. A further less than 1 in 10 (5%) disagree that response standards are an important measure of performance.
- 1.24 Three fifths (60%) of respondents think that speed of attendance is very important over other measures, whilst one third (33%) think it is fairly important. Less than 1 in 10 (7%) think it is not important.
- 1.25 In terms of other key areas in which they would like to see performance measured, 17% of questionnaire respondents said they would like to see overall response times (including mobilisation times and weight of attack to achieve successful outcomes) measured. 8% of respondents would like to see a measure relating to fire prevention, whilst 4% sought more information on staffing issues such as retention rates, work/life balance, morale etc.

Focus groups

- 1.26 Focus group participants generally agreed that response standards are an important performance measure, but also that they would be interested in learning more about other key areas of the FRS role - the impact of prevention and outreach work for example (though it was acknowledged that the impact of this can be hard to quantify).

There was a support for a refresh of response standards

Open questionnaire

- 1.27 More than four fifths (84%) respondents agree that HFRS and IWFRS should adapt their response standards based on risk to ensure resources are utilised as effectively and efficiently as possible to keep communities safe, whilst less than 1 in 10 (7%) neither agree nor disagree. Less than in 1 in 10 (9%) disagree, with 5% strongly disagreeing.

Focus groups

- 1.28 Though focus group participants were impressed with HFRS' and IWFRS' attendance times, they were concerned about the lack of nuance and transparency within a county-wide standard. There was thus almost unanimous support for a review of this standard - though one participant was concerned that any changes could be a precursor to resource reductions. It was also argued that incident outcomes are more important than attendance times, and that this should factor into any future review.

Responding to medical emergencies

There was widespread support for co-responding, but there was some concern about sending full crews to medical incidents

Open questionnaire

- 1.29 More than two fifths (44%) of respondents strongly agree that HFRS and IWFRS should continue to develop and widen the medical response activities they provide to the public, whilst more than one

quarter (28%) tend to agree. More than 1 in 10 (11%) of respondents neither agree nor disagree, whilst less than 1 in 10 (9%) tend to disagree, and 7% strongly disagree with the possible widening of medical response activities.

Focus groups

- 1.30 Co-responding as a concept was widely supported by focus group participants, but opinion was divided as to whether, in future, full crews (in fire engines) should be deployed to medical incidents. Some felt they should on the grounds that: all emergency services should be working together to save lives; and fire engines can more often than not reach those in need more quickly than ambulances. Others, though, objected (or at least expressed concern) on the basis that medical response could conflict with fire and rescue response - and because they considered it somewhat cost-ineffective with respect to diesel costs and fire engine wear and tear.

Partnerships

Open questionnaire

- 1.31 Just under two fifths (38%) of respondents strongly agree that HFRS and IWFRS should use their skills and capabilities to respond to a wider range of risks and demands to make their communities safer; the same proportion (38%) of respondents tend to agree. 1 in 10 (10%) of respondents neither agree nor disagree, whilst less than 1 in 10 (9%) tend to disagree, and 4% strongly disagree.

Data Sharing

Open questionnaire

- 1.32 Nearly half (49%) of respondents would be willing for their data to be shared with HFRS and IWFRS' partners to improve understanding of risk and the ability to collaborate effectively to identify those most in need of prevention activities, whilst more than one quarter (27%) would be somewhat willing. Around one eighth (12%) of respondents would not be very willing to have their data shared, with a similar proportion (11%) not willing at all.

Finances and funding

There was support for HFRS and IWFRS exploring opportunities for income generation

Open questionnaire

- 1.33 Two fifths (40%) of respondents strongly agree that HFRS should explore opportunities for income generation, whilst more than one third (35%) tend to agree. More than 1 in 10 (11%) neither agree nor disagree, and more than one eighth (14%) disagree.
- 1.34 In terms of what could be provided, offering training services to organisations was the most popular suggestion.

Focus groups

- 1.35 Focus group participants were also generally happy for HFRS and IWFRS to explore income generation opportunities within their areas of expertise - such as fire safety training and providing additional fire cover at large events.

Identity

There was little support for a name change

Open questionnaire

- ^{1.36} Just less than two thirds (63%) strongly agree that the name 'Fire and Rescue Service' still reflects the role of HFRS and IWFRS, whilst nearly one fifth (19%) tend to agree. Less than 1 in 10 (7%) respondents neither agree nor disagree, whilst 5% each tend to disagree and strongly disagree.

Focus groups

- ^{1.37} Few focus group participants supported a name change on the grounds of complexity, tradition (that is, many people still refer to the FRS as 'fire brigade' or 'fire service' anyway) and rebranding costs. Indeed, only a couple of people suggested a need for change, particularly in relation to incorporating the Services' prevention and medical response remit.

2. Project overview

The Commission

- 2.1 In 2019, Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service (HFRS) and the Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service (IWFRS) published an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) consultation document that identified risks within Hampshire and the Isle of Wight and assessed those risks to see how likely they are to occur. The IRMP is designed to ensure HFRS and IWFRS can make plans to manage these risks.
- 2.2 The plan was co-produced in a full-day workshop session by the FRs and their stakeholders, namely:



- 2.3 Consequently, HFRS and IWFRS commissioned Opinion Research Services (ORS) to undertake a programme of key consultation activities and to report respondents' views on the following issues:
- Communities: factors that can impact levels of vulnerability;
 - Diverse workforce: representation within HFRS and IWFRS;
 - The Built environment: identifying and targeting high-risk buildings;
 - Landscape and geography: prioritising environmental protection work;
 - Measuring HFRS' and IWFRS' performance: response standards;
 - Responding to medical emergencies: developing and widening medical response activities;

- Partnerships: HFRS and IWFRS using their capabilities to respond to a wider range of risks and demands;
- Data sharing: willingness for HFRS and IWFRS to share data with their partner organisations;
- Finances and funding: exploring opportunities for income generation; and
- Identity: the name ‘Fire and Rescue Service’ and how it reflects the current role of HFRS and IWFRS.

The Consultation Process

- ^{2.4} The consultation period ran from 23rd September to 24th November 2019. Key elements of the consultation were undertaken by ORS as an independent organisation - for example, designing the consultation questionnaire (in conjunction with HFRS and IWFRS) and presentation material for the focus groups; recruiting, facilitating and reporting four deliberative focus groups; and analysing and reporting all consultation responses.
- ^{2.5} The 8-week formal consultation period gave the public, staff and stakeholders sufficient time to participate, and through its consultation documents and website information, HFRS and IWFRS sought to provide people with sufficient information to understand their proposals and to make informed judgements about them.

Quantitative Engagement

Open questionnaire

- ^{2.6} The open consultation questionnaire (with an accompanying Consultation Document) was available online between 30th September and 24th November 2019. The survey was available to residents, representatives from business, public and voluntary organisations and employees of HFRS and IWFRS. In total, 653 questionnaires were completed, all of which were submitted online. Most responses were from individuals, but 20 responses were received from the following organisations:
- 3SFire Ltd
 - Action on Hearing Loss
 - Age UK
 - Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council
 - Bembridge Parish Council
 - Dorset & Wiltshire FRS
 - Freemantle & Shirley Community Centre
 - Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service
 - Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service
 - New Forest District Council
 - Organisational Development East Hampshire District Council and Havant Borough Council.

- Pain Management Support Groups (Recognised by the Queen Alexandra Hospital Department of Rheumatology)
- Pegasus Group
- Regional Home Oxygen Lead
- Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service
- South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SCAS)
- Southampton City Council
- Test Valley Borough Council (Corporate)
- Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Estates Department
- Wightlink Ltd

2.7 It should be noted that while open questionnaires are important consultation routes that are accessible to almost everyone, they are not ‘surveys’ of the public. Whereas surveys require proper sampling of a given population, open questionnaires are distributed unsystematically or adventitiously, and are more likely to be completed by motivated people while also being subject to influence by local campaigns. As such, because the respondent profile (as outlined in the full report) is an imperfect reflection of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight population, its results must be interpreted carefully. This does not mean that the open questionnaire findings should be discounted: they are analysed in detail in this report and must be taken into account as a demonstration of the strength of feeling of residents who were motivated to put forward their views.

Interpretation of the data

- 2.8 Where percentages do not sum to 100, this may be due to computer rounding, the exclusion of “don’t know” categories, or multiple answers. An asterisk (*) in the profile tables denotes a figure that is less than 0.05.
- 2.9 Where differences between demographic groups have been highlighted as significant there is a 95% probability that the difference is significant and not due to chance. Differences that are not said to be ‘significant’ or ‘statistically significant’ are indicative only. When comparing results between demographic sub-groups, overall, only results which are significantly different are highlighted in the text.
- 2.10 The example comments shown throughout the report have been selected as being typical of those received in relation to each proposal.
- 2.11 Charts are used extensively in this report to make it as user friendly as possible. The pie charts and other charts show the proportions (percentages) of respondents making relevant responses. Where possible, the colours of the charts have been standardised with:
- Purple/blue/yellow shades to represent neutral responses (neither positive nor negative)
 - Green shades to represent positive responses (E.g. agreement)
 - Red shades to represent negative responses (E.g. disagreement)
 - Grey shades to represent ‘other’ and/or ‘don’t know’ responses

Qualitative engagement

Focus groups

- 2.12 HFRS and IWFRS commissioned a programme of four deliberative focus groups with members of the public across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight (held in Eastleigh, Isle of Wight, Basingstoke, Portsmouth) involving a diverse and broadly representative cross-section of residents. ORS worked in collaboration with HFRS and IWFRS to prepare informative stimulus material for the groups before facilitating the discussions and preparing an independent report of findings.

Attendance and Representation

- 2.13 The focus groups were designed to inform and ‘engage’ the participants with the issues set out in the IRMP. This was done by using a ‘deliberative’ approach to encourage members of the public to question and to reflect on the proposals in detail. The meetings lasted for two hours.
- 2.14 In total, there were 41 diverse participants at the focus groups. The dates of the meetings and attendance levels by members of the public can be found in Table 1.

Table 1: Focus groups (Area, Time and Date and Number of attendees)

Area	Time and Date	Number of Attendees
Eastleigh	Wednesday 13th November 2019 6:30pm - 8:30pm	11
Isle of Wight	Thursday 14th November 2019 6:30pm - 8:30pm	10
Basingstoke	Tuesday 19th November 2019 6:30pm - 8:30pm	11
Portsmouth	Wednesday 20th November 2019 6:30pm - 8:30pm	9

- 2.15 The attendance target for the focus groups was between 8 and 12 people so the recruitment programme was successful. Participants were recruited by random-digit telephone dialling from ORS’ Social Research Call Centre. Such recruitment by telephone is an effective way of ensuring that the participants are independent and broadly representative of the wider community. Participants who took part in focus groups as part of HFRS’ and IWFRS’ engagement process were also invited to take part. As standard good practice, people were recompensed for their time and efforts in travelling and taking part.
- 2.16 Overall (as shown in the table below), participants were a broad cross-section of residents from the local areas

Table 2: Focus groups criteria

Criteria	Focus Group Count
Gender	
Male	23
Female	18

Age	
16-34	13
35-54	16
55+	12
Ethnicity	
BAME	9
Geographical area	
Basingstoke and Deane	4
Fareham	4
Hart	2
Isle of Wight	10
New Forest	3
Portsmouth	6
Rushmoor	2
Southampton	5
Test Valley	3
Winchester	2
Disability	
Limiting Illness or Disability	4

- 2.17 In the recruitment process, care was taken to ensure that no potential participants were disqualified or disadvantaged by disabilities or any other factors, and the venues at which the focus groups met were readily accessible. People's needs were taken into account in the recruitment and venue selection.
- 2.18 Although, like all other forms of qualitative consultation, focus groups cannot be certified as statistically representative samples of public opinion, the meetings reported here gave diverse groups of people from Hampshire and the Isle of Wight the opportunity to participate.
- 2.19 Because the recruitment was inclusive and participants were diverse, we are satisfied that the outcomes of the meeting (as reported below) are broadly indicative of how informed opinion would incline based on similar discussions. In summary, the outcomes reported here are reliable as examples of the needs and wants of diverse informed people reacting to the possible challenges facing HFRS and IWFRS.

Discussion agenda

- 2.20 The focus group agenda covered the following topics:
- The built environment: identifying and targeting high-risk buildings;
 - Landscape and geography: prioritising environmental protection work;

- Partnerships: HFRS and IWFRS using their capabilities to respond to a wider range of risks and demands;
- Diverse workforce: representation within HFRS and IWFRS;
- Measuring HFRS' and IWFRS' performance: response standards;
- Responding to medical emergencies: developing and widening medical response activities;
- Finances and funding: exploring opportunities for income generation; and
- Identity: the name 'Fire and Rescue Service' and how it reflects the current role of HFRS and IWFRS.

Written submissions

- 2.21 Two written submissions were received during the consultation period: one from the Fire Brigades Union and the other from the Forestry Commission.

Reporting

- 2.22 The findings from the qualitative research concisely reviews the sentiments and judgements of focus group participants about HFRS and IWFRS and what they expect and desire of it. Verbatim quotations are used, in indented italics, not because we agree or disagree with them – but for their vividness in capturing recurrent points of view. ORS does not endorse the opinions in question but seeks only to portray them accurately and clearly. The report is an interpretative summary of the issues raised by participants.

3. Open Questionnaire

Introduction

- 3.1 The open consultation questionnaire (with an accompanying Consultation Document) was available between 23rd September and 24th November 2019 online on both the HFRS and IWFRS websites, and as a hard copy, which was available on request.
- 3.2 653 questionnaires were completed; all of which were submitted online.

Duplicate and Co-ordinated Responses

- 3.3 It is important that engagement questionnaires are open and accessible to all, whilst being alert to the possibility of multiple completions (by the same people) distorting the analysis. Therefore, while making it easy to complete the questionnaire online, ORS monitors the IP addresses through which questionnaires are completed. A similar analysis of ‘cookies’ was also undertaken – where responses originated from users on the same computer using the same browser and the same credentials (e.g. user account).

Profile Tables

Table 3: Age – All Respondents

Age	Total responses (Unweighted)	% of respondents (Unweighted)
Under 35	81	17
35-44	79	17
45-54	116	25
55-64	71	15
65 and over	124	26
Not Known	182	-
Total	653	100

Table 4: Gender – All Respondents

Gender	Total responses (Unweighted)	% of respondents (Unweighted)
Male	288	63
Female	159	35
Other	10	2
Not Known	196	-
Total	653	100

Table 5: Disability – Respondents

Disability	Total responses (Unweighted)	% of respondents (Unweighted)
Yes	59	13
No	393	87
Prefer not to say	201	-
Total	653	100

Table 6: Ethnic Group – All Respondents

Ethnic group	Total responses (Unweighted)	% of respondents (Unweighted)
White British	425	95
Other	21	5
Not Known	207	-
Total	653	100

Table 7: Working for HFRS or IWFRS – All Respondents

Do you work for Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service or Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service?	Total responses (Unweighted)	% of respondents (Unweighted)
Yes	105	24
No	341	76
Prefer not to say	207	-
Total	653	100

Table 8: Local Authorities – All respondents

Local Authority	Total responses (Unweighted)	% of respondents (Unweighted)
Basingstoke and Deane	19	5
East Hampshire	14	3
Eastleigh	29	7
Fareham	22	5
Gosport	8	2
Hart	11	3
Havant	32	8
Isle of Wight	78	19
New Forest	35	9
Portsmouth	31	8
Rushmoor	11	3
Southampton	56	14
Test Valley	25	6
Winchester	20	5
Outside Hampshire	13	2
Not Known	249	-
Total	653	100

Main Findings



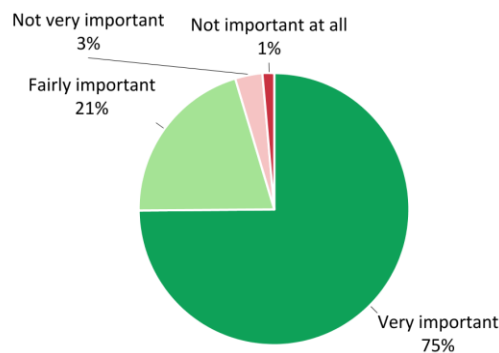
Communities

HFRS and IWFRS aim to identify and help those in their communities who are most vulnerable, such as those aged over 65, those living alone, those with mental health issues, alcohol and/or drug dependencies or those who are frail. They will work with partner agencies to ensure their strategies complement one another for the benefit of these people.

How important is it for you that HFRS and IWFRS continue to identify and target the most vulnerable groups and communities to make them safer?

- 3.4 It can be seen in Figure 1 that three quarters (75%) of respondents think it is very important that HFRS and IWFRS continue to identify and target the most vulnerable groups and communities to make them safer; a further fifth (21%) think this is fairly important.
- 3.5 Less than 1 in 10 (4%) do not think it is important; only 1% think it is not important at all.

Figure 1: How important is it for you that HFRS and IWFRS continue to identify and target the most vulnerable groups and communities to make them safer?



Base: All Respondents (652)



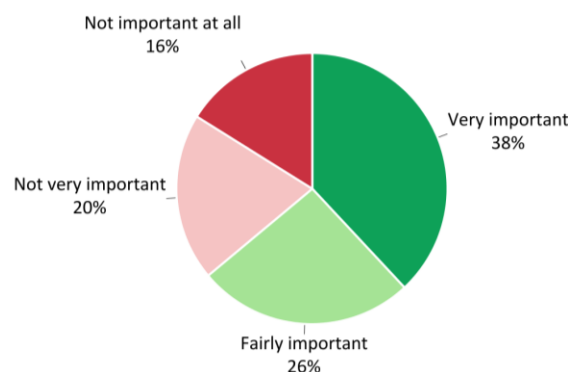
A diverse workforce

HFRS and IWFRS aim to have diverse workforces that reflect the communities they serve and can sensitively engage with people from all backgrounds and walks of life. Concerted efforts are being made to remove historic barriers that may have deterred people from under-represented groups from applying for operational roles in the past.

How important is it to you that the workforces of HFRS and IWFRS represent the makeup of the communities they serve?

- 3.6 Figure 2 shows that more than one third (38%) of respondents think it is very important that the workforces of HFRS and IWFRS represent the makeup of the communities they serve, and more than one quarter (26%) think it is fairly important.
- 3.7 One fifth (20%) feel it is not very important, whilst more than one eighth (16%) feel it is not important at all.

Figure 2: How important is it that the workforces of HFRS and IWFRS represent the makeup of the communities they serve?



Base: All Respondents (626)

- 3.8 A few people took the opportunity to comment on this issue in the Equalities section. Some considered it essential that there should be more diversity within HFRS and IWFRS.

“The fire service is nationally male dominated. The service should continually assure itself that its recruitment, promotion processes and practical assessments are appropriate for role(s) and accessible to all”

“The service should encourage a more diverse workforce and do more for staff inclusion and cohesion”

- 3.9 Others, though, could understand neither the reasoning for nor the importance of attempting to diversify the FRS workforce: as the selection of comments below demonstrates, they stressed that firefighters should be selected on merit only.

“Recruit the best people not by race, gender or religion”

“Why are you bothered about the race and ethnicity of your employees? If I need your help I don't care where my rescuer comes from or what they believe in”

“Jobs, in any service or corporation should be given purely on capability, nothing else should come into the equation”

“I believe we are all equal, but positive discrimination is a bad thing in society. When it comes to recruitment it should be based on the best person for the job and not their ethnicity”

“What should matter are the capabilities of a firefighter/manager not their characteristics. View the person's ability not the person. If something goes wrong and a family members life is at risk there is no point having a beautifully diverse service rock up if they can't do the job. Focus on skill not diversity”



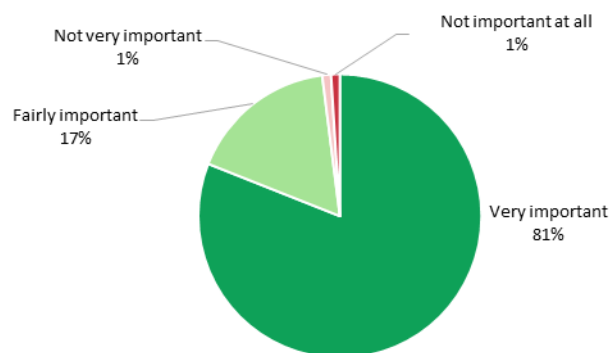
The built environment

HFRS and IWFRS have a duty to make Hampshire and the Isle of Wight safer: one of the laws that enables them to do this is the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, which is designed to ensure there is a basic fire safety standard in non-domestic premises. Teams of dedicated Fire Safety Inspecting Officers work with statutory partners and businesses to ensure places of work, commercial premises and public access buildings meet the standard required.

During the past decade this team has been significantly reduced due to the prioritisation of emergency response in the face of significant budget reductions. Innovative working has lessened the impact and we will ensure we have the capacity to inspect premises we identify as a priority. HFRS and IWFRS are committed to: investing in their staff and supporting systems to ensure they have the capacity to inspect the buildings they believe most require it to reduce public risk; and working with businesses to ensure they remain safe and can continue to function in the event of an incident.

How important is it to you that HFRS and IWFRS identify and inspect their highest risk buildings to help make them safer?

Figure 3: How important is it that HFRS and IWFRS identify and inspect their highest risk buildings to help make them safer?

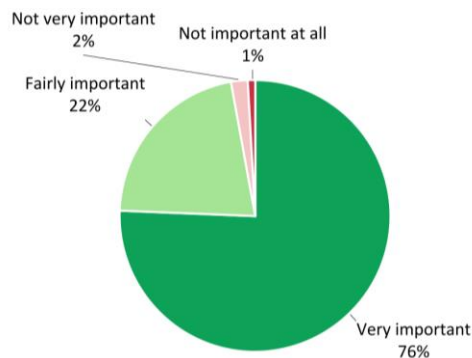


Base: All Respondents (604)

- 3.10 Figure 3 shows that the vast majority of respondents (98%) think it is important that HFRS and IWFRS identify and inspect their highest risk buildings to help make them safer; more than four fifths (81%) of respondents think it is very important.
- 3.11 Only 2% of respondents think it is not very important or not important at all.

How important is it to you that HFRS and IWFRS support their key risk sites to reduce their fire risk?

Figure 4: How important is it to you that HFRS and IWFRS support their key risk sites to reduce their fire risk?



Base: Base: All Respondents (602)

- 3.12 Figure 4 shows that more than three quarters (76%) of respondents think it is very important that HFRS and IWFRS support their key risk sites to reduce their fire risk. More than one fifth (22%) think it is fairly important.
- 3.13 Less than one in ten (3%) do not think it is important.

How important is it to you that HFRS and IWFRS support work to protect heritage sites?

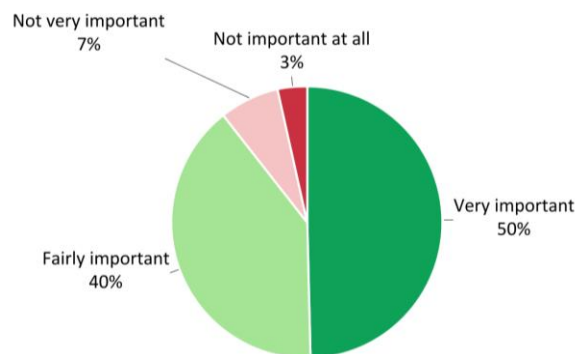


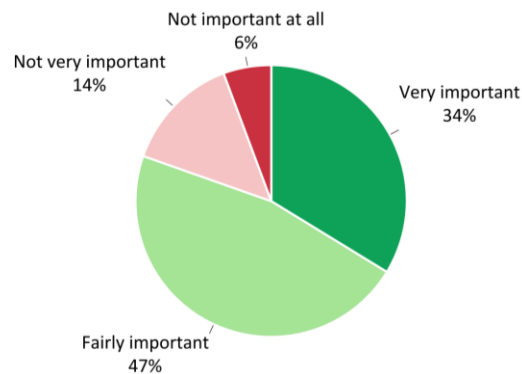
Figure 5: How important is it to you that HFRS and IWFRS support work to protect heritage sites?

Base: All Respondents (605)

- 3.14 It can be seen in Figure 5 that nearly four fifths (89%) of respondents think it is important that HFRS and IWFRS support work to protect heritage sites, with half thinking it is very important.
- 3.15 Just over 1 in 10 (11%) think it is not important.

How important is it to you that HFRS and IWFRS consider economic risk when considering their strategies?

Figure 6: How important is it to you that HFRS and IWFRS consider economic risk when considering their strategies?



Base: All Respondents (596)

- 3.16 Figure 6 above shows that over one third (34%) think it is very important that HFRS and IWFRS consider economic risk when considering their strategies; just under half (47%) think it is fairly important.
- 3.17 More than one eighth (15%) think it is not very important, whilst less than one in ten (6%) think it is not important at all.



Landscape and geography

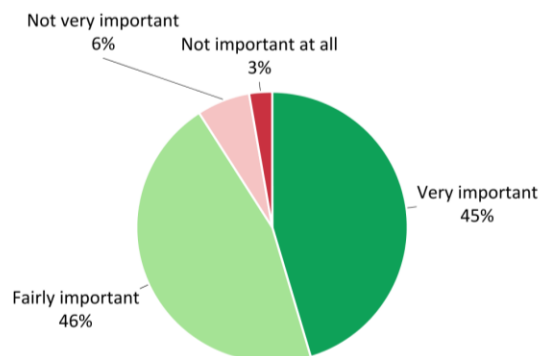
HFRS and IWFRS recognise the risks presented by the natural environment and that these risks are now increased due to the effects of climate change.

Climate change continues to increase the risk of severe weather such as heatwaves, colder winters and heavier rain leading to numerous risks such as increased wildfires and flooding events. HFRS and IWFRS believe that they must be ready to respond to incidents in the natural environment both to protect life and property and also the environment itself.

How important is it to you that HFRS and IWFRS prioritise environmental protection work through preventative and response activities?

- 3.18 Figure 7 shows that more than 9 in 10 (91%) respondents think it is important that HFRS and IWFRS prioritise environmental protection work through preventative and response activities, whilst less than 1 in 10 (9%) disagree.

Figure 7: How important is it to you that HFRS and IWFRS prioritise environmental protection work through preventative and response activities?

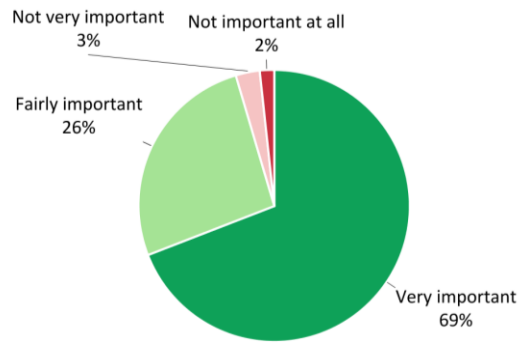


Base: All Respondents (595)

How important is it to you that HFRS and IWFRS prioritise preparations to be ready for and respond to the risks posed by severe weather?

- 3.19 As seen in Figure 8, 95% of respondents consider it important that HFRS and IWFRS prioritise preparations to be ready for and respond to the risk posed by severe weather, whilst less than 1 in 10 (5%) do not think it is important.

Figure 8: How important is it to you that HFRS and IWFRS prioritise preparations to be ready for and respond to the risks posed by severe weather?



Base: (595)



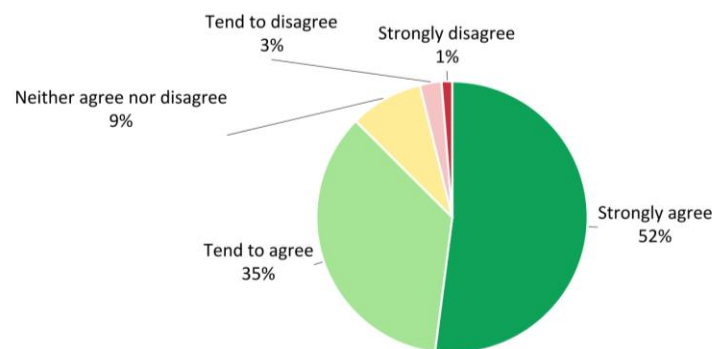
Measuring Performance

HFRS and IWFRS would like to develop a set of key performance indicators the public can access. Traditionally we are measured by our speed of response however there are numerous other ways in which we serve our communities in making Hampshire and the Isle of Wight safer. It is important to us for you to be able to see how we are performing across the key areas in which we serve.

HFRS and IWFRS are committed to setting challenging, achievable and appropriate targets that will help drive us to make life safer for our communities.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that response standards are an important measure of performance for HFRS and IWFRS?

Figure 9: To what extent do you agree or disagree that response standards are an important measure of performance for HFRS and IWFRS?



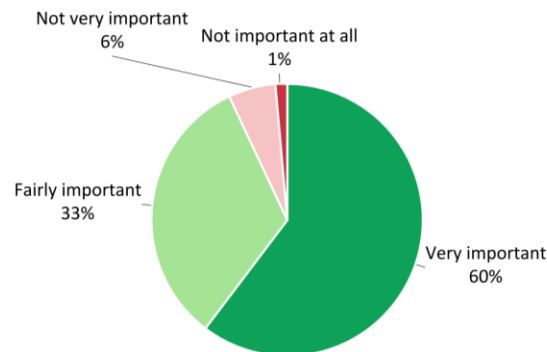
Base: All Respondents (573)

- 3.21 Figure 9 shows that more than half (52%) of respondents strongly agree that response standards are an important measure of performance for HFRS and IWFRS, whilst more than one third (35%) tend to agree, and less than 1 in 10 (9%) neither agree nor disagree.
- 3.22 A further less than 1 in 10 (5%) disagree that response standards are an important measure of performance for HFRS and IWFRS.

How important is our speed of attendance over other measures?

- 3.23 As seen in Figure 10 overleaf, three fifths (60%) of respondents think that speed of attendance is very important over other measures, whilst one third (33%) think it is fairly important. Less than 1 in 10 (7%) think it is not important.

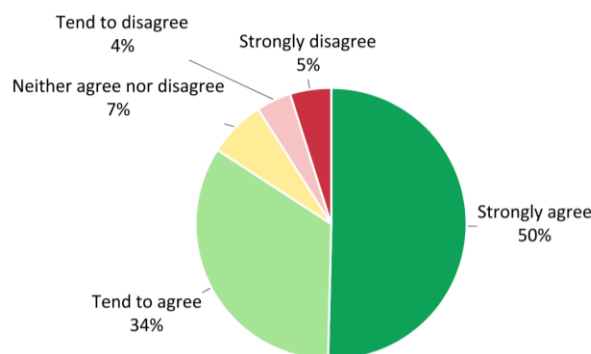
Figure 10: How important is our speed of attendance over other measures?



Base: All Respondents (572)

To what extent do you agree or disagree that HFRS and IWFRS should adapt their response standards based on risk to ensure resources are utilised as effectively and efficiently as possible to keep communities safe?

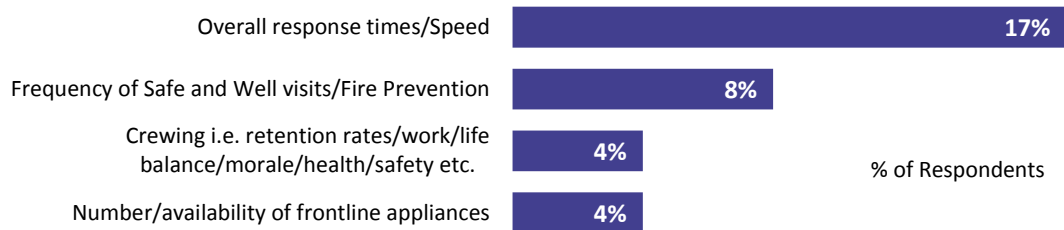
Figure 11: To what extent do you agree or disagree that HFRS and IWFRS should adapt their response standards based on risk to ensure resources are utilised as effectively and efficiently as possible to keep communities safe?



Base: All Respondents (574)

- 3.24 In Figure 11, it can be seen that more than four fifths (84%) respondents agree that HFRS and IWFRS should adapt their response standards based on risk to ensure resources are utilised as effectively and efficiently as possible to keep communities safe, whilst less than 1 in 10 (7%) neither agree nor disagree.
- 3.25 Less than 1 in 10 (9%) disagree that HFRS and IWFRS should adapt their response standards, with 5% strongly disagreeing.

In what key areas would you like to see our performance measured?

Figure 12: In what key areas would you like to see our performance measured?

Base: All Respondents (650)

- 3.26 In Figure 12, it can be seen that 17% of respondents would like to see overall response times (including mobilisation times and weight of attack to achieve successful outcomes) measured.

“Response [time] is the only way. [It] could be the difference between saving a life or losing it. To this end the mobilisation system has inadequacies that need rectifying”

“Measure the time to get the weight of attack to an incident to make meaningful intervention, not the first”

- 3.27 8% of respondents would like to see a measure relating to fire prevention (including the frequency of Safe and Well visits) measured, whilst 4% sought more information on staffing issues (retention rates, work/life balance, morale etc.).

“Performance measures should not look at speed of response alone; performance should also be measured against protection and prevention activities as well as how we can prove that we have improved safety in the communities that we serve. In addition to this, performance should be measured against the well-being of staff and their health and welfare.”

- 3.28 Other key areas that respondents would like to see performance measured includes: the number of fire engines available at any given time, levels of community engagement and levels of risk.

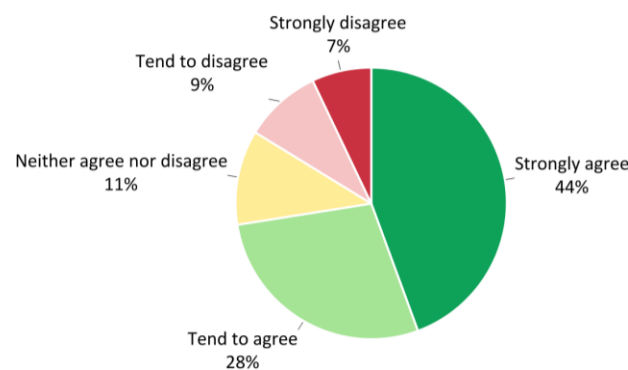


Responding to medical emergencies

HFRS and IWFRS have dedicated medical response capabilities called co-responders who support the ambulance service in specific locations by delivering medical intervention as quickly as possible to someone in need. They have also recently invested in all frontline crews and appliances to enhance their medical capabilities. They are now looking to expand the support offered to their partner ambulance services as part of the wider strategy to make life safer across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight

To what extent do you agree or disagree that HFRS and IWFRS should continue to develop and widen the medical response activities it provides to the public?

Figure 13: To what extent do you agree or disagree that HFRS and IWFRS should continue to develop and widen the medical response activities they provide to the public?



Base: All Respondents (577)

- 3.29 Figure 13 shows that more than two fifths (44%) of respondents strongly agree that HFRS and IWFRS should continue to develop and widen the medical response activities they provide to the public, whilst more than one quarter (28%) tend to agree. As one free-text comment stated:

“Taking on medical responsibilities due to the NHS poor performance at A&E, (but the best they can probably do with the money available) means that the fire and rescue service and the police are having to take on work that should be done by ambulance service or first responders. However, in the case of accidents, the fire and rescue service and the police are likely to be on site well before an ambulance, so their enhanced medical training is essential to save lives and prevent life changing injuries from actions of untrained people.”

- 3.30 More than 1 in 10 (11%) of respondents neither agree nor disagree, whilst less than 1 in 10 (9%) tend to disagree, and 7% strongly disagree with the possible widening of medical response activities. The free-text comments seem to suggest that this is due to concern around the over-dilution of the firefighter role, to the detriment of the FRS’s core functions.

“Firefighters need to be trained to ensure they are good at their job. Not watering down their skills on medical calls. The firefighters already have more than enough skills to maintain. The ambulance service is there for medical emergencies. This should be correctly funded”

“I agree that the fire service should be able to respond to a number of different types of incidents however, I would like to make sure that they are still able to deal with their core service, which is to deal with fires”

“In light of the further anticipated funding reduction, please prioritise core activities first i.e. Fire and rescue. Further activity, such as medical response, should only be undertaken at no detriment to core activities”

“Loading firefighters with so many diverse jobs, outside of normal emergency calls, is a risk, as it requires proper training, updates etc., all at extra cost, if it's to be carried out in a proper and safe manner”

“To look at the statutory requirements, and ensure we first carry out what is required before other roles”

“Firefighters should be trained to deal with fires and rescues, to the best possible, they shouldn't be utilised as social workers, or to cover for an underfunded NHS”



Partnerships

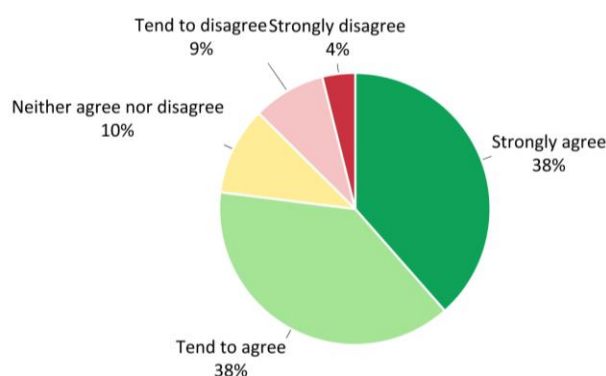
HFRS and IWFRS recognise that they must continue to evolve and work in new ways to meet the new risks and challenges they face; risks that should not be looked at in isolation but rather as more widely connected issues to be addressed in collaboration with partners. Widening the scope of their activities through a better understanding of risk has already helped the two FRs engage directly with vulnerable people and make them and their environment safer.

Some examples of different ways of working are:

- *Working with young people with low self-esteem, social isolation or weight management problems*
- *Working with the NHS to increase balance, fitness levels and nutrition advice within targeted populations to keep people mobile and reduce the risks of frailty and falling;*
- *Medical co-responding with the ambulance service (whereby trained firefighters are mobilised by the ambulance service and then supported by the nearest available ambulance to get vital medical intervention as quickly as possible to someone in need)*
- *Assisting the police with searches for vulnerable missing persons.*

To what extent do you agree or disagree that HFRS and IWFRS should use their skills and capabilities to respond to a wider range of risks and demands to make their communities safer?

Figure 14: To what extent do you agree or disagree that HFRS and IWFRS should use their skills and capabilities to respond to a wider range of risks and demands to make their communities safer?



Base: All Respondents (564)

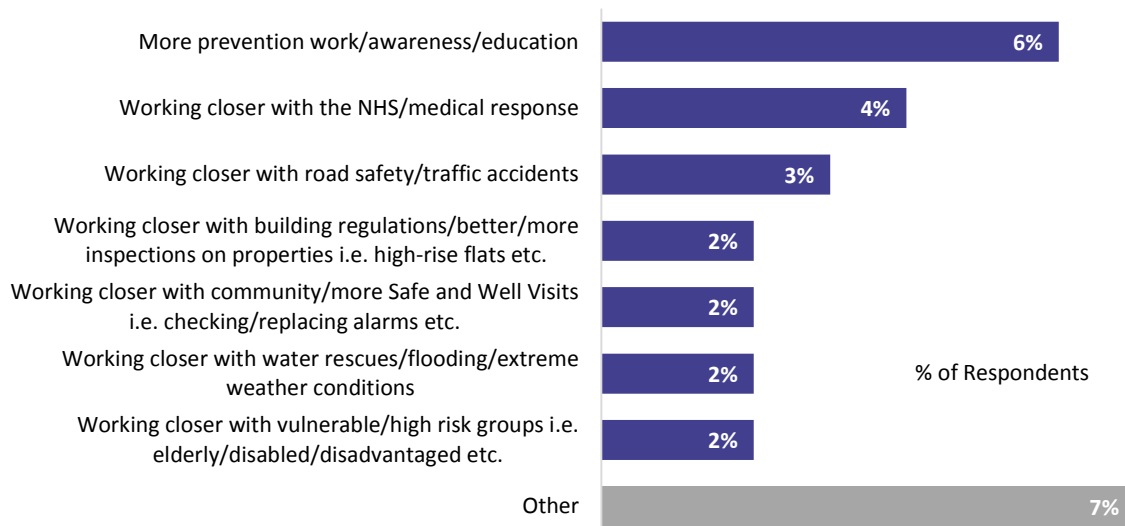
- 3.31 Figure 14 shows that just under two fifths (38%) of respondents strongly agree that HFRS and IWFRS should use their skills and capabilities to respond to a wider range of risks and demands to make their communities safer; the same proportion (38%) of respondents tend to agree. One free-text comment in support stated that:

“Integrating into shared services, is the way forward in these cash strapped times. It will take commitments from all stakeholders, and an openness to change which is sometimes hard.”

- 3.32 1 in 10 (10%) of respondents neither agree nor disagree that the HFRS and IWFRS should use their skills and capabilities to respond to a wider range of risks and demands, whilst less than 1 in 10 (9%) tend to disagree, and 4% strongly disagree.

What other risks or demands do you think HFRS and IWFRS should become involved with to make life safer?

Figure 15: What other risks or demands do you think HFRS and IWFRS should become involved with to make life safer?



Base: All Respondents (650)

- 3.33 Figure 15 shows that 6% of respondents think that HFRS and IWFRS should undertake more prevention and education work to make life safer, whilst 4% think the Services should undertake more medical co-responding activity.

“Teaching people how to be careful in their homes. Attending schools and colleges to teach the students basic care in the home going back and forth to school and in their school environment”

“Any incident where there is a significant risk to life and FRS capabilities or personal could be utilised to remove unnecessary strain from other overstretched emergency services (i.e. search for vulnerable persons. More co-responders in the county, where station availability allows. Try to do more Safe and Wells for more people even if they do not meet the current criteria. More community engagement and school visits (school visits where parents can be involved)”

“Expand the co-responder approach to have joint fire/medical response/service as in the USA”

- 3.34 Of the ‘other’ risk and demands mentioned, these included becoming more involved with counter-terrorism activity, as well as arson awareness and other specific preventative measures.

- 3.35 It should also be noted that a few comments were made along the following lines.

“We are not specialists in all areas. Our role outside of the fire services act, should be around support. If it doesn't make firefighters or the public safer, then we should not be involved. This is obviously a broad area, but making life safer could be interpreted in so many different ways. There has to be a limit, or we risk not being good at anything because we are trying to support everyone else”



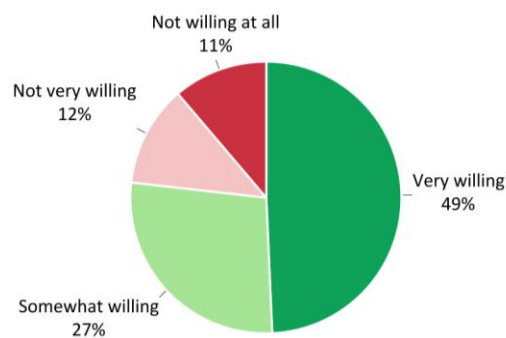
Data sharing

HFRS and IWFRS are seeking to further develop their data sharing agreements with partners to improve their understanding of risk and their ability to collaborate effectively to identify those most in need of prevention activities.

Historically we know most people killed or seriously injured in fires are known to FRSs or their partners. Effectively sharing information between trusted partners helps them to focus on those most at risk.

How willing would you be for HFRS and IWFRS to share your data with our partners in this way?

Figure 16: How willing would you be for HFRS and IWFRS to share your data with our partners in this way?



Base: All Respondents (542)

- 3.36 Figure 16 shows that nearly half (49%) of respondents would be willing for their data to be shared with HFRS and IWFRS' partners, whilst more than one quarter (27%) would be somewhat willing.
- 3.37 Around one eighth (12%) of respondents would not be very willing to have their data shared, with a similar proportion (11%) not willing at all.



Finances and funding

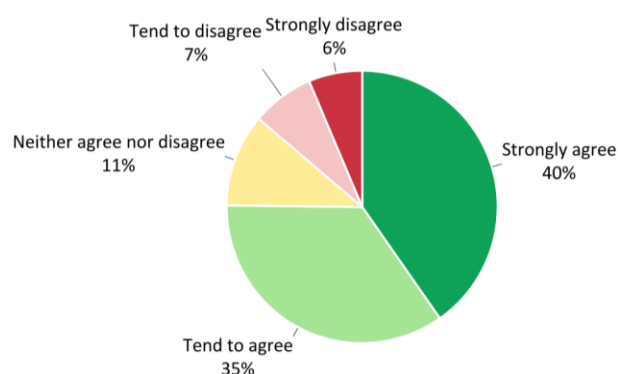
HFRS and IWFRS are funded in several ways including via collection of council tax. Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority currently collects £67.71 per year in council tax for a Band D property to provide a fire and rescue service to the communities of Hampshire, while the Isle of Wight Council currently collects £66.91 per year for a Band D property to provide a fire and rescue service to the communities of the Isle of Wight.

Our financial strategy ensures our core functions are sustainable and incorporates council tax, government grants and business rates alongside income generation and cost recovery from the use of our estates, partnership working and our trading arm.

Both FRSs have experienced reductions in government funding and an anticipated £4m of further reductions will be needed across both services to balance the budget by 2021/22. It is believed that following this, no further reductions can be made without impact to local communities.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that HFRS should explore opportunities for income generation?

Figure 17: To what extent do you agree or disagree that HFRS should explore opportunities for income generation?

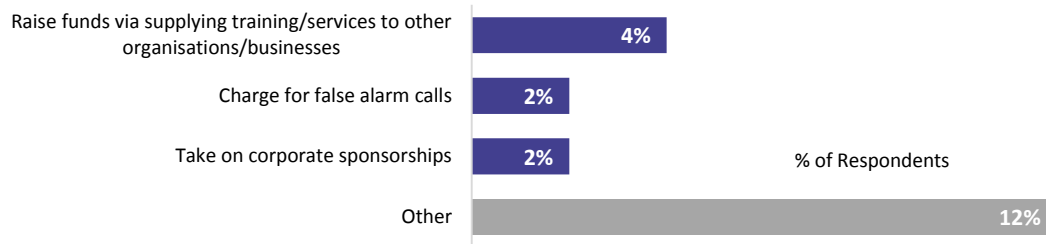


Base: All Respondents (551)

- 3.39 Figure 17 shows that two fifths (40%) of respondents strongly agree that HFRS should explore opportunities for income generation, whilst more than one third (35%) tend to agree. As one free-text comment stated:

“Revenue generation is key, especially due to varied support from local authorities and government”

- 3.40 More than 1 in 10 (11%) neither agree nor disagree, and more than one eighth (14%) disagree.

Figure 18: Are there any further financial opportunities that HFRS and IWFRS should be exploring?

Base: All Respondents (646)

- 3.41 Figure 18 shows that 4% of respondents think that HFRS and IWFRS should raise funds by offering training services to organisations.

“The scope for commercial training is immense – and who would paying customers/employers/organisations trust most with their fire/safety training than the fire service? The brand itself needs little selling, we’re already popular. It’s a no-brainer for me. Some of it may require investment outside of normal municipal firefighting, such as the approval of concerned authorities for the training of firefighter specialisms such as offshore, petro-chemical or aviation, but I believe the potential for this business should be scoped”

- 3.42 Some respondents (2%) suggested charging for false alarms – and further 2% felt the Services should seek corporate sponsorship.

“Charging for repeated automatic alarm calls, charging for incident reports, charging for services to businesses where the business is deemed at fault.”

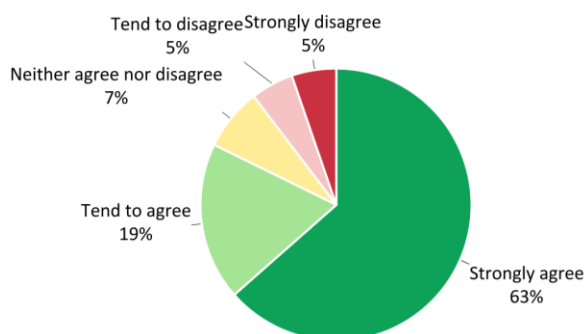
- 3.43 Of the ‘other’ responses given, these included: encouraging funding links with parish councils; further partnership procurement; local/regional lotteries; fundraising in the community at public events; and selling a Fire Service ‘experience’ session to children at schools.



Identity

HFRS and IWFRS have transformed greatly over the last few years and will continue to do so in order to meet the new risks and challenges facing their communities. They have and will continue to develop new ways of working, developing how staff are trained and equipped in order to respond to a wider range of risks to continue to make life safer. Given the continually changing roles of HFRS and IWFRS, they feel it may be the right time to consider amending their names to more accurately reflect the ways they serve their communities.

Figure 19: Given the changing roles of HFRS and IWFRS, to what extent do you agree or disagree that the name 'Fire and Rescue Service' still reflects their role?



Base: All Respondents (550)

- 3.44 It can be seen in Figure 19 that just less than two thirds (63%) strongly agree that the name 'Fire and Rescue Service' still reflects the role of HFRS and IWFRS, whilst nearly one fifth (19%) tend to agree.
- 3.45 Less than 1 in 10 (7%) respondents neither agree nor disagree, whilst 5% each tend to disagree and strongly disagree.
- 3.46 Some comments both for and (mostly) against a name change were given in the 'other comments' section of the questionnaire.

"Fire, rescue and response service, could be a new combined name, although a little wordy"

"Prevention is such a massive part of the work you do, perhaps this should be incorporated into the names of the two services?"

"Would be interested to see fire service renamed to something like 'Hampshire fire and emergency service', to represent the wider range of incidents. You can be called to 'medical response', which isn't covered under 'rescue'."

"Changing the name of the service, I can see this would be a forward-move for those within the service, but the name or title, is mainly (in my view), for the use of the public. We need to know who / what is needed in an emergency. Bear in mind, the fire service (i can't remember exactly what it was called!) Was, many years ago, renamed the fire and rescue service, which seems to reflect what it does..."

“Do not waste taxpayer's money, and your time changing the name of the fire and rescue service. That's what your there for. Stop trying to take on the roles of social services, and the health care and ambulance services”

“Don't go changing the name. It's obvious it could inform people of a wider role but be careful”

“Educate the public in what you do instead of changing your name”

“I think it's important to keep the fire and rescue service, as you would want people to know that is the main role. I appreciate the service does lots of other good work, but not sure how you could sum it up in a new name for the service. I think other areas of income generation should be considered, but not to the detriment of our core aim”

“I know many people (outside of HFRS) who still refer to the 'fire brigade' and 'firemen', so it will need a lot of publicity to get our name changed!”

“I think the name is really important. Fire and rescue service covers the work provided, if it was changed to 'emergency service', or something more generic, it would get really confusing. HFRS is brilliant, as putting out fires, and rescuing people, (and animals), from many situations, why would it be called anything else?”

“Our identity. The current title of the service is what the public know, potential concerns that changing the name, would move away from the principle role and brand”

“With regards to the previous question. I don't think the general public really care what the service is called, as long as the response is appropriate in a time of need. A name change would probably be a costly and pointless exercise, which would still result in the service being referred to as a fire service. Also, as a Hampshire resident, I would have no interest in a name that also reflects the IOW. Yes, I understand the merits of combined bodies, but they should retain their identities”

“You are fire and rescue. Don't change things – everyone knows you”



Positive / negative impacts

Are you able to provide any supporting evidence and suggest any ways to reduce or remove any potential negative impact and increase any positive impact?

As public bodies, HFRS and IWFRS have a duty to take into account the impact of their decisions on human rights, under the Human Rights Act 1998, and also on people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 (age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation).

- 3.48 47 respondents gave examples and suggestions of ways to reduce or remove any potential negative impacts, and to increase any positive impact. These included the FRSs giving consideration to those with a disability in all they do.

“Be accessible to all, be inclusive, ensure any information going out to the public is available in other formats, easy read, braille, other languages. Ensure consultations are available in paper copies, with sae, as well as electronic formats, do not assume everyone is able to use it and everyone is able to read”

“Ensuring that all sections of society are taken into account (when planning service delivery) can only be a good thing. Most important of these is to ensure that the needs of those with disabilities are thought through and planned for”

- 3.49 Having facilities for other genders at fire stations was also noted - and there were some concerns about a ‘lad culture’ and ‘bullying’ within HFRS.

“Facilities for females/gender reassigned individuals at stations. Are we truly inclusive and respectful?”

“Inclusion is a buzz word used by ‘managers’ as strap lines for propaganda purposes. When words like ‘banter’ are used, it only reinforces the ‘lad culture’ which is prevalent and documented. HFRS has undoubtedly saved countless lives but has destroyed many of its own staffs’ in the process”

“You have a negative score on a bullying culture, what have you done about it? I hear that non-fire station staff (office staff) are treated like second class citizens”

- 3.50 Other respondents again stressed felt there should be more diversity within HFRS and IWFRS:

“The fire service is nationally male dominated. The service should continually assure itself that its recruitment, promotion processes and practical assessments are appropriate for role(s) and accessible to all.”

“The service should encourage a more diverse workforce and do more for staff inclusion and cohesion.”

4. Focus Groups

Introduction

- 4.1 Overall, the four focus group sessions considered a wide range of important issues that are reported fully below. The report has been structured to address each of the areas of discussion in some detail. The views of the four meetings have been merged to give an overall report of findings, rather than four separate and potentially repetitive mini-reports - but significant differences in views have been drawn out where appropriate.

Findings

The built environment

There was support for HFRS and IWFRS continuing with their risk-based inspection programmes for non-domestic properties

- 4.2 Risk inspections of non-domestic properties were considered essential because the consequences of an incident in premises of this nature can be significant, especially in terms of life and economic risk. Nonetheless, while in an ideal world they would prefer to see the FRSs inspecting every single relevant property, participants generally accepted that this is impossible in the current economic climate, and that a risk-based regime is thus both inevitable and sensible.

“We generally agree with risk-based inspections given staffing limitations, but we would prefer if they were increased” (Eastleigh)

“With a reduced budget there’s no alternative option” (Eastleigh)

“With limited resources, this seems non-negotiable” (Portsmouth)

- 4.3 There was, though, some concern that reducing inspections has and will result in more incidents - as well as a suggestion that increasing the number completed may be more economically efficient in the long-run if they have the effect of preventing fires.

“So physically there’s no chance to say ‘this non-domestic property is safe or not’ because it’s not based on a visit to assess?” (Eastleigh)

“Does reduced inspection lead to more incidents? If inspecting more would lead to less incidents surely that would be a good thing” (Newport)

- 4.4 Some other, more specific suggestions in this area were to: lengthen the time between inspections of high-risk properties to enable more premises to be checked; and work in partnership with other organisations (such as the Building Control and the Health and Safety Executive [HSE]) to complete these inspections.

“Has the reduction in funding and staff also meant a longer length of time between inspections of high-risk premises? Is it safe to stretch the time between inspections so perhaps more premises could then be inspected?” (Newport)

“Could there be a different body to do the inspections with different qualifications? Firefighters are trained for specific things...other people should help them like Building Control, HSE Consulting Engineers” (Portsmouth)

- 4.5 It was also said that HFRS and IWFRS should:

“Have a means to share findings from inspections via Open Data so that other interested parties (e.g. insurers, councils, event managers etc.) pick up some information and impose economic penalties on businesses so that premises owners have an incentive to improve” (Eastleigh)

The natural environment

The FRSs are expected to respond to environmental incidents, but responsibility for their prevention should lie elsewhere

- 4.6 There was general expectation that, given their skills and capabilities, HFRS and IWFRS would form a significant part of any response to incidents within the natural environment - though a few people sought more information about relative risk to life and resource demands before making a firm judgement on this. Some typical comments were:

“This should be part of the remit; it’s very important” (Basingstoke)

“There is immediate risk to life through flooding. It’s a high-risk area” (Portsmouth)

“Vital, as forest fires can spread rapidly and destroy massive areas very quickly” (Newport)

“Very important to protect National Parks etc. like the New Forest, especially with climate change” (Basingstoke)

“The Services’ capability will play a big role to support in severe weather, like four-wheel drives” (Basingstoke)

“We need to understand the relative risk to life and potential resource demand that might be impacted by having to deal with an environmental event” (Portsmouth)

- 4.7 However, working to prevent such incidents was typically thought to be the responsibility of others like the Environment Agency and local authority Environment Protection Officers - though a minority supported FRS involvement insofar as it would prove cost-effective in the long-run if resulting in fewer incidents.

“This is really important but we can’t make the Fire Service responsible for everything. It has to play its part but it can’t be responsible for climate change!” (Portsmouth)

“Environmental protection should surely be done by environmental control officers?” (Newport)

“How far do you take it. Do you get involved in the prevention of cats up trees?!” (Eastleigh)

“Prevention is better and cheaper in the long run and we would think it’s worthwhile for the Fire Service to support prevention activities...the more proactive you are, the more you will help mitigate the risk in the first place so you might not have to make that response” (Eastleigh)

“This is very important and will ultimately be cost-effective” (Portsmouth)

- 4.8 One participant also suggested that:

“The Forestry Commission should provide more guidance on walks to the general public and guidance on who to call. There’s never a signpost that says something like ‘if you see a fire here ring us to let us know the location’” (Newport)

Heritage risk

Majority opinion was that heritage risk is a lower priority than other risk types

- 4.9 Though not universal, the predominant view among focus group participants was that protecting heritage sites should be a lower priority for the FRSs than, say, managing life, building and environmental risk.

“We would prioritise saving life over heritage” (Eastleigh)

“We would question how heritage sites could be considered a priority over more at-risk domestic properties or locations where there may be a more immediate or pronounced risk to life” (Portsmouth)

“As lovely and important as they are, people’s lives must come first, including the economic impact of disasters which will have a direct impact on people’s lives” (Eastleigh)

“Heritage sites are probably well taken care of by their responsible persons” (Newport)

“There’s a need to work with heritage sites in an advisory capacity. Responsibility should lie with the ‘landlords’ and if they need advice they could go online” (Basingstoke)

- 4.10 Several comments were made to suggest that as organisations such as English Heritage and National Trust are so well-resourced, they should either make a significant contribution toward, say, the retrospective fitting of fire suppression systems - or should be required to establish their own official fire safety divisions to manage heritage risk.

“Could English Heritage have a sub-division which would be supported and assisted by the Fire Service who could provide them with initial training?” (Newport)

“They have a lot of money themselves so they should contribute. They should be investing in safety themselves and it should be within their strategies” (Portsmouth)

- 4.11 It should be noted, though, that several participants placed high priority on protecting heritage sites, which were described as “irreplaceable” and essential in the context of tourism and economic benefit.

“It is important to keep history alive and not lost forever” (Newport)

“There has to be a long-term benefit to this; they are irreplaceable. Once they are lost they are lost for ever. If you lose something that costs a lot of money in the short-term but can be rebuilt you might want to give that less weight than something that is less economically significant but is irreplaceable like a heritage site or an environmental asset like the New Forest (Portsmouth)

“It’s important for tourism, the local economy and preserving history” (Portsmouth)

Economic risk

Opinion was divided on the extent to which HFRS and IWFRS should consider economic risk within its plans

- 4.12 Some participants stressed the need for the FRs to consider economic risk within their plans given the potential impact economic harm can have on people’s lives.

“Economic risk has to be important” (Newport)

“Forward economic planning is important. They need to be mindful of further reduced budgets, changes in government priorities for funding the public sector etc.” (Portsmouth)

“Very important as it has a direct impact on people’s lives” (Eastleigh)

- 4.13 In considering relative priorities, though, others felt this should be secondary to other types of risk - especially as many of the more high-risk sites (COMAH sites for example) operate to such high standards of safety, despite the hazards they present on paper.

“This should be a lower priority; should be more in-house” (Newport)

“Ferry ports and airports should have their own sub-division, but consideration should be given to the nature of the business” (Newport)

“This feels less important as the risk from COMAH sites especially seems less severe and frequent due to their high standards and regulations” (Portsmouth)

People and communities

There was support for different ways of working with vulnerable people, providing it is done in partnership and does not detract from the Services’ core functions

- 4.14 Though initially somewhat confused as to why HFRS and IWFRS would seek to involve themselves in working with, say, young people with low self-esteem, many participants tended to support such activity once they understood its long-term benefits.

“Identifying the most vulnerable will offer the best return on investment if it’s evidence-based” (Portsmouth)

“Anything that prevents unnecessary deaths is a great value to society...and evidence shows that these people are at greater risk of death” (Newport)

“If there’s a direct impact then it should be a priority. That is, if it requires high resources in future then look to prevent” (Portsmouth)

“People who are bariatric can become very difficult to manage; maybe addressing that at an early age is worthwhile because it can take a lot of resource if they do need to be moved” (Eastleigh)

“The firefighters were excellent helping out with children from a battered wives refuge. They were good role models of kind, caring men for children who didn’t have many good male role models” (Basingstoke)

- 4.15 Importantly, though, support often came with a caveat that this work must be done in partnership with others - and that it should not in any way compromise the core functions of the Service. Some typical comments were:

“They should support the police, ambulance and social work in partnership” (Basingstoke)

“This is excellent. Overall risks can be reduced with a holistic approach. Collaboration of resource makes sense” (Eastleigh)

“Inter-agency co-operation and using the skills across organisations seems an extremely sensible use of resources” (Portsmouth)

“There’s a need to identify and target vulnerable groups and communities but not to be responsible for the actual work. That should be the local authority and other agencies as they are more social work type issues” (Basingstoke)

“Risk to life and health needs an integrated approach” (Portsmouth)

“In no way should this impact on them going out to fight fires” (Basingstoke)

“They should continue as long as it doesn’t impact on firefighting capabilities” (Portsmouth)

“They should continue to work with vulnerable groups as long as the basic requirement of fire and rescue isn’t compromised” (Eastleigh)

- 4.16 A minority of participants did not feel the FRSs should be involving themselves in this sort of work at all, particularly in light of diminishing resources that must be prioritised.

“All of these activities are obviously great, but we have to prioritise resources” (Basingstoke)

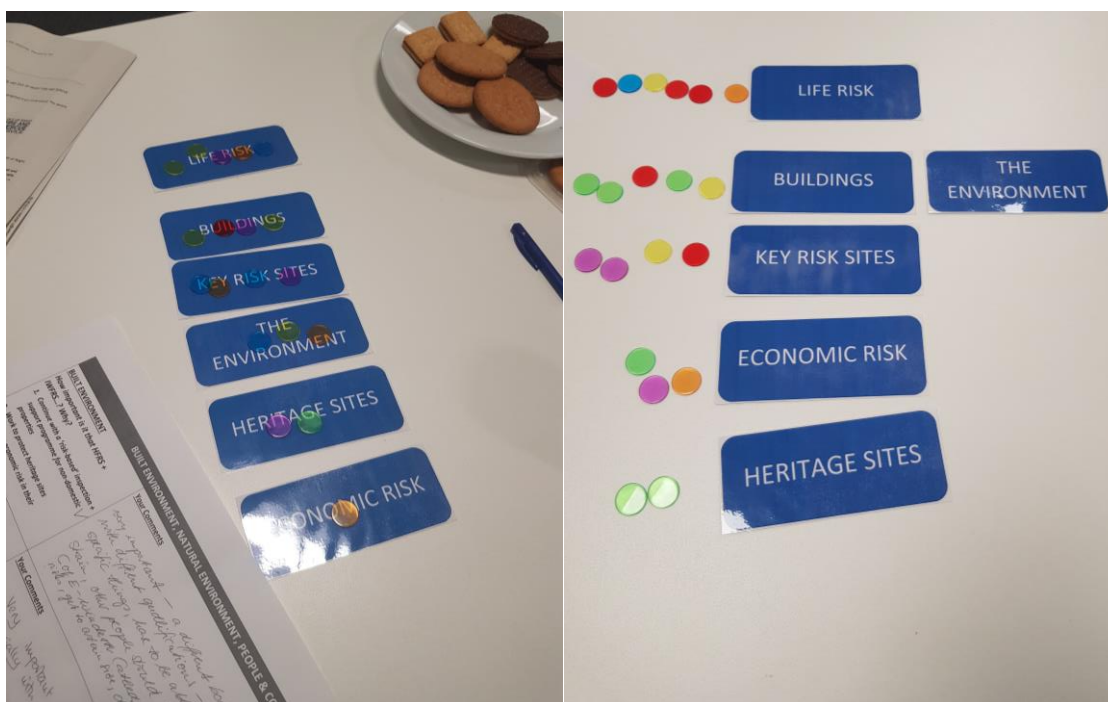
“It’s nice that they involve themselves with children with low self-esteem etc. but it’s not really a priority for the FRS” (Eastleigh)

“You’re having to do all these extra things and they’re not giving you any extra staff or money...it doesn’t make sense” (Eastleigh)

Prioritising risk

Life risk is prioritised above all other types

- 4.17 Following discussion around the issues reported above, participants were asked (in pairs or threes) to rank the following different risk types according to the priority they should be afforded by HFRS and IWFRS: life risk; buildings; the environment; heritage risk; economic risk; and key risk sites. They were then given 20 ‘counters’ and asked to assign these to demonstrate how much resource they would give to each area. Below are some examples of participants’ completed exercises.



- 4.18 Overall, the table below shows that life risk was clearly prioritised above all other types.

“It is vital to spend limited budgets as efficiently as possible to ensure loss of life is as minimal as possible” (Newport)

“We prioritised life above all else” (Portsmouth)

“It’s a really difficult balance between resources and how to manage them, but we think life is the highest priority” (Portsmouth)

- 4.19 Life risk was followed by the environment, buildings and key risk sites (which are separated by two percentage points in terms of overall counter distribution, so to all intents and purposes afforded equal priority). Economic risk and especially heritage risk were considered the least important focuses for the FRSs.

Risk Type	Rank	Number of counters assigned (345 in total)
Life risk	1	108 (31%)
The environment	2	58 (17%)

Buildings	3	56 (16%)
Key risk sites	4	52 (15%)
Economic risk	5	43 (12%)
Heritage risk	6	28 (8%)

4.20 In terms of differences between groups, life risk was the top priority and heritage risk the bottom priority for all but there was some variance as to the placement of the four other risk types:

- The environment placed second at Eastleigh and third at Newport, Basingstoke and Portsmouth;
- Buildings placed second at Basingstoke and Portsmouth, third at Eastleigh and fifth at Newport;
- Key risk sites placed second in Newport and fourth at Eastleigh, Basingstoke and Portsmouth;
- Economic risk placed fifth in all groups except Newport, where it placed fourth (above buildings).

A diverse workforce

Improving workforce diversity is important, but may not be a priority in times of economic constraint

4.21 Participants generally acknowledged the desirability and importance of HFRS' and IWFRS' attempts to diversify their workforces, and many supported investment in this area. Indeed, it was considered an especially important issue to address in on-call areas, where it is imperative to maximise the recruitment pool within the four-minute radius around the fire station.

"If you can't fill places on the on-call then you should certainly be doing that without a doubt. You should be looking everywhere you can" (Newport)

"There's a pool of talent out there and you may not be drawing on the best available talent if some people for whatever reason see it as something that's not for them" (Portsmouth)

4.22 However, inasmuch as the FRSs have no difficulty attracting applications more generally, many others wondered whether spending significant additional money on targeted recruitment campaigns was a top priority in times of financial constraint.

"With a reduced budget, if recruitment numbers aren't a problem then diversity (while really important) may not be a priority. If it was a limitless budget then I'd say it was really important to sort it out but..." (Eastleigh)

"If it's using the budget, it's probably not a priority" (Basingstoke)

"It all depends what you mean by a bit or a lot of investment. I wouldn't say it's one of the top priorities even though it certainly needs some attention" (Portsmouth)

"Just because it's not proportionate doesn't mean the quality isn't there. Most primary school teachers are female but people don't really question that as an issue. If a firefighter that came to give a talk or rescue me from a burning building, I wouldn't care who it was" (Eastleigh)

- 4.23 In terms of possible strategies, more engagement with schools and colleges (by offering career talks for example) was suggested - as was the expansion of ‘young firefighter’ schemes, targeting places with diverse customers such as gyms and the provision of more information about exactly what the firefighter role entails to overcome perception barriers.

“My son is in school and having career talks at the moment and when the businesses and all that come in doing their presentations, they don’t have the police, fire, ambulance etc. That’s where it could all start by going into schools and doing it that way” (Basingstoke)

“What about young firefighters’ clubs with pizza and movies and things? By the time kids are 18 they’ll have been messing around with fire engines and things which will make it very easy to recruit from that community” (Portsmouth)

“Are you looking in the right place? I go to gyms across the county and there are loads of diverse people there. There’s a pool of people there...” (Portsmouth)

“It’s not a role people understand enough about to apply. They don’t know what’s required of them to apply for the job. The Fire Service need to let people know exactly what they’re looking for to get past those barriers in people’s minds” (Basingstoke)

- 4.24 It was also said that:

“I work in an IT department that almost exclusively white male and we have hardly any applications from females. Slowly, with the way it’s taught in schools now there will be a lot more females coming through with those skills because there’s so much more diversity on the agenda nowadays. It’s a generation thing. It’s hard to change the attitudes of people who have grown up with them, it’s starting with the generation of tomorrow who will be more inclusive than us” (Portsmouth)

Measuring performance

Speed of response remains an important performance measure, but the public want to know more

- 4.25 Respondents generally agreed that response standards are an important performance measure, but also that they would be interested in learning more about other key areas of the FRS role - the impact of prevention and outreach work for example (though it was acknowledged that the impact of this can be hard to quantify).

It would be interesting to see the KPIs...maybe there are other measures that could relate to other activities other than response (Basingstoke)

“The outreach...how many people are reached through that; how many people have the Service engaged with through that” (Eastleigh)

“I don’t really care that much that you got somewhere in 15 minutes. I care much more about your return on investment in things like falls prevention and fire prevention” (Portsmouth)

“Your return on investment. In public health you use modelling where you say ‘if we swap someone to this intervention we would save this much money’ and then we would evaluate whether we have saved money. You would need to keep good track of things like ‘we went into this many schools and did this and we have seen that we’ve prevented xxx in five years’. It’s really hard” (Portsmouth)

There was a support for a refresh of response standards

- 4.26 Though participants were impressed with HFRS’ and IWFRS’ attendance times, they were concerned about the lack of nuance and transparency within a county-wide standard.

“You’re lacking granularity with the current response standards” (Portsmouth)

“The standard seems like a very blunt and inaccurate tool” (Portsmouth)

- 4.27 There was thus almost unanimous support for a review of this standard - though one participant was concerned that any changes could be a precursor to resource reductions.

“My fear would be that any change to the reporting of response times will lead to decisions made in the next five years’ budget. So if you change them, is it just an excuse to cut more money from the service?” (Newport)

- 4.28 It was also argued that incident outcomes are more important than attendance times, and that this should factor into any future review.

“Surely it’s not the time it takes to get somewhere that’s the issue; it’s the outcome that’s the issue. Could that be measured and reported somehow?” (Portsmouth)

Responding to medical emergencies

There was widespread support for co-responding, but opinion was divided on sending full crews to medical incidents

- 4.29 Co-responding as a concept was widely supported by focus group participants, but opinion was divided as to whether, in future, full crews (in fire engines) should be deployed to medical incidents. Some felt they should on the grounds that: all emergency services should be working together to save lives; and fire engines can more often than not reach those in need more quickly than ambulances.

“It’s a matter of life and it’s your core job to save lives” (Basingstoke)

“All the emergency services are trying to make us safer and if I was dying I would be grateful for whoever it was that came to save me” (Eastleigh)

“If that fire engine is closer to the person in need of medical response there and then and they can go and assist, then why not? It makes sense to use resources in that way and the crew would only be there until the ambulance gets there” (Eastleigh)

“The public service is a patchwork and they have to hold each other together” (Portsmouth)

- 4.30 Others, though, objected (or at least expressed concern) on the basis that medical response could conflict with fire and rescue response - and because they considered it somewhat cost-ineffective with respect to diesel costs and fire engine wear and tear.

“A car yes, a fire engine no. At the moment if there’s a firefighter responding to a medical emergency and at the same time there’s a house fire, there’s a crew at the station that can respond to that fire” (Eastleigh)

If you’re using a fire engine, what happens if there’s a traffic pile up on the M3 and it’s tied up at a medical emergency? Would you be diverted to the pile up because that’s your main role? (Basingstoke)

There’s an opportunity cost to this. If the crew is off doing this they can’t be looking after a fire call (Portsmouth)

If you sent a fire engine you will have maintenance and wear and tear issue that will come out of the Fire Service budget (Eastleigh)

It can’t be cost effective to use full crews surely...putting diesel in the truck, wear and tear is all going to cost a lot (Newport)

- 4.31 Furthermore, one person suggested that the appropriateness of sending a full crew would depend on how much quicker they could get there for *“if it’s just a minute it may not be worth the risk but if it’s double the amount of time the ambulance would take then yes, it’s worth it”* (Eastleigh). Moreover, another participant was of the view that:

“It would have to be life-threatening things rather than just someone breaking their arm or something” (Basingstoke)

Finances and funding

There was support for HFRS and IWFRS exploring opportunities for income generation

- 4.32 Participants were generally happy for HFRS and IWFRS to explore income generation opportunities within their areas of expertise - such as fire safety training and providing additional fire cover at large events.

“If the income generation doesn’t conflict with profit, why not? If the expertise is there, use it” (Eastleigh)

“I think you would be the best people to deliver any training from a community point of view” (Newport)

- 4.33 There was some concern, though, that this might attract criticism from some quarters inasmuch as:

“If you’re charging to, say, train people up in extinguisher use might some people say you should do that anyway if you’re trying to make Hampshire safer? And people do pay council tax and business rates so they could argue they’re paying twice” (Eastleigh)

Identity: a new name for HFRS and IWFRS?

There was little support for a name change

- 4.34 In light of the changing roles of HFRS and IWFRS, participants were asked for their thoughts on whether the name ‘Fire and Rescue Service’ is still appropriate. Most felt it is, and few supported a name change on the grounds of complexity, tradition and rebranding costs.

“I think anything else becomes a bit too complicated” (Portsmouth)

“There’s no point rebranding again when people still call it the fire brigade!” (Eastleigh)

“Do you have the resources to rebrand yourselves...for new logos etc.?!” (Eastleigh)

- 4.35 Indeed, only a couple of people suggested a need for change, particularly in relation to incorporating the Services’ prevention remit.

“Should there be something about prevention as there’s a lot of that these days. They are doing a lot more things” (Eastleigh)

“I don’t think it is perfect because we’ve said throughout the discussion that they do so much more now. Could there be anything around the prevention work for example? People will start to develop a better understanding of what they do” (Basingstoke)

- 4.36 In essence it was said that:

“I know where you’re going with this, but Fire and Rescue or Fire Service is what people know you as and rebranding doesn’t really work. I’d rather you concentrate on the stuff we’ve discussed earlier tonight” (Portsmouth)

5. Written submissions

Introduction

- 5.1 During the formal consultation process, two organisations provided written submissions. The contributors were the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) and Forestry England.
- 5.2 ORS has read the written submissions and summarised them in this chapter. It is important to note the following section is a **report of the views expressed by submission contributors**. In some cases, these views may not be supported by the available evidence - and while ORS has not sought to highlight or correct those that make incorrect statements or assumptions, this should be borne in mind when considering the submissions.

Submissions

FBU

- 5.3 The respondent feels the IRMP *“has been difficult to respond to in any great depth as it is significantly lacking in detail...”*. In specific terms, the FBU *“cannot feasibly see how a further £4million reduction is in the interest of public safety or of benefit to the long term goals of the FRS”*. It has also explored the additional pressures likely to occur as a result of the Grenfell Tower inquiry, which will require significant resources to achieve the necessary outcomes – and feels this is *“incompatible with such a hefty budget reduction”*.
- 5.4 In the section entitled ‘Reducing Risk: Place’, in the Non-domestic subsection, the document states:
- We will, if necessary, use our enforcement powers to ensure public safety. Any businesses that do not comply with the law can expect to be subject to a robust enforcement approach and possible prosecution proceedings.*
- 5.5 The respondent says that Fire Safety has been placed under extreme pressure since 2010, seeing a significant reduction in personnel numbers. They thus consider this statement to be *“unachievable without large investment to ensure an infrastructure that allows for a fully qualified workforce to inspect and audit premises”* – particularly in light of the fact the aforementioned Grenfell Inquiry is ongoing and is likely to lead to significant additional pressures in this area.
- 5.6 The respondent says the IRMP talks about a refresh of response standards without providing any clarity as to what is meant by this generic statement. The FBU believes that weight and speed of response are critical to effectively resolve operational incidents, and that any change to the response standard *“must be done on the basis of not only the speed of the first attendance but the weight of any such attendance and its ability to undertake a meaningful intervention”*.
- 5.7 The respondent says the consultation document misrepresents what is currently within the firefighter role map. For example, with regard to Safe and Well Visits, the FBU’s interpretation of the current role map is that firefighters are to undertake Home Fire Safety Visits and **NOT** be expected to engage in wider social care activities. Additional, but not exhaustive examples of work the Union considers to be outside of the role of a firefighter include: missing persons; STEER; co-responding; public health and NHS work. The respondent says *“the public have a right to know that these are not part of a firefighter’ role as it stands, to suggest otherwise is misleading”*.

- 5.8 Furthermore, the respondent notes that the IRMP document, when discussing flooding, makes no reference to the lack of statutory duty for this function within England. They say that *“in this front facing document we believe that should be made clear to the public”*.
- 5.9 The respondent feels the pressures placed on firefighters is having a detrimental effect on their health & wellbeing – and that this is being further damaged by a lack of adherence to Working Time Regulations. They say that *“this lack of robust regulation of hours being worked by firefighters must stop and WTR compliant shift systems introduced to ensure the wellbeing of all personnel”*.
- 5.10 Finally, it is said that while the FBU still broadly believes in the principle of merging HFRS and IWFRS into one new Combined Fire Authority:

“Given the merging of 2 FRS’ and based on the guiding principles (which were agreed with FBU Officials as to how the CFA merger would be undertaken)...we had hoped the opportunity to invest in frontline operational personnel would have been taken. Along with this it was agreed that the new CFA would seek to uplift firefighters terms & conditions but with the budget reductions contained within this IRMP we question whether this is achievable”.

Forestry England

Forestry England referenced in Hampshire FRS IRMP consultation

- 5.11 In the consultation document it states research and partnership working with Forestry England. After careful checking, the respondent confirms *“no research has been provided by Forestry England and additionally there has been no formal engagement for partnership working with Forestry England”*. They would be grateful to understand how Forestry England was referenced in this public consultation.

Suggested opportunities

Definition of wildfire used by Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Services

- 5.12 The respondent says that the definition used by Hampshire FRS in the consultation is a modification of that used by National Operational Guidance Programme (NOGP) - and that the use of this definition provides the following challenges:

One of the four criteria cannot be measured using the Incident Recording System, thus there is a risk of under reporting of wildfire incidents; and

Failure to record smaller wildfire incidents, such as ignitions, will have a significant impact on masking trends, especially risking underestimation the impacts of future extreme weather linked to climate change.

- 5.13 Indeed, the respondent provides an analysis of wildfire incidents attended by Hampshire FRS, which significantly contrasts the 71 defined in the consultation document.

Table 9: Wildfire incidents experienced 2009-2017

Financial year	Wildfire Incidents (number)	Area Burnt (hectares)	Wildfire Duration (hours)
2009-10	1,068	97	1,204
2010-11	1,152	24	1,178
2011-12	1,136	60	1,448
2012-13	328	16	384
2013-14	629	136	713
2014-15	408	124	526
2015-16	561	75	720
2016-17	380	21	428
Total	5,662	554	6,600

- 5.14 Whilst this table excludes wildfire incidents experienced in 2018 and 2019, the respondent considers it *“highly likely there is large increase of number, area burnt and duration due to the prolonged dry and hot spring and summers, heat waves and low rainfall. This illustrates the episodic cycle of wildfire incidents in-between years of increased rainfall and cold, which increase vegetation fuel loading”*.
- 5.15 As the Forestry Commission also uses Scottish Government’s definition of wildfire (Wildfire Operations Guidance), the basis of the NOGP definition, the respondent would therefore suggest a clear definition between smaller and larger wildfire incidents could be used to address the problem. This is apparently used successfully in the Forestry Commission’s statistical analysis of wildfire incident in England using Fire and Rescue Service’s data.
- 5.16 It is said that the benefits of this include:
- The Incident Recording System will provide all the data required and thus ensure there is no risk of under reporting of incidents attended by Fire and Rescue Services;
 - Ensuring the fire and land management sector use the same definition - providing clarity to local community, business and environment at the local and national level, especially when working on evidence for Community Risk Registers and IRMPs;
 - Better assessment of the trends of wildfire incidents as more extreme weather is experienced, to improve mitigation and adaptation planning to climate change; and
 - Improved emergency planning to incidents such as the Swinley Forest Fire in 2011, which started from one of four fires which would be excluded by the criteria currently used by HFRS and IWFRS.

Partnership working at a landscape-scale level

- 5.17 Given that the areas most affected by wildfires are on open habitats, such as lowland heath, grasslands and arable, the respondent encourages HFRS and IWFRS to work with the following partners:
- Natural England, the regulator for open habitats in England;
 - New Forest and South Downs National Park Authorities;
 - Other large landowners such as National Trust, Ministry of Defence etc.;
 - Land representative organisations such as National Farmer Union, Countryside and Built Landowner Association and environmental Non-Government Organisations; and
 - A focus on prevention in existing groups, such as the South East England Wildfire Group.

Requested outputs from Hampshire and Isle of Wight FRS's IRMP

- 5.18 Within the IRMP or its supporting document, and as part of Fire and Rescue Service statutory duties for fire safety and to 'assess, plan and advise', the respondent would like to see the following information for general public, landowners, Local Planning Authorities and forestry and environmental regulators:
- Clear lists and/or map/s of wildfire risk in Hampshire, to provide an evidence base to help target increasing building wildfire resilience today and in the future;
 - How HFRS and IWFRS engage on wildfire mitigation and adaptation with land owners in terms of government land management incentives, such as Countryside Stewardship and regulation, such as Forestry Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for deforestation;
 - How land management regulators will be effectively engaged in Community Risk Registers to ensure short, medium and long-term mitigation and adaptation to wildfire will be achieved, including how improve wildfire risk analysis;
 - Advice, assessment and planning on building wildfire resilience, such as providing advice to land managers on wildfire risk and future impact on climate change;
 - Hampshire FRS policy on wildfire mitigation and adaptation and how this is reported in terms of the Climate Change Act;
 - How wildfire risk should be addressed by Local Planning Authority Local Plans and development applications in terms of relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework; and
 - Means of improving the interoperability between FRSs and land management organisations who work at the landscape scale.
- 5.19 Overall, the respondent suggests the need for a consistent format with other FRSs, using a national approach to set standards across the land management and fire sectors. This, it is said, *"will be critical for landowners who have property across adjacent county borders as well as national land management agencies"*.

Appendix: Other suggestions and comments



Additional comments by respondents that have been identified as explaining specific alternatives to one or more aspects of the proposals

GENERAL POSITIVE COMMENTS

"I think fire lead the way in exploring how they can diversify and improve service delivery to the public. Numerous examples exist on the island and any expansion of skills to improve health or community safety is welcomed."

"I think on the whole the HFRS is run very well."

"I think the fire service do a wonderful job and deserve all the funding that is required to sustain this service."

PREVENTION AND EDUCATION

"Send more people, visiting people at risk. Make a list of people that are valuable in their own home, who are housebound with a list from the home help people and carers. Some housebound people live in one room, and do not get to see the rest of the house, which may not be checked for some time. So, need a separate register so they can locate people in one room."

"Southampton City Council supports HFRS use of safe and well visits. Our data suggests that a large proportion of accidental fires occur in areas mainly made up of educated young people who are privately renting. This suggests that students and young city workers are most susceptible to an accidental dwelling fire. This is followed by urban renters of social housing and elderly people reliant on support to meet financial or practical needs. Southampton city council would support an expansion of this scheme to focus on the most at risk groups."

"More focus on prevention and protection, will be key for the future. Especially considering recent incidents such as Ocado. As well as the learning and phase one report from the Grenfell inquiry."

"More public service awareness campaigns, time dedicated to RTAs, and effect, lessons learnt. More experience, education opportunities for young people. Run firework displays instead of public."

"More visits by schools to see and get involved in the work, that fire services do."

FINANCE AND FUNDING

"All the work you do is very important. I appreciate that funding has been cut so would prefer central government to increase funding to increase wages, increase numbers of staff, and provide better equipment."

"Consider investing in the response side, reduce funding to side projects. Income generation should not be to the detriment of operational standards. Reduce purchases of ineffective UHPL and cabs equipped vehicles. Invest in firefighter decontamination measures both at fire ground and en route and return to station."

"I have another comment, but not about risk, it's about funds. Maybe you could organise a national raffle. With a grand prize to encourage sales on a national scale. It takes a lot of organising, and advertising, but it could be very lucrative. Good luck. You are all very brave men. I admire your courage."

"We should be funded better by central government."

"I believe some funding is spent responding to types of incidents which are already funded by other services or central government. Coastal incidents such as water or mud on the coast is already responded to by the coastguard, funded by central government, supported by the RNLI. So, fire and rescue are finding something already covered. Ambulance service have volunteer responders at no cost also, so again, funds could go to other areas of FRS."

"While the brigade and accountant's look at costs and cuts. It should ask members of the public to attend the meetings and reflect of how best it provides the service to the public. Part of our council tax pays for the service."

WORKFORCE/STAFFING ISSUES

"Fire services are key parts of our communities. Firefighters are respected and valued, and there should be more of them to help protect our communities in a wide range of circumstances and incidents."

"From my point of view, the most important thing is that when called, the fire brigade arrives quickly, and in force. When my neighbour across the road had a fire, a fire engine turned up, and it just looked like there wasn't enough of them. There was so much they were running everywhere; it was ages before anyone else turned up."

"HFRS keeps starting projects which never come to fruition. If lessons were learnt from the experience and implemented for the next idea to endure the sad mistakes were made, then that would be positive. That is sadly not the case though. Time and time again, people are out in charge who only motivation is to bolster their own ego. HFRS needs people who are more diverse who can offer different opinions and challenge decisions. HFRS has a great number of very professional people with a passion for excellence who are regrettably stiffed by the embedded culture. That culture needs to be addressed before HFRS can truly be progressive and meet the demands of our communities."

"However, the service, try to improve, they must remember to treat employees fairer and be mindful."

"I would like to see senior officers covering sickness or injury on the front line, to help them stay current with the jobs of front-line staff."

"It talks about sharing knowledge with other services. We need to start sharing knowledge internally first. Watch to watch, station to station, group to group. Use videos from incidents."

"Keep up the good work. There are many brilliant initiatives in play, but maybe we could do more to gather ideas from our employees. I suggest we have an ideas feature on our new intranet and that its someone's job to manage them and always give feedback. It's not only the managers that have good ideas."

"Our own people must be our focus. With a healthy proactive workforce outside of the response element - all the other things we do will go more smoothly. HFRS and IWFRS must stop trying to please everyone. Focus on the primary functions of the role, get those right, and the rest will fall into place."

"The availability of training courses needs to be improved, as there is a massive backlog for module b, c and d courses for development firefighters at the moment. On a financial note, why did the service recruit for new firefighters, and then have to spend lots to train them to a competent standard, when there are already competent firefighters on temporary contracts, that could have filled the shortfall in numbers?"

"The consultation document makes a big thing out of how the service cares for its people. Whilst i don't suggest that there is any intention to be callous, I see very little evidence of the statements in the

consultation document being supported by real action. I know this is only a consultation document, but it does cast the illusion that caring for staff is 'being done', not an aspiration and as such it's quite offensive. In 23 years in this job, I've never felt less valued or overlooked, and there are many reasons for that, which makes it almost impossible to put a finger on; it's a culmination. Only yesterday a firefighter with some serious mental health issues from a neighbouring station was put in contact with me by a friend for two reasons; firstly, because I had the experience of once being in a similar mental state as he is now, and secondly, because he was getting diddly-squat support from his line managers. The third and most significant factor, was that I had no confidence whatsoever in recommending that he follows the lame route offered by our employer. He needed help, and soon, and I have directed him to a non-NHS, non-service, route that has responded immediately. If we are so good at responding to the public's needs, why are we so poor at doing it for our own?"

"What is being done to recognise and resolve the crewing difficulties at so many of the fire stations within both counties? What is being done to make the public aware of the number of times a vehicle or a station is unable to respond? What is being done to review the crewing model to permit the joint mobilising of crews below the normal expectation, so as to achieve a level of crew, to be able to deal with an incident, through multiple vehicle response, with reduced crew, to reduce the response times from fully crewed vehicles from much further away?"

"On page 17, regarding mental health, the comments appear to be biased towards firefighters' mental health. However, we know that most sick leave due to mental health is taken by office-based staff. On page 19, it states 'we have also invested in our frontline crews, who have now had enhanced medical training, to benefit the community, when responding to the variety of incidents we attend, and to support our partners. We prioritise this service to protect the most vulnerable'. Surely, at incidents, medical aid should be given to those who are in most need, this is one area, where we are surely there, for all the public, and not just the most vulnerable. There is no mention that HFRS and IWFRS, will take into account the recommendations arising from the Grenfell enquiry."

"We should focus on how we can provide the most efficient response to emergencies, that's what the public primarily require from us. I think it's time we looked at how we crew some of the stations, where our resources are. I think we should close some stations that are never on the run anyway and use that money to better fund other resources. Allow appliances to respond with three riders, or with no ICS level one, with another appliance attending also."

SPECIFIC COMMENTS/CONCERNS/SUGGESTIONS

"With all the services under increasing demand with an ever-growing population the FRS becoming medical responders, is it not time that the FRS should have their own ambulances, to support the NHS ambulance service. In a major incident, the NHS ambulance services maybe so stretched, that they do not have enough vehicles, so additional FRS ambulances, could provide that extra capacity."

"Concerned for the Firefighters in respect of [developing] cancers from various fires that are attended. A good regular medical examination to monitor their wellbeing and support if taken via their job."

"Greater consultation with public, especially young people."

"Retain staff, volunteers, and set up work streams for each area with local stakeholders to see where more cross support could be invested in."

"There may be a benefit and cost saving by controlling police, ambulance, first responder, and fire and rescue response, from the same room in the control centre, so that the optimum resources can be applied to each incident. Unfortunately, this would require a significant amount of training for all the call centre staff."

"Exercising is crucial and shouldn't be lessened in the future in favour of other work. However, every exercise should be followed by true learning and evolution. Often when I have exercised with HFRS (I'm not in HFRS by the way), we fail to realise the lessons and repeat them again the next time. This is the same for all agencies. Exercising is really important as part of a learning process, and not in isolation,

as a live only event to be put away at the end of that day. Realising the lessons and making changes will save lives.”

“Rather than expanding to establish functionality that already exists in other government supplied services (e.g., ambulance, police, social services), instead, focus on joint, and complementary working to avoid duplication of expertise and cost. 2. Examine, together with partner services, the feasibility of establishing single sites populated by all three main emergency services rather than maintaining individual sites for each service. I'm thinking also here of the situation in the USA where FRS have their own emergency medical services. 3. Examine the potential to price for risk. Within an overall Hampshire, and IOW geographic area, businesses and residents in low risk areas must inevitably be subsidising the costs of a FRS for higher risk areas.”

“I would prefer to see eventual integration with the ambulance service and move away from joint working with the police. More synergy with ambulance service than the police.”

“HFRS and IWFRS should be two 'independent' bodies. Whilst they are both fire and rescue services, I believe their 'emergency incidents' can be different and training for one is not necessarily the same training needed for the other. For example, whilst IWFRS have to be prepared to deal with traffic incidents, they will not be dealing with motorway incidents, on the other hand, IWFRS are more likely to deal with agricultural and farming incidents, than HFRS, so would need training in that area. On top of this, if the two were to merge, whilst some savings might initially be made, experience tells us, that the larger populated areas end up with the majority of the resources, (both equipment wise and financial), which would be detrimental to the IOW, especially during the summer when the island becomes home to thousands of visitors!”

“I don't think the graphic on the front page is right (a male in uniform) when the public can expect to see other members of staff as well. I understand it would be difficult to cover all types of staff, but I'm not sure if the current graphic is the right one.”

“I would like to see a cadet corps, and school, college and university groups to teach basic firefighting and first aid etc. This could be sponsored by businesses. New pumps etc., for the service could be sponsored by businesses, and show signage on the vehicles.”

“Improve stations e.g., bigger stations to allow better facilities for firefighters training, and better appliances with risks in today's world, might face.”

“Integrated risk management planning is not something that will appeal to ninety percent of the population, yet the topics it covers, are of interest to a hundred percent. You may want a less administrative version available to all.”

“Island and mainland fire and emergency responses, to terminal and ferry incidents, still highly important. Island and mainland fire and emergency responses, to piers, still highly important.”

“It is important that the busy station at Southsea retains its three full-size appliances.”

“More cover in areas of new build houses.”

“Perhaps this is covered, but in view of recent tower block fires, should there be greater involvement by the HFRS and IWFRS at the planning and building stages of all public buildings, and also housing estates.”

“Please do not reduce the service no matter how hard it will become.”

“Please note on questions where 'neither agree or disagree' or 'don't know' has been selected, this is intended to mean 'no comment' on this proposal.”

“Police escort to every incident to ensure the safety of HFRS team.”

“We need better communication infrastructure across Hampshire.”

“There needs to be a much greater emphasis on climate change. In the IRMP document, it quotes 'considering our own impact'. Given the seriousness of this issue, there must be immediate action to begin working towards reducing our carbon footprint. Whilst the effects of climate change may appear minimal at present, if immediate action is not taken now, the longer-term effects will be hard felt. The service should adopt two key priorities. Digital strategy, to remove all paper-based processes, and to be stored in environmentally friendly infrastructures, reducing physical hardware. This should also extend to how our communities interact with our services. Estates, vehicle and equipment strategy to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and increase sustainability. This should include the procuring of goods from sustainable sources.”

“What has been done to deal with your low scores in your inspection report? Why was the equipment so badly damaged at the Ocado fire? Surely this shouldn't have happened.”

“Where I live, I have to travel down or up the Mall Brading, and often can just about get my car through the little bit of road left due to vehicles parking on either side. I constantly worry, that should a fire engine, or even an ambulance need access urgently, it would be, in places, impossible. Basic health and safety needed here. I consider such roadways as this one, (there are bound to be others), should be included in any risk management plan. Or at least fire and rescue service, should have consultation with those who manage the roadways, with double yellow lines etc., to ensure a clear roadway and safety of all residents, and property along the full stretch of the mall.”

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