

NOTICE OF MEETING

<i>Meeting</i>	Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority	<i>Clerk to the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority</i> John Coughlan CBE
<i>Date and Time</i>	Wednesday, 19th February, 2020 10.30 am	<i>The Castle, Winchester Hampshire SO23 8UJ</i>
<i>Place</i>	Room X - HFRS HQ, Eastleigh	
<i>Enquiries to</i>	<u>members.services@hants.gov.uk</u>	

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

Agenda

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To receive any apologies for absence.

2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

3 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING - 4 DECEMBER 2019** (Pages 5 - 10)

To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting

4 **DEPUTATIONS**

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

5 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

To receive any announcements the Chairman may wish to make.

6 **MEMBER DEVELOPMENTS**

To receive any updates from Members of the Authority

7 **BUDGET AND PRECEPT REQUIREMENT 2020/21** (Pages 11 - 70)

To consider a report from the Treasurer, which presents the 2019/20 revised budget and the 2020/21 forward budget to Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority (HFRA).

8 **RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY** (Pages 71 - 78)

To consider a report from the Chief Fire Officer, which asks Members to approve the proposed Risk Management Policy.

9 **HAMPSHIRE AND ISLE OF WIGHT FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES SAFETY PLAN** (Pages 79 - 194)

To consider a report from the Chief Fire Officer, which seeks approval for the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Safety Plan 2020-25.

10 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

To resolve that the public be excluded from the meeting during the following items of business, as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during these items there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, and further that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons set out in the reports.

11 **EXEMPT MINUTE FROM HFRA MEETING - 4 DECEMBER 2019**
(Pages 195 - 196)

To approve an exempt minute on Property Matters from the 4 December 2019 meeting.

12 **EXEMPT MINUTE FROM HFRA MEETING (MEMBERS ONLY) - 4 DECEMBER 2019**

To approve an exempt minute on the Local Pay Award from the 4 December 2019 meeting.

ABOUT THIS AGENDA:

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

ABOUT THIS MEETING

The press and public are welcome to attend the public sessions of the meeting. If you have any particular requirements, for example if you require wheelchair access, please contact members.services@hants.gov.uk for assistance.

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Agenda Item 3

AT A MEETING of the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority held at Shared Headquarters, Eastleigh on Wednesday, 4th December, 2019

Chairman:

* Councillor Christopher Carter

* Councillor Liz Fairhurst	* Councillor Sharon Mintoff
* Councillor Roz Chadd	* Councillor Roger Price
Councillor Jason Fazackarley	* Councillor David Simpson
* Councillor Jonathan Glen	* Councillor Rhyddian Vaughan MBE
* Councillor Geoffrey Hockley	

*Present

Also present: Councillor Dave Stuart, Isle of Wight Council

228. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Jason Fazackarley.

Neil Odin and Michael Lane also sent apologies for the meeting.

The Chairman also took the opportunity to welcome Councillor Dave Stuart from the Isle of Wight Council.

229. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were mindful of their duty to disclose at the meeting any disclosable pecuniary interest they had in any matter on the agenda for the meeting, where that interest was not already entered in the Authority's register of interests, and their ability to disclose any other personal interests in any such matter that they might have wished to disclose.

230. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed and agreed.

231. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations for this meeting.

232. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman updated Members on the Integrated Risk Management Plan for 2020 – 2025 public consultation, which closed on the 24th November and had received over 806 responses from across the county.

It was also reported that the Government had invited the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Chair Roy Wilsher, to Chair a new Protection Board. The Board

consisted of senior representatives from the Home Office, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), the NFCC and the Local Government Association (LGA).

Regarding Grenfell Inquiry, the Phase 1 report was published 30 October 2019 and details the events that took place on the night of the fire. Phase 2 of the public enquiry is expected to commence early 2020 and should examine the circumstances and the causes that preceded the events that took place on the night. The Chairman passed on condolences on behalf of Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Services to the bereaved, survivors and families of those affected by the tragedy.

The Chairman also thanked Councillor Tig Outlaw, who had stepped down from his position as a Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Public Protection on the Isle of Wight Council for his hard work and support whilst everyone moved towards the creation of a combined fire authority covering Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

233. MEMBER DEVELOPMENTS

During Member Developments, the Authority agreed it would be beneficial to discuss the LGA training received on 26 November 2019 at an upcoming APAG meeting. It was also confirmed that a private briefing would be arranged for Members around security following the London Bridge incident.

Councillor Vaughan confirmed he would be attending a Prince's Trust event in 19 December and Councillor Price updated Members on his attendance at an engagement forum in November, which will meet every 3-4 months going forward.

234. ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

The Authority considered a report from the Chief Fire Officer (item 7 in the minute book) regarding the Annual Statement of Assurance, which was required by the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (updated in 2018) to provide assurance to local communities and government on financial, governance and operational matters.

It was anticipated that this would in future be brought forward at the start of the financial year along with the Annual Governance Statement and other key documents.

During questions from Members, it was confirmed that a reference to Armed Forces would be included. On Page 23 it was confirmed that 5 Fire Stations had Wholetime coverage, whereas 8 had Wholetime facilities on one appliance, but backed up with on-call facility. It was agreed that that this be made clearer in the document. On Page 21 of the pack, it was noted that 'Service' would be removed from 'Hampshire and Fire Rescue Service Authority'.

The Pay Multiple was the difference between the lowest paid and highest paid member of staff.

RESOLVED:

Subject to the minor amendments discussed at the meeting, the Annual Statement of Assurance for 2018/19 was approved by the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority.

235. **HAMPSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE AND UNITED KINGDOM INTERNATIONAL SEARCH AND RESCUE (UKISAR)**

The Authority considered a report from the Chief Fire Officer, (item 8 in the minute book) which set out the risks and benefits of HFRS deploying staff to United Kingdom International Search and Rescue (UKISAR).

The UKISAR team was a mixed team from 15 different capabilities across the service and would train together periodically, and whilst there were risks identified (paragraphs 37-40 of the report), it was felt that there were mitigations in place to control these.

Members were happy with the proposals put forward.

RESOLVED:

- a) Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority approved option (a) that it continues to provide a capability for UK International Search and Rescue from HFRS when requested to do so by Her Majesty's Government.
- b) Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority approved maintenance of the appropriate resources to facilitate the required capability to UKISAR; and
- c) Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority approved procedures formed to deploy; which are outside of HFRA's statutory duty, being delegated to the Chief Fire Officer.

236. **2020/21 BUDGET UPDATE**

Councillors Chris Carter and Jonathan Glen declared a non-pecuniary interest as Members of the Hampshire County Council Pension Fund Panel and Board. Councillor Roger Price also declared a non-pecuniary interest as a deputy Member of the Hampshire County Council Pension Fund Panel and Board.

The Authority considered a report from the Treasurer, (item 9 in the minute book) which provided an update to members of the current financial position for the 2019/20 Revenue Budget and an update on the 2020/21 budget setting process.

Members learned that the precept increase was forecast at 1.99%, which was in line with the limits set out in the Spending Round. Given the continuing uncertain financial future it was recommended in the report that the precept be increased by the maximum allowed in 2020/21. Table 15 was highlighted on Page 43 of the pack as showing the budget monitoring for 2019/20 as of 30 September 2019.

Under reserve funding, it was proposed that an annual contribution of £0.5m be made to the ICT Reserve and depending on the overall budget position for next

year that this is built into the revenue budget from 2020/21 onwards, as ICT becomes more important to the operational effectiveness of service.

Looking at the Hampshire Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), it was confirmed that initial high level results for the 2019 valuation indicated that for 'scheduled bodies', the fund was almost 100% funded following an improvement in investment returns over the period and a slow down in the increases in life expectancy. This would be revalued in 2022.

During questions from Members it was confirmed that the £240,000 overspend listed in paragraph 16c of the report was primarily down to legislative change for the replacement of tyres on vehicles.

In paragraph 24 of the report it stated the extra costs to the Fire and Rescue Service as a result of the delay with Combined Fire Authority creation. Members queried whether the Service would receive any reimbursement for the extra costs and it was agreed that this would be looked into by the Chief Finance Officer.

RESOLVED:

- 1) Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority agreed with the principle of setting the precept at the maximum level without breaching the referendum limit, subject to final decisions by the Authority in February next year.
- 2) Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority approved an annual contribution of up to £0.5m into the ICT Reserve dependent on the eventual budget position in February.
- 3) Additional funding of up to £305,000 was approved from the Transformation Reserve for CFA preparation costs as a consequence of the additional years delay in implementation.
- 4) The estimated net annual saving arising from the 2019 Pension Fund valuation be contributed to a new Grant Equalisation Reserve in 2020/21 and future years (subject to review following the Spending Review next year)
- 5) The mid-year review of treasury management activities in Appendix B were noted.
- 6) Delegated Authority was granted to the Treasurer to make pre-payments of contributions (up to three years' worth) into the Hampshire Pension Fund or pay off any residual deficit amount if it is considered financially beneficial to do so.

237. MID-YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Authority considered a report from the Chief Fire Officer, (item 10 in the minute book) regarding the Mid-Year Performance report. The report focused on how the Service had performed against a range of operational and corporate health measures, with comparisons made against previous years and to other Fire and Rescue Services or national trends, where relevant and applicable.

It was highlighted that key facts and figures had been summarised on page 75 of the pack but acknowledged that the document would be improved to make it easier to find further details of the statistics listed.

Members learned the importance of consistency in providing reliable data, and more regular data returns going forward would mean that consistency would improve.

The 8/80 response methodology was a traditional way of measuring response times, but it was accepted that understanding the different factors for this had moved on since it was established. Proactive work was being done around response times and the best way forward to analyse and improve ways of working.

Whilst 26% of Green Book staff sickness was related to mental health, there had been a 50% reduction in sickness and this figure was a reflection on staff feeling open in talking about mental health and signing off with mental health related issues, using the support packages made available to them.

RESOLVED:

Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority noted the performance detailed in Appendix A and welcomed the revised structure and focus of the report, which will continue to be refined moving forward.

238. MINUTES FROM STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE MEETING - 25 SEPTEMBER 2019

The minutes of the Stakeholder Committee (item 11 in the minute book) on 25 September were received by the Authority and there were no questions.

239. MINUTES FROM THE STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING - 22 OCTOBER 2019

The minutes of the Standards and Governance Committee meeting (item 12 in the minute book) on 22 October were received by the Authority and the Chairman of the Committee extended thanks for officers and Members following an increase in the meetings. There were no questions.

240. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was resolved that the public be excluded from the meeting during the following items of business, as it was likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during the items there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, and further that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons set out in the reports.

241. **PROPERTY MATTERS**

The Authority considered a report from the Chief Fire Officer (item 14 in the minute book) regarding Property Matters [SUMMARY OF EXEMPT MINUTE].

242. **EXEMPT MINUTES FROM STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE MEETING - 25 SEPTEMBER 2019**

The exempt minutes of the Stakeholder Committee meeting (item 15 in the minute book) that took place on 25 September 2019 were received by the Authority. There were no questions.

243. **PRINCIPAL OFFICER LOCAL PAY AWARD**

The Authority considered an exempt report from the Director of Human Resources (item 16 in the minute book) regarding the Principal Officer Local Pay Award. [SUMMARY OF EXEMPT MINUTE].

Chairman,



**HAMPSHIRE
FIRE AND
RESCUE
AUTHORITY**

Purpose: Approval

Date **19 February 2020**

Title **Budget and Precept Requirement 2020/21**

Report of Treasurer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report presents the 2019/20 revised budget and the 2020/21 forward budget to Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority (HFRA) for approval. Changes agreed in the December 2019 Budget Update report have been included with the detail, along with assumptions agreed within the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) presented to the HFRA in September 2018, where still applicable.
2. Due to the uncertainty around the levels of government grant and precept, it was agreed that no MTFP would be produced in September 2019, but an interim update would be included within this report. A summary up to 2021/22 is included at **Appendix B** and is explained in more detail later in this report.
3. An updated Reserves Strategy is also presented for approval in this report **Appendix D**, which includes details of the current level of reserves, the reason for holding each reserve and plans for future usage.
4. This report sets out details of the precept increase, showing the level of precept and increase for each council tax band. As part of the provisional settlement figures, the Government have announced that the referendum limit will be set at 2%, as had been assumed within the MTFP. It is recommended that due to the uncertainties surrounding local government finance and the need to close budget gaps in future years, the council tax is increased by the maximum level of 1.99% for 2020/21.
5. The year 2020/21 is the first year following a four year settlement agreement, which had provided some financial certainty to the Authority, albeit that grant reductions required savings to be made. Information for future years has been limited, therefore figures included in the MTFP for 2020/21 onwards were estimates and vary from the final settlement figures and other assumptions in many areas.

6. The capital programme for 2020/21 onwards and the funding of this is set out in this report and are recommended for approval.

BACKGROUND

7. The September 2018 MTFP had forecast a deficit of £1.8m, of which £700,000 was found as part of the 2019/20 budget. This left an expected shortfall for 2020/21 of £1.1m. As 2020/21 was the first year following the four year funding settlement, a number of assumptions and estimates were included within the MTFP for grant funding and precept.
8. Those assumptions were based on the latest information at that time, however there have been significant changes at governmental level which have resulted in a more generous settlement than had been expected. Along with other changes to costs within the Service, it has been possible to balance the budget, as well as increasing contributions to reserves to ensure funding for the capital programme as well as operational equipment and IT systems into the future.
9. Whilst the one year settlement for 2020/21 is favourable compared to what had been forecast, the absence of any figures beyond that date makes financial planning very difficult. This report therefore sets out an interim financial plan for the next two years (to 2021/22), whilst we await the outcome of the Government's next Comprehensive Spending Review during this year, which will hopefully provide a multi-year settlement for the local government sector, at which point a major update of the MTFP can be undertaken.
10. Plans for a new Combined Fire Authority (CFA) are progressing, with a planned implementation date of 1st April 2021, and any future financial decisions will also need to be made in this context.

2019/20 BUDGET MONITORING – QUARTER 3

11. The forecast position for 2019/20 is showing a surplus of £0.796m, which is higher than that reported to the Authority in December 2019.
12. The table below shows the budget monitoring for 2019/20 as at 31st December 2019.

	2019/20 Current Budget	2019/20 Forecast as at end Quarter 3	Variance Underspend / (Overspend)
Employee Costs	54,134	54,122	-12
Premises	5,883	6,036	153
Transport	1,545	1,794	249
Supplies & Services	9,453	9,382	-71
Third Party Payments	3,050	3,305	255

Expenditure	74,065	74,639	574
Income	-4,146	-5,075	-929
Net Current Expenditure	69,919	69,564	-355
Non-Current Expenditure	788	839	52
Net Cost of Service	70,707	70,403	-303
Funded By:	-70,707	-71,200	-493
(Surplus) / Deficit	0	-796	-796

13. The overall position is an underspend of £0.796m. This is split between an underspend of £0.303m on the main HFRS budget and £0.493m of previously unbudgeted grant to cover increased firefighters pension costs.
14. The main factors in the underspend of £0.303m in the main HFRS budget in this are as follows:
- Premises costs – overspend of £153,000. This is mainly due to increased business rates for Basingstoke Fire Station following an in year revaluation, as well as increased cleaning costs.
 - Transport costs – overspend of £249,000. This relates to increased travel claims for firefighters and the legislative changes leading to the replacement of tyres on fire appliances.
 - Third party payments – overspend of £255,000 mainly relating to additional delivering differently in partnership (DDiP) activity, which is offset by additional income.
 - Income – overachievement of £929,000. The additional income relates to additional DDiP income, higher than budgeted income from investments and a one-off credit from the shared services partnership relating to changes in HR provision.

2020/21 BUDGET AND PRECEPT

Council Tax

15. The Sept 2018 MTFP included an estimated increase to the Council Tax Base of 1.0%. The Districts and Boroughs have now confirmed their bases for 2020/21, which now gives an overall increase of 1.28%, generating additional funding of £124,000.
16. The referendum limit had been assumed at 2% in the MTFP and this has now been confirmed by the Government.

17. Given the current uncertain position in terms of both future government grant and referendum limits, it is recommended that the council tax be increased by the maximum level of 1.99% for 2020/21, equating to an increase of £1.35 for a Band D property. All figures in this report assume that this level of increase is applied.

18. The figures below show the council tax rates for the year beginning 1st April 2020 for the properties in each band, based on a 1.99% increase:

Band A:	£46.04	Band E:	£84.41
Band B:	£53.71	Band F:	£99.75
Band C:	£61.39	Band G:	£115.10
Band D:	£69.06	Band H:	£138.12

19. Combining the council tax base increase and the precept increase, the table below shows the precept funding due from each precepting authority for the year 2020/21.

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council	£4,602,663
East Hampshire District Council	£3,527,792
Eastleigh Borough Council	£3,248,205
Fareham Borough Council	£3,008,205
Gosport Borough Council	£1,867,320
Hart District Council	£2,838,735
Havant Borough Council	£2,849,208
New Forest District Council	£4,937,300
Portsmouth City Council	£3,987,193
Rushmoor Borough Council	£2,210,972
Southampton City Council	£4,521,220
Test Valley Borough Council	£3,442,986
Winchester City Council	£3,450,257
Total	£44,492,056

20. The Council Tax Collection Fund surplus has now been confirmed at £195,144, which is a decrease of £179,00 on the figure included within the MTFP.

Business Rates

21. The Authority receives a top up grant in respect of business rates from the Government, together with a proportion of retained business rates collected by District and Unitary Councils in the County. In addition to this, following reliefs

and business rate caps introduced by the Government, Section 31 grant is paid to the authority for lost business rate income it would otherwise have earned.

22. With no settlement agreement in advance, the top up grant was assumed as flat cash based on the final 4 year settlement figure of £7.464m in future years. This has now been confirmed at £7.585m, which is £121,000 higher than forecast.
23. Within the MTFP, the 2020/21 locally retained business rate figure was assumed to be the 2019/20 figure inflated by 1.00%. This would have given the authority a £7.127m share of business rates. Billing authorities have now confirmed the authority's share of business rates will be £7.158m. This is an increase of £31,000 against forecast, resulting in a slightly higher level of long term funding going forward.
24. Section 31 grant amounting to £304,017 will be provided in compensation for the 2% cap, and £889,837 will be provided for other business rates relief schemes, which is significantly higher than had originally been forecast.
25. The billing authorities have now confirmed that there is a small surplus on their business rates collection fund and the authority's share will be £5,859 in 2020/21. This will be one-off funding to the Authority in 2020/21, in the same way that the council tax collection fund operates.

Government Grant

26. 2020/21 is the first year following a four-year funding settlement agreement and as such, no information was available on the level of government grant. It was therefore assumed that further reductions would be made to the grant of 10% in 2020/21, then 5% per year thereafter. This would have provided grant funding of £6.495m in 2020/21.
27. The one year Spending Round announced by the Government last September provided greater levels of public sector funding compared to the trends of the last 10 years, albeit that no guarantees were provided around the longer term position in advance of the next comprehensive spending review (CSR).
28. For Fire, there was a real terms increase in Revenue Support Grant, giving HFRA a grant figure of £7.333m which has now been confirmed by the Government, which is an increase of £838,000 on the original forecast in the MTFP.

Budget Pressures

29. As part of the annual budget setting process, a number of pressures have been identified. Further analysis of these is undertaken to consider whether they represent the unavoidable increased cost of previous policy decisions or whether or not they are in effect growth bids over which there is some element of choice.

30. Those in the first category have either been added as base changes to the Service budgets or have been able to be contained within existing budgets following the base budget review that is undertaken each year.
31. Two of the requests were considered to be growth bids and require additional funding and the Authority are requested to review these and approve them to be included in the 2020/21 base budget. These are:
- Smoke Alarms (Prevention) - £146,000
Increase budget for smoke alarms and other Safe & Well visit items, following comment from Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) that Hampshire are lower than other Services in this area. This is effectively a financial consequence of an action put in place following the last inspection. This item could be rejected but could adversely impact on the results of the next inspection.
 - Information Technician (Organisational Performance) - £38,500
To permanently establish a temporary post which is in place to manage data across the Service and improve data quality. Given the constant demands on this area of the organisation, it is recommended that the existing temporary resource is built into the base budget.
32. It is recommended that these are approved for inclusion within the 2020/21 budget and the figures in this report assume this position.

Efficiencies

33. Service Delivery Redesign has now been implemented and the final phase of revenue savings totalling just over £400,000 are included in the 2020/21 budget.
34. As part of the budget setting process, a zero based budget exercise was undertaken. This has resulted in the requirement for inflation being reduced and further budget reductions being achieved without the need for changes to service level. These savings have been used to assist with achieving a balanced budget for 2020/21, against the original forecast of a £1.1m deficit.

Overall 2020/21 Budget Position

35. **Appendix A** outlines the base budget for 2020/21 by both cost type and function. It shows that a balanced budget has been achieved, whilst taking into account all the factors above. Some of the key changes which have helped balance the budget are shown in the table below:

	£'000
Increased Revenue Support Grant	838
Increased Fire Pension Grant	493
Increased Council Tax Base	124
Reduced Pay Inflation	192
Total	<u>1,647</u>

36. The changes highlighted above have resulted in a surplus being available within the budget of just over £1m. This will be transferred as a one-off contribution into the Transformation Reserve in line with existing policy.

Capital Programme

37. The proposed capital programme for 2019/20 to 2024/25, including spend to date and the proposed financing, is set out at **Appendix C** of this report.
38. The Vehicle Replacement Programme (VRP) has been updated to reflect changing needs following the Service Delivery Redesign (SDR) programme. Although purchases are now being made for most vehicles, the hold on purchasing during the period of change has resulted in a significant underspend over the past few years. This funding has been carried forward and will be used to fund the purchase of the SDR vehicle requirements over the coming years. This has been reflected in the capital programme.
39. The main build on Basingstoke Fire Station was completed some time ago and has been in use for two years. However, there have been several build issues, particularly around drainage, which the contractor will be rectifying in 2020/21. In addition, other design flaws have come to light which can be resolved whilst the contractor is on site, so a cost of £80,000 has been negotiated to cover these works. The Authority is requested to approve that this additional cost be funded from the Capital Payments Reserve.
40. Phase 2 of the Strategic Headquarters build has been completed and the final payments are expected to be made by the end of this financial year. An overspend is expected on this project due to issues during the build. The majority of this cost has been covered through adjustments to the plans to reduce costs in other areas to offset this.
41. The additional overspend of £77,000 (1.7% of budget) is the maximum expected overspend, as negotiations are still in progress, and the final figures will be confirmed at a later date. It is requested that the overspend be approved to be funded from the Capital Payments Reserve.

Reserves

42. The Authority holds specific reserves to provide for future spending as part of its medium term financial planning.
43. An updated Reserves Strategy which outlines the purpose of the reserves that we hold is provided in **Appendix D**. Details of the expected balance on each of the specific reserves and the general balance over the period 2019/20 to 2023/24 are set out within the appendix.

INTERIM FINANCIAL PLAN

44. In the absence of a multi year grant settlement and building on the information contained within the Spending Round for 2020/21, it was agreed that an interim

financial plan would be presented to the Authority as part of the budget setting process for 2020/21. This takes the 2020/21 budget presented in this report and then adds on a further year to the end of 2021/22 based on a range of assumptions outlined later in this section of the report.

45. Given the uncertainty at a national level with future funding, alongside the new Combined Fire Authority expected in April 2021, there are risks associated with the strategy, but these can largely be mitigated through the strong financial position both in terms of reserves and contributions built into the base budget.
46. The MTFP summary is included at **Appendix B**. It shows that for the 2021/22 financial year we expect there to be a small deficit of £116,000. The main assumptions that should be noted in relation to this forecast are:
 - The continuation of £3.443m pension grant in 2021/22.
 - A 5% reduction in Revenue Support Grant (RSG).
 - The removal of £1.035m of planned prudential borrowing costs in respect of the Station Investment Programme which would be delayed until future years (based on the current delivery timeframes for the programme).
 - A contingency of £500,000 reflecting the degree of uncertainty in the 2021/22 financial forecasts.
 - Continuation of Section 31 grant at 2020/21 levels (£1.086m).
 - 2.5% increase for pay awards each year.
 - General inflation at 1.5%, with specific rates where known.
 - 1.99% increase on council tax.
 - 1.0% increase in council tax base.
47. The aim would be to balance the budget in 2021/22 through the use of reserves (or reduced contributions to reserves) as we have in previous years. The advantage of this position is that the Authority is able to maintain a stable financial outlook during this period whilst it awaits the outcome of the CSR later this year, which will set out more clearly the future prospects for funding and how we might be impacted by the implementation of the Fair Funding Review and Business Rate Retention.
48. The disadvantages of this approach are twofold:
 - Our forecasts may prove wrong for 2021/22 (for example the pension grant could be withdrawn) leaving the Authority with a significant deficit to address in the year.
 - We lose the potential to stay 'ahead of the curve' in respect of future savings programmes, which has been a key feature of our financial planning during the period of austerity.
49. In respect of the first risk, we may be required to meet a substantial deficit in setting the 2021/22 budget. It is difficult to assess what a worst-case scenario

may look like, but if we assumed the full loss of the pension grant and a further 10% loss in RSG, that would give a deficit in the order of £4m. Against this position, we have the following mitigations:

- The base revenue budget for that year will include contributions to reserves totalling over £6.1m, which could be stopped if required albeit that this would impact on the future financial position going forward.
 - The Authority has already agreed to use the net saving on the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) deficit contributions to create a Grant Equalisation Reserve which would stand at £1.25m by this point.
 - The Capital Payments Reserve would be around £10m which could be used if necessary and replacement funds provided in future years (either through revenue contributions or prudential borrowing).
 - Ultimately, we have a General Fund Reserve of £2.5m to act as a 'last resort' buffer for the budget albeit that this would need to be replaced in future years if it were utilised.
50. In some respects, the second risk is of greater concern as our capacity to be able to deal with a one-off problem in 2021/22 is significant, but our ability to respond to the potential need for significant recurring savings beyond this point relies on early planning and sensible timescales for any required consultation and delivery.
51. To help mitigate this risk, the Service will continue to build on the changes implemented as part of the Service Delivery Redesign and look at further options for efficiency savings across all Directorates as part of its drive for continuous improvement, which would be expected irrespective of the need to meet budget deficits in future years.
52. Proposals and options can be developed for consideration later in this calendar year, with a view to starting implementation during the 2021/22 financial year where possible and appropriate. Once the results of the CSR are known later this year the longer term financial prospects for the Authority can be assessed and if a major programme of savings is required at this point, further options can be developed for consideration.
53. The approach outlined in the interim financial plan seeks to strike a balance between maintaining financial stability and ensuring that the Authority is well placed to respond to the potential future financial challenges that may arise from the CSR.

AVAILABILITY AND COMPETENCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

54. The current software systems used for Availability and Competency Management are FireWatch within Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service (HFRS) and PDRpro, and Rappel within Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service (IWFRS). The contract for FireWatch will end in December 2020, but with an option to extend for one further year. Given the value of the contract, a full tendering

process is required and therefore a full review of the systems being used is being undertaken.

55. The ambition is that the Combined Fire Authority (CFA) will operate using common software across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight for Availability and Competency Management when it is formed in April 2021, although there may be some challenges in achieving that in the timescales.
56. The Availability and Competency Management project has conducted a comprehensive process to ascertain the user requirements for the system for both HFRS and IWFRS. These are being assessed against the range of software solutions available on the market so that a decision can be made on which solution(s) most closely matches the Service needs.
57. This report seeks approval for funding of up to £800,000 from the Capital Payments Reserve for the costs anticipated for the implementation of an Availability and Competency Management System. This is based on the best information available at this time prior to the procurement process starting, mainly to ensure that there are no further delays in progressing the final system solution once chosen.
58. Should all of this funding not be required then it will obviously not be drawn down; but should the final system solution mean that further costs are necessary for implementation above those estimated, a further report will be brought back to the Authority for approval.

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT DELIVERY MODEL

59. A strategic review of the facilities management provision was conducted by an independent property consultant and included extensive work with HCC colleagues. This review made a recommendation, for a number of reasons including improved performance, control and public value, to the HFRS Executive Group to change the delivery model which is currently delivered via a hybrid of in-house and outsourced resource. The review recommended bringing the provision fully in-house.
60. To implement this, a new department re-structure is necessary which will result in new permanent establishment posts as outlined below:

New Post	Grade	FTE	Budget Cost (mid point)
Building Maintenance Technician	E	5.0	£28,571
Building Maintenance Supervisor	F	1.0	£31,667
Totals		6.0	£174,522

61. The cost associated with this department restructure is cost-neutral and will be managed within existing department budgets.
62. Authority is sought from HFRA for the approval of these new posts into the permanent establishment and for the associated budget virement.

TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY

63. The Treasury Management Strategy and Investment Strategy are attached at **Appendix E** and require approval on an annual basis. This document includes the Prudential Indicators and statement on Minimum Revenue Provision.
64. The Treasury Management Strategy and Investment Strategy for 2020/21 take into account the changes required in the 2017 Prudential and Treasury Management Codes.
65. The report recommends that the following be approved:
 - (a) That the Treasury Management Strategy (TMS), including the Annual Investment Strategy for 2020/21, (and the remainder of 2019/20) is approved; and
 - (b) That authority is delegated to the Chief Finance Officer to manage the Fire and Rescue Authority's investments and borrowing according to the Treasury Management Strategy Statement as appropriate.
66. Members may recall that following changes to the grouping mechanism within the Hampshire Pension Fund, the option to allow pre-payment of 3 years' worth of contributions was provided, and delegated authority given to the Treasurer to agree to this if it was financially advantageous.
67. It is anticipated that savings in the order of £50,000 per annum will be realised through the pre-payment of contributions, albeit there is a small risk of a loss if there were a significant drop in investment returns early in 2020/21. On balance, this was considered to be a very small risk and the option to pre-pay was agreed. The impact on the Authority's TMS has been reflected in Appendix E.

CAPITAL AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY

68. A new reporting requirement was introduced for the 2019/20 budget in respect of a Capital and Investment Strategy. This has been updated for 2020/21 and is included as **Appendix F** of this report. The appendix provides information about the Authority's strategy regarding use of assets and how they help to support the overall financial position. Some of these elements were previously included within the Treasury Management Strategy and have been split out into this separate document to ensure that we comply with the code.

SECTION 25 REPORT

69. Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 requires the Chief Financial Officer to give an independent view on the robustness of the estimates and adequacy of reserves to the Authority at the time it is setting its budget and council tax. In previous years this has been covered within the body of the budget report but given the enhanced focus on financial management within the public sector, it has been included separately as **Appendix G** of this budget report.

70. The Authority is required to take this report into account in setting the budget and council tax for 2020/21.

INSURANCE STRATEGY

71. The Fire Authority became a member of a mutual, the Fire and Rescue Indemnity Company (FRIC), on 1 November 2015. FRIC is made up of a group of eleven Fire and Rescue Authorities. FRIC was set up to provide indemnity for its Members against risks normally fully covered by a traditional insurance company. Below is a summary of the current status of our insurance arrangements.
72. There has been an increase in our 2019/20 contribution of 5%. It was expected that FRIC's Liability and Property costs would rise quite significantly due to claims experience, emerging risks and other external factors. FRIC's operating structure does however provide a level of protection against external factors, such as standard insurance market increase in premiums.
73. Additional covers consisting of Business Travel, Personal Accident, Engineering Insurance and Engineering Inspection are still obtained through Zurich Municipal and to date, we have not made any claims under these additional policies. Increases are due to assets numbers on the engineering aspect and increase in payroll for the additional covers.
74. The charges to date are shown in the table below:

Contribution/Premium	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
FRIC Contribution <i>*Non-FRIC Covers – includes separate cover for terrorism and recovery of uninsured losses</i>	£522,066	£500,667	£516,402 (£14,089 Non-FRIC Covers)	£541,826 (£12,558 Non-FRIC Covers)
Additional Covers	£92,867	£96,088	£76,035	£80,473

SUPPORTING OUR SERVICE PLAN AND PRIORITIES

75. This report sets out how the available funding will be directed to the priority areas within HFRS and supports a continuing strong financial position.

CONSULTATION

76. The Authority undertook a major consultation process during 2019 that sought residents and stakeholders' views about the Integrated Risk Management Plan and the deployment of resources within HFRS. Previous consultations have revealed that the majority of respondents are happy to see a rise in council tax in order to protect services provided by the Authority.
77. The proposals in this report have been the subject of consultation with the representative bodies and the business community and no issues of concern

were raised. Any further comments or issues will be reported back verbally to the Authority.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

78. The report covers the overall financial position for 2020/21, on Revenue, Capital and Reserves. It also requests one-off funding for the Availability and Training Project, which is required due to Procurement regulations at the cessation of the current contract. There are not expected to be any long term increases to cost as a result of this.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

79. The proposals in this report meet the Authority's legal requirement to set a balanced budget and council tax for the next financial year prior to 1 March.

PEOPLE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

80. The proposals within this report are considered compatible with the provisions of the equality and human rights legislation and do not change any policies.

OPTIONS

81. There are no options for consideration within the report, although budget setting and forecasting by its very nature mean that assumptions are made around a number of variables that can change over time.

RISK ANALYSIS

82. The Authority has an established process for planning ahead to meet financial targets. This has helped considerably in managing the reductions in government grant which have affected the available funding over the past 10 years.
83. The absence of any settlement information beyond 2020/21 represents a significant risk to the Authority but the proposed interim financial plan outlines a suggested way forward for mitigating those risks as far as possible.

CONCLUSION

84. It is recommended that the Authority approve the proposals made within this report, including a 1.99% increase in the precept for 2020/21.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority approve:

85. The Revenue Budget, as set out in Appendix A.
86. The interim financial plan as set out in paras 44 to 53.
87. The Capital Programme and funding as set out in Appendix C.
88. The additional works at a cost of £80,000 on Basingstoke Fire Station be funded from the Capital Payments Reserve.
89. That the forecast overspend of £77,000 on the Strategic Headquarters capital programme be funded from the Capital Payments Reserve.
90. That funding of £800,000 be approved from the Capital Payments Reserve for implementation of the Availability and Competency Management System.
91. That approval be given for the virement to create new posts within the FM function to bring the service fully in-house.
92. That a total of £1,035,000 is budgeted to be transferred to the Transformation Reserve in 2020/21.
93. The Reserves Strategy as set out in Appendix D.
94. The Treasury Management Strategy as set out in Appendix E, including the Annual Investment Strategy for 2020/21, (and the remainder of 2019/20).
95. That authority is delegated to the Chief Finance Officer to manage the Fire and Rescue Authority's investments and borrowing according to the Treasury Management Strategy Statement as appropriate.
96. The Capital and Investment Strategy as set out in Appendix F for 2020/21, (and the remainder of 2019/20).
97. The Section 25 Report as set out in Appendix G.
98. The council tax requirement for the Authority for the year beginning 1st April 2020 of £44,492,056.
99. That the Authority's tax be increased by 1.99% for the year beginning 1st April 2020 and for the properties in each band, as set out in para 18 of this report:

Band A:	£46.04	Band E:	£84.41
Band B:	£53.71	Band F:	£99.75

Band C:	£61.39	Band G:	£115.10
Band D:	£69.06	Band H:	£138.12

100. That the precepts set out in para 19 of this report, totalling £44,492,056 are issued on the billing authorities in Hampshire, requiring the payment in such instalments and on such dates set by them and previously notified to the Authority, in proportion to the tax base of each billing authority's area as determined by them.

APPENDICES ATTACHED

- 101. Appendix A – 2020/21 proposed budget in subjective and objective format
- 102. Appendix B – Interim Medium Term Financial Plan
- 103. Appendix C – Proposed Capital programme and funding
- 104. Appendix D – Reserves Strategy
- 105. Appendix E – Treasury Management Strategy & Investment Strategy 2019/20 – 2020/21
- 106. Appendix F – Capital and Investment Strategy 2019/20 - 2021/22
- 107. Appendix G – Section 25 Report

Contact:

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Appendix A

Outline Budget 2020/21 - Subjective

2019/20 Original Budget	2019/20 Revised Budget		2020/21 Forecast Budget
32,115	33,088	Whole Time Firefighters	32,273
6,279	6,914	Retained Firefighters	6,776
11,328	11,472	Staff	11,764
1,087	1,087	Net cost of pensions	1,087
763	763	Employers LGPS contribution re pension deficit	0
611	844	Other Employee Costs	695
52,184	54,168		52,594
4,891	5,883	Premises	5,095
1,513	1,545	Transport	1,542
6,017	9,453	Supplies & Services	6,326
2,498	3,241	Third Party Payments	2,561
67,102	74,290		68,118
-3,257	-4,146	Income	-3,488
-4,099	-4,099	Specific Grant	-3,443
59,746	66,045		61,188
3,905	3,905	Revenue contributions to capital	3,965
63,651	69,950	Net Cost of Service	65,153
788	788	Capital Financing	799
2,074	-4,225	Contribution to / (from) reserves	3,161
66,513	66,513	Budget Requirement	69,112
-43,070	-43,070	Precept	-44,492
-7,215	-7,215	Revenue Support Grant	-7,333
-1,086	-1,086	Other Non-Specific Grants	-2,343
-7,683	-7,683	Business Rates Top-Up Grant	-7,585
-7,057	-7,057	Locally Retained Business Rates	-7,158
-374	-374	CT Collection Fund Balance	-195
-27	-27	BR Collection Fund Balance	-6
-66,513	-66,513		-69,112
0	0	Funding Gap / (Surplus)	0

Outline Budget 2020/21 - Objective

2018/19 Original Budget	2018/19 Revised Budget		2019/20 Proposed Budget
236	1,446	Policy and Planning	897
39,810	44,128	Operations	41,983
1,533	1,687	Performance and Assurance	1,554
12,856	17,424	Corporate Services	14,461
3,462	3,679	People and Organisational Development	3,835
-0	-4,169	Finance	-2,629
1,087	1,087	Net Cost of Pensions	1,087
763	763	Employers LGPS contribution re pension deficit	0
0	0	Transformation Reserve Funding	0
59,746	66,045		61,188
3,905	3,905	Revenue contributions to capital	3,965
63,651	69,950	Net Cost of Service	65,153
788	788	Capital Financing	799
2,074	-4,225	Contribution to / (from) reserves	3,161
66,513	66,513	Budget Requirement	69,112
Funded By:			
-43,070	-43,070	Precept	-44,492
-7,215	-7,215	Revenue Support Grant	-7,333
-1,086	-1,086	Other Non-Specific grants	-2,343
-7,683	-7,683	Business Rates Top-Up Grant	-7,585
-7,057	-7,057	Locally Retained Business Rates	-7,158
-374	-374	CT Collection Fund Balance	-195
-27	-27	BR Collection Fund Balance	-6
-66,513	-66,513		-69,112
0	0	Funding Gap / (Surplus)	0

Appendix B

Interim Medium Term Financial Plan

	2020/21 Forecast Budget	2021/22 Forecast Budget
Whole Time Firefighters	32,273	33,080
Retained Firefighters	6,776	6,945
Staff	11,764	12,571
Net cost of pensions	1,087	1,114
Employers LGPS contribution re pension deficit	0	0
Other Employee Costs	695	706
	52,594	54,417
Premises	5,095	5,232
Transport	1,542	1,565
Supplies & Services	6,326	6,420
Third Party Payments	2,561	2,599
	68,118	70,232
Income	-3,488	-3,537
Specific Grant	-3,443	-3,443
	61,188	63,253
Revenue contributions to capital	3,965	3,965
	65,153	67,218
Net Cost of Service		
Capital Financing	799	726
Contribution to / (from) reserves	3,161	2,125
	69,112	70,068
Budget Requirement		
Precept	-44,492	-45,828
Revenue Support Grant	-7,333	-6,966
Other Non-Specific Grants	-2,343	-2,343
Business Rates Top-Up Grant	-7,585	-7,585
Locally Retained Business Rates	-7,158	-7,230
CT Collection Fund Balance	-195	0
BR Collection Fund Balance	-6	0
	-69,112	-69,952
Funding Gap / (Surplus)	0	116

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Capital Commitments and Future Programme

Project Details	Approved Spend	2018/19 and previous years	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Latest Estimate	Balance Over(-) Under
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
Basingstoke Fire Station	6,875	6,623	52	280					6,955	-80
Fire control system - (FGP 4/12) NFCSP	729	671	0	58					729	0
Solar photovoltaic panels	1,076	1,059	17	0					1,076	0
Thermal imaging cameras	350	252	72	0					324	26
Estates Transformation -HQ Phase 2	4,583	4,534	126	0					4,660	-77
Vehicles			4,221	7,112	5,293	5,825	3,542	3,818	29,811	0
Station investment Programme	100	0	100	0					100	0
Replacement Fire Training Facility	3,500	0	3,500	0					3,500	0
Total Programme Cost	17,213	13,139	8,088	7,450	5,293	5,825	3,542	3,818	47,155	-131
Financed by:										
Capital payments reserve		11,139	7,964	7,392	5,293	5,825	3,542	3,818	44,973	
Prudential Borrowing		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Revenue Grant unapplied reserve		0	0	58	0	0	0	0	58	
Capital receipts		1,500	124	0	0	0	0	0	1,624	
Capital Grant		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Partner contributions		500	0	0	0	0	0	0	500	
Total financing		13,139	8,088	7,450	5,293	5,825	3,542	3,818	47,155	

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Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority Reserves Strategy

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 Section 43 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires that, when setting the budget for the forthcoming year, precepting authorities should have regard to the level of reserves needed to provide sufficient resources to finance estimated future expenditure, plus any appropriate allowances that should be made for contingencies and risks.
- 1.2 Best practice on the use and management of reserves and balances is provided by CIPFA and the Local Authority Accounting Panel (LAAP) guidance, specifically LAAP Bulletin 99 - 'Local Authority Reserves and Balances'. This was issued in July 2014, but since then many references have been made to the scale of public sector reserves by various parties.
- 1.3 In May 2018 the Government published the New Fire and Rescue Services Framework which introduces a requirement for Combined Fire and Rescue Authorities to publish a Reserve Strategy on their website and outlined the detail which should be included. The Reserves Strategy can form part of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) or be a stand-alone document.

2. Strategic Context

- 2.1 There are a number of reasons why Authorities might hold reserves, these include to:
 - a) Mitigate potential future risks such as increased demand and costs;
 - b) Help provide for the costs of future liabilities;
 - c) Temporarily plug a funding gap should resources be reduced suddenly or as part of an agreed medium term financial strategy;
 - d) Enable the Authority to resource one-off policy developments and initiatives without causing an unduly disruptive impact on Council Tax;
 - e) Spread the cost of large scale projects which span a number of years.
- 2.2 Reserves only provide one-off funding so the Authority aims to avoid using reserves to meet regular and ongoing financial commitments, other than as part of a sustainable medium-term financial plan.
- 2.3 Long-Term Sustainability - Reserves are an essential tool to ensure long term budget stability particularly at a time when the Authority has been facing significant year on year reductions in grant funding and uncertainty over the medium term. Due to the fact that funding for future capital projects is held as an earmarked reserve, the overall level of reserves held by the Authority is currently still relatively high but will reduce as the capital programme progresses.
- 2.4 Reserve balances have been identified as a key indicator of financial health and the Authority continues to have an appropriate level of reserves to deal with identified risks.

As a minimum, there are sufficient balances to support the budget and capital programme and provide an adequate contingency for budget risks.

2.5 There are two different types of reserve, and these are:

Earmarked Reserves – these reserves are held to fund a specific purpose and can only be used to fund spending associated with that specific purpose. Should it transpire that not all the agreed funds are required then the agreement of the Authority would be sought to decide how any remaining balance is to be utilised.

General Reserve – usage from this Reserve is non-specific and is held to fund any unforeseen spending that had not been included in the base budget e.g. excessive operational activity resulting in significant retained pay costs. Generally, this is deemed to be a reserve of ‘last resort’ and the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority (HFRA) has never been required to use its General Reserve.

3. Determine the Adequacy of the General Reserve

- 3.1 A well-managed Fire Authority will strive to maintain as low a level of General Reserve as possible, whilst still covering its financial risks. As a single-purpose authority, HFRA has no opportunity to use cross-service subsidies to meet unanticipated expenditure and so, proportionally, its General Reserve may be slightly higher than for a multi-purpose authority.
- 3.2 The Authority has a robust approach to managing risk and there are effective arrangements for financial control in place. That said, given the high level of influence that third parties, such as the Local Government Employers and Government departments have on its income and expenditure, there is always a risk that the Authority will unexpectedly become liable for expenditure that it has not budgeted for.
- 3.3 A number of years ago, the Authority agreed to increase the General Reserve to £2.5m to reflect the increased risk in the budget as a result of the period of austerity and year on year grant reductions. At the same time the Authority was also receiving 4 year grant settlements which significantly helped in planning for future financial sustainability, even during a period of grant reductions.
- 3.4 At the start of 2020-21, the General Reserve will represent 3.6% of the Authority’s net revenue budget, which is considered adequate to mitigate the risks that it faces. Whilst this may be below the percentage level of General Fund Reserves of other Authorities, this also takes into account the fact that the base revenue budget has over £6.1m a year for contributions to reserves built in (equivalent to 9% of the net revenue budget) and this therefore offers a very significant mitigation to any potential unexpected spending before use of the General Reserve is required.
- 3.5 The level and adequacy of reserves is assessed annually by the Chief Financial Officer in preparing the Section 25 report that Members must take into account in setting the annual budget and precept.

4. Earmarked Reserves

- 4.1 The Authority has a number of earmarked reserves which have been established for specific purposes where there have been emerging risks, future cost pressures or as part of sensible medium term financial planning.
- 4.2 The relevance of, and balance in, each of these is reviewed annually as part of the update of the MTFP and the Authority is informed of the latest plans for the balances held in such reserves over the medium term via the Reserves Strategy.
- 4.3 The Earmarked Reserves for the Authority are presented and analysed as outlined below.

5. Transformation Reserve

- 5.1 This is used to help deliver value for money improvements, implement change programmes and to 'pump-prime' environmental improvement initiatives. Any budget surpluses or underspends achieved at the end of the year are generally transferred to this reserve in order to maintain its level and provide funding for further improvements or change programmes as they arise.

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Opening Balance	-3,601	-1,119	-1,000	-946	-1,176
Draws	3,414	1,404	304	20	0
Contributions	-932	-1,285	-250	-250	-250
Closing Balance	-1,119	-1,000	-946	-1,176	-1,426

- 5.2 The majority of commitments against this reserve currently relate to the Combined Fire Authority (CFA) Project and non-capital elements of the Service Delivery Redesign (SDR) vehicle changes.

6. Capital Payments Reserve

- 6.1 This provides an essential resource for the capital programme and helps to reduce the need for borrowing. This is essential as no capital grant is now received from government and no recent bidding processes for capital have been announced. Regular contributions are now made to the reserve from the base budget, set at the amount required to fund the vehicle replacement programme and a contribution to retained station replacements.

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Opening Balance	-23,090	-17,122	-10,695	-9,067	-7,207
Draws	9,997	10,392	5,593	5,825	3,542
Contributions	-4,029	-3,965	-3,965	-3,965	-3,965
Closing Balance	-17,122	-10,695	-9,067	-7,207	-7,630

6.2 Due to the recent Service Delivery Review programme and the hold on vehicle purchases, whilst vehicle requirements were being assessed, there is currently a backlog on vehicle purchases. The majority of the approved spend in this reserve is for this purpose. In addition, funding is being held for retained station replacements, which are being reviewed as part of the Station Investment Programme and business cases are expected to be presented to the Authority during 2020/21 for approval to spend some of this allocation, albeit the majority of the spend is expected to come from prudential borrowing.

7. Equipment and ICT Reserves

7.1 Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and other equipment purchases are not often spread evenly across years. This makes it difficult to budget for replacement within the annual revenue budget. Reserves have therefore been set up for both ICT and other equipment to allow larger items to be purchased whilst retaining a constant contribution from the revenue budget.

Equipment	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Opening Balance	0	-37	-330	-910	-134
Draws	563	457	170	1,526	89
Contributions	-600	-750	-750	-750	-750
Closing Balance	-37	-330	-910	-134	-795

ICT	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Opening Balance	-75	0	-500	-1,000	-1,500
Draws	75	0	0	0	0
Contributions	0	-500	-500	-500	-500
Closing Balance	0	-500	-1,000	-1,500	-2,000

8. Grant Equalisation Reserve

- 8.1 In October 2019 the results of the Hampshire Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) revaluation and de-grouping exercise were announced. The revaluation has indicated that the scheme is now almost 100% funded and therefore the annual deficit contribution is no longer required. Against this, there has been a small increase in the future service contribution rate for HFRS, leaving a net saving of around £625,000.
- 8.2 Given the uncertainty around all pension schemes and the fluctuating nature of all changes of this type, it was agreed at the December 2019 HFRA meeting that this saving should be transferred to reserves in the interim 3 year period to provide funding to protect against unexpected grant changes in the future. This retains the provision within the budget which will be reviewed once the results of the 2022 valuation are known and could be used at that point to protect against future swings in the pension scheme charges.

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Opening Balance	0	0	-625	-1,250
Draws	0	0	0	0
Contributions	0	-625	-625	-625
Closing Balance	0	-625	-1,250	-1,875

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Treasury Management Strategy and Investment Strategy 2020/21 to 2022/23

1. Summary

- 1.1. The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2017 Edition (the CIPFA Code) require authorities to determine the Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) before the start of each financial year.
- 1.2. As per the requirements of the Prudential Code, Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority adopted the CIPFA Treasury Management Code at its meeting in February 2012. This report fulfils the Fire & Rescue Authority's legal obligation under the Local Government Act 2003 to have regard to the CIPFA Code.
- 1.3. **This Report recommends:**
- 1.4. **That the Treasury Management Strategy, including the Annual Investment Strategy for 2020/21, (and the remainder of 2019/20) is approved; and**
- 1.5. **That authority is delegated to the Chief Finance Officer to manage the Fire & Rescue Authority's investments and borrowing according to the Treasury Management Strategy Statement as appropriate.**

2. Introduction

- 2.1. Treasury management is the management of the Fire & Rescue Authority's cash flows, borrowing and investments, and the associated risks. The Fire & Rescue Authority has borrowed and invested sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of financial risk are therefore central to the Fire & Rescue Authority's prudent financial management.
- 2.2. Treasury risk management at the Fire & Rescue Authority is conducted within the framework of the CIPFA Code which requires the Fire & Rescue Authority to approve a TMSS before the start of each financial year. This report fulfils the Fire & Rescue Authority's legal obligation under the Local Government Act 2003 to have regard to the CIPFA Code.
- 2.3. Investments held for service purposes or for commercial profit are considered in a different report, the Capital and Investment Strategy.

3. External context

- 3.1. The following paragraphs explain the economic and financial background against which the TMSS is being set.

Economic background

- 3.2. The UK's progress negotiating its exit from the European Union, together with its future trading arrangements, will continue to be a major influence on the Fire & Rescue Authority's treasury management strategy for 2020/21.
- 3.3. GDP growth rose by 0.4% in the third quarter of 2019 from -0.2% in the previous three months with the annual rate falling further below its trend rate to 1.1% Looking ahead, the Bank of England forecasts economic growth to pick up during 2020 as Brexit-related uncertainties dissipate and provide a boost to

business investment helping GDP reach 1.6% in Q4 2020, 1.8% in Q4 2021 and 2.1% in Q4 2022.

- 3.4. The headline rate of UK Consumer Price Inflation remained the same in November 2019 at 1.5% year-on-year, although lower than highs of 2.1% in July and April 2019 and below the BOE target of 2%.
- 3.5. Labour market data continues to be positive with unemployment at 3.8%, the lowest level since 1975. The 3-month average annual growth rate for pay excluding bonuses rose to 3.5% in November 2019 providing some evidence that a shortage of labour is supporting wages. However, adjusting for inflation this means real wages were only up by 0.9% in October 2019 and only likely to have a moderate impact on household spending.

Credit outlook

- 3.6. The recent Bank of England stress tests assessed all seven UK banking groups, with all seven passing the test. Major banks have steadily increased their capital for many years now, however the tests do not cover all banks and the Bank of England will seek to address some of these issues in 2020, when Virgin Money/Clydesdale will be added to the testing group and separate tests will be included of ringfenced banks.
- 3.7. Challenger banks hit the news headlines in 2019 with Metro Bank and TSB Bank both suffering adverse publicity and falling customer numbers.
- 3.8. Looking forward, the potential for a “no-deal” Brexit and/or a global recession remain the major risks facing banks and building societies in 2020/21 and a cautious approach to bank deposits continues to be recommended by the Fire & Rescue Authority’s treasury advisors.

Interest rate forecast

- 3.9. The Fire & Rescue Authority’s treasury management adviser Arlingclose is forecasting that Bank Rate will remain at 0.75% until the end of 2022. The risks to this forecast are deemed to be significantly weighted to the downside, particularly given the need for greater clarity on Brexit and continuing global economic slowdown.
- 3.10. The Bank of England, having previously indicated interest rates may need to rise if a Brexit agreement was reached, stated in its November Monetary Policy Report and its Bank Rate decision (7-2 vote to hold rates) that the MPC now believe this is less likely even in the event of a deal.
- 3.11. Gilt yields have risen but remain at low levels and only some very modest upward movement from current levels are expected based on Arlingclose’s interest rate projections. The central case is for 10-year and 20-year gilt yields to rise to around 1.00% and 1.40% respectively over the time horizon, with broadly balanced risks to both the upside and downside. However, short-term volatility arising from both economic and political events over the period is a near certainty.
- 3.12. A more detailed economic and interest rate forecast provided by Arlingclose is attached at Annex A.

4. Balance sheet summary and forecast

- 4.1. On 30 November 2019, the Fire & Rescue Authority held £8.3m of borrowing and £29.2m of investments. This is set out in further detail at Annex B. Forecast changes in these sums are shown in the balance sheet analysis in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Balance sheet summary and forecast

	31/03/19	31/03/20	31/03/21	31/03/22	31/03/23
	Actual	Estimate	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Capital Funding Requirement	11.2	10.8	10.3	9.9	9.5
Less: External borrowing					
- Public Works Loan Board	(8.4)	(8.3)	(7.1)	(6.7)	(5.9)
Internal (over) borrowing	2.8	2.5	3.2	3.2	3.6
Less: Working capital	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3
Less: Usable reserves	(30.4)	(21.7)	(16.6)	(20.5)	(19.2)
New borrowing or (investments)	(24.3)	(15.9)	(10.1)	(14.0)	(12.3)

- 4.2. The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), while usable reserves and working capital are the underlying resources available for investment. The Fire & Rescue Authority's current strategy is to maintain borrowing and investments below their underlying levels, sometimes known as internal borrowing.
- 4.3. The capital funding requirement is predominantly for major building works, including Strategic Headquarters. There is an on-going requirement for vehicles and other equipment that will need to be replaced over the coming years. Reserves will mainly be used to fund the Transformation programme.
- 4.4. CIPFA's Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities recommends that the Fire & Rescue Authority's total debt should be lower than its highest forecast CFR over the next three years. Table 1 shows that the Fire & Rescue Authority expects to comply with this recommendation during 2019/20.

5. Borrowing strategy

- 5.1. The Fire & Rescue Authority currently holds £8.3m of loans, which represents no change since the previous year, as part of its strategy for funding previous years' capital programmes. The balance sheet forecast in Table 1 shows that the Fire & Rescue Authority does not expect to need to borrow in 2020/21. The Fire & Rescue Authority may however borrow to pre-fund future years' requirements, providing this does not exceed the authorised limit for borrowing of 17.6m.

Objectives

- 5.2. The Fire & Rescue Authority's chief objective when borrowing money is to strike an appropriately low risk balance between securing low interest costs and achieving certainty of those costs over the period for which funds are required. The flexibility to renegotiate loans should the Fire & Rescue Authority's long-term plans change is a secondary objective.

Strategy

- 5.3. Given the significant cuts to public expenditure and in particular to local government funding, the Fire & Rescue Authority's borrowing strategy continues to address the key issue of affordability without compromising the longer-term stability of the debt portfolio. With short-term interest rates currently much lower than long-term rates, if the Fire & Rescue Authority does need to borrow, it is likely to be more cost effective in the short-term to either use internal resources, or to borrow short-term loans instead.
- 5.4. By internally borrowing, the Fire & Rescue Authority would be able to reduce net borrowing costs (despite foregone investment income) and reduce overall treasury risk. If borrowing is required, the benefits of internal and short-term borrowing will be monitored regularly against the potential for incurring additional costs by deferring borrowing into future years when long-term borrowing rates are forecast to rise modestly. Arlingclose will assist the Fire & Rescue Authority with this 'cost of carry' and breakeven analysis.
- 5.5. The Fire & Rescue Authority has previously raised the majority of its long-term borrowing from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) but the government increased the margin on PWLB rates by 100 basis points (1%) in October 2019 making it a relatively expensive way to meet borrowing needs.
- 5.6. Alternative options should the Fire & Rescue Authority need to borrow any long-term amounts include banks, pension funds and local authorities as well as the potential to issue bonds and similar instruments, in order to lower interest costs and reduce over-reliance on one source of funding in line with the CIPFA Code.
- 5.7. The Fire & Rescue Authority may also arrange forward starting loans during 2020/21, where the interest rate is fixed in advance, but the cash is received in later years. This would enable certainty of cost to be achieved without suffering a cost of carry in the intervening period.
- 5.8. In addition, the Fire & Rescue Authority may borrow short-term loans (normally for up to one month) to cover unplanned cash flow shortages.

Sources of borrowing

- 5.9. The approved sources of long-term and short-term borrowing are:
- Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) and any successor body
 - any institution approved for investments (see below)
 - any other bank or building society authorised to operate in the UK
 - any other UK public sector body
 - UK public and private sector pension funds (except Hampshire Pension Fund)

- capital market bond investors
- UK Municipal Bonds Agency plc and other special purpose companies created to enable local authority bond issues

Other sources of debt finance

5.10. In addition, capital finance may be raised by the following methods that are not borrowing, but may be classed as other debt liabilities:

- leasing
- hire purchase
- Private Finance Initiative
- sale and leaseback

5.11. The Fire & Rescue Authority has previously raised all of its long-term borrowing from the PWLB but it continues to investigate other sources of finance, such as local authority loans and bank loans, which may be available at more favourable rates.

Short-term and variable rate loans

5.12. These loans leave the Fire & Rescue Authority exposed to the risk of short-term interest rate rises and are therefore subject to the interest rate exposure limits in the treasury management indicators below.

Debt rescheduling

5.13. The PWLB allows authorities to repay loans before maturity and either pay a premium or receive a discount according to a set formula based on current interest rates. The Fire & Rescue Authority may take advantage of this and replace some loans with new loans, or repay loans without replacement, where this is expected to lead to an overall cost saving or a reduction in risk.

6. Investment strategy

6.1. The Fire & Rescue Authority holds invested funds representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. In the past 12 months, the Fire & Rescue Authority's investment balance has ranged between £19.9m and £36.8m, however it is planned that balances will fall significantly between now and 31 March 2021 as shown in Table 1.

6.2. The reduction in investment balances predicted is, in addition to funding the transformation programme, partly the result of the intention to pay employer's pension contributions in advance in April 2020. This will be for the three years covering 2020/21 to 2022/23 for staff in the Local Government Pension Scheme and will enable the Fire & Rescue Authority to make savings on pension contributions that outweigh the lost investment income. This can be done without impacting liquidity with the benefit of also reducing counterparty risk.

Objectives

- 6.3. The CIPFA Code requires the Fire & Rescue Authority to invest its funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its investments before seeking the highest rate of return, or yield. The Fire & Rescue Authority's objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment income.

Negative interest rates

- 6.4. If the UK enters into a recession in 2020/21, there is a small chance that the Bank of England could set its Bank Rate at or below zero, which is likely to feed through to negative interest rates on all low risk, short-term investment options. This situation already exists in many other European countries. In this event, security will be measured as receiving the contractually agreed amount at maturity, even though this may be less than the amount originally invested.

Strategy

- 6.5. Approximately 72% of the Fire & Rescue Authority's surplus cash is invested so that it is not subject to bail-in risk, as it is invested in local authorities, pooled property, equity and multi-asset funds, secured bank bonds and treasury bills. Whilst the remaining cash is subject to bail-in risk, 33% is held in overnight money market funds which are subject to a reduced risk of bail-in, 30% is held in certificates of deposit which can be sold on the secondary market and 37% is held in overnight bank call accounts for liquidity purposes. Further detail is provided at Annex B. This diversification will represent a continuation of the new strategy adopted in 2015/16.
- 6.6. Under the new IFRS 9 standard, the accounting for certain investments depends on the 'business model' for managing them. The Fire & Rescue Authority aims to achieve value from its internally managed treasury investments through a business model of collecting the contractual cash flows and therefore, where other criteria are also met, these investments will continue to be accounted for at amortised cost.
- 6.7. The Fire & Rescue Authority's investments in pooled property and equity funds allow the Fire & Rescue Authority to diversify into asset classes other than cash without the need to own and manage the underlying investments. The funds, which are operated on a variable net asset value (VNAV) basis, offer diversification of investment risk, coupled with the services of a professional fund manager; they also offer enhanced returns over the longer term but are more volatile in the short-term. All of the Fire & Rescue Authority's pooled fund investments are in the funds' distributing share classes which pay out the income generated.
- 6.8. Although money can usually be redeemed from the pooled funds at short notice, the Fire & Rescue Authority's intention is to hold them for at least the medium term. Their performance and suitability in meeting the Fire & Rescue Authority's investment objectives are monitored regularly and discussed with Arlingclose.
- 6.9. As shown in Annex B, without this allocation the weighted average return of the Fire & Rescue Authority's cash investments would have been 0.86%; the

allocation to high yielding investments has added 0.92% (£0.33m based on the cash balance at 30 November 2019) to the average interest rate earned by the remainder of the portfolio.

Table 2: High yield investments capital value

	Principal invested £m	Market value 30/11/2019 £m	Capital yield (per annum) %
Pooled Property Funds	3.25	3.30	0.25
Pooled Equity Funds	2.00	2.20	1.92
Multi-Asset Funds	1.75	1.80	2.85
Total	7.00	7.30	1.05

- 6.10. The benefit to the revenue budget of these investments targeting higher yields is demonstrated in Table 3 below, using cash balances and average returns at 30 November 2019. It should be noted however that balances and returns do not remain constant and the actual returns will form part of the outturn report at the conclusion of the financial year.

Table 3: Estimated annual income returns

	Cash balance at 30/11/19	Weighted average return	Estimated annual income return
Short-term and long-term cash investments	£22.16m	0.86%	£0.19m
Investments targeting higher yields	£7.00m	4.70%	£0.33m
Total	£29.16m	1.78%	£0.52m

- 6.11. Higher yields can be accessed through long-term cash investments (although this is currently less the case as yields have declined) and investments in other assets than cash, such as pooled property, equities and bonds. Non-cash pooled investments must be viewed as long-term investments in order that monies are not withdrawn in the event of a fall in capital values to avoid crystallising a capital loss.
- 6.12. At the current time, given the medium to long term nature of the investments, it is unlikely that a capital loss would ever be realised, since the Fire & Rescue Authority would avoid selling investments that realised a capital loss.
- 6.13. Going forward however, changes to International Financial Reporting Standards means that capital gains and losses on investments need to be reflected in the revenue account on an annual basis. There is currently a

statutory override in place for local authorities that exempts them from complying with this requirement for the next 4 years.

Investment limits

- 6.14. The maximum that will be lent to any one organisation (other than the UK Government) will be £4m. A group of banks under the same ownership will be treated as a single organisation for limit purposes. Limits will also be placed on fund managers and investments in pooled funds.

Table 4: Investment limits

	Cash limit
Any single organisation, except the UK Central Government	£4m each
UK Central Government	Unlimited
Any group of organisations under the same ownership	£4m per group
Any group of pooled funds under the same management	£4m per manager
Registered providers and registered social landlords	£6m in total
Money Market Funds	50% in total
Real estate investment trusts	£6m in total

Approved counterparties

6.15. The Fire & Rescue Authority may invest its surplus funds with any of the counterparty types in Table 5 below, subject to the cash limits (per counterparty) and the time limits shown.

Table 5: Approved investment counterparties and limits

Credit Rating	Banks		Government	Corporates	Registered Providers	
	Unsecured	Secured			Unsecured	Secured
UK Govt	n/a	n/a	£ Unlimited 30 years	n/a	n/a	n/a
AAA	£2m 5 years	£4m 20 years	£4m 30 years	£2m 20 years	£2m 20 years	£2m 20 years
AA+	£2m 5 years	£4m 10 years	£4m 25 years	£2m 10 years	£2m 10 years	£2m 10 years
AA	£2m 4 years	£4m 5 years	£4m 15 years	£2m 5 years	£2m 10 years	£2m 10 years
AA-	£2m 3 years	£4m 4 years	£4m 10 years	£2m 4 years	£2m 10 years	£2m 10 years
A+	£2m 2 years	£4m 3 years	£2m 5 years	£2m 3 years	£2m 5 years	£2m 5 years
A	£2m 13 months	£4m 2 years	£2m 5 years	£2m 2 years	£2m 5 years	£2m 5 years
A-	£2m 6 months	£4m 13 months	£2m 5 years	£2m 13 months	£2m 5 years	£2m 25 years
None	£1m 6 months	n/a	£4m 25 years	n/a	£2m 5 years	£2m 5 years
Pooled funds and real estate investment trusts	£4m per fund					

This table must be read in conjunction with the notes below

Credit rating

6.16. Investment limits are set by reference to the lowest published long-term credit rating from a selection of external rating agencies. Where available, the credit rating relevant to the specific investment or class of investment is used, otherwise the counterparty credit rating is used. However, investment decisions are never made solely based on credit ratings, and all other relevant factors including external advice will be taken into account.

Banks unsecured

6.17. Accounts, deposits, certificates of deposit and senior unsecured bonds with banks and building societies, other than multilateral development banks. These

investments are subject to the risk of credit loss via a bail-in should the regulator determine that the bank is failing or likely to fail. See below for arrangements relating to operational bank accounts.

Banks secured

- 6.18. Covered bonds, reverse repurchase agreements and other collateralised arrangements with banks and building societies. These investments are secured on the bank's assets, which limits the potential losses in the unlikely event of insolvency, and means that they are exempt from bail-in. Where there is no investment specific credit rating, but the collateral upon which the investment is secured has a credit rating, the higher of the collateral credit rating and the counterparty credit rating will be used to determine cash and time limits. The combined secured and unsecured investments in any one bank will not exceed the cash limit for secured investments.

Government

- 6.19. Loans, bonds and bills issued or guaranteed by national governments, regional and local authorities and multilateral development banks. These investments are not subject to bail-in, and there is generally a lower risk of insolvency, although they are not zero risk. Investments with the UK Central Government may be made in unlimited amounts for up to 30 years.

Corporates

- 6.20. Loans, bonds and commercial paper issued by companies other than banks and registered providers. These investments are not subject to bail-in but are exposed to the risk of the company going insolvent.

Registered providers (Secured and Unsecured)

- 6.21. Loans and bonds issued by, guaranteed by or secured on the assets of registered providers of social housing and registered social landlords, formerly known as housing associations. These bodies are tightly regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing (in England), the Scottish Housing Regulator, the Welsh Government and the Department for Communities (in Northern Ireland). As providers of public services, they retain the likelihood of receiving government support if needed.

Pooled funds

- 6.22. Shares or units in diversified investment vehicles consisting of any of the above investment types, plus equity shares and property. These funds have the advantage of providing wide diversification of investment risks, coupled with the services of a professional fund manager in return for a fee. Short-term Money Market Funds that offer same-day liquidity and very low or no volatility will be used as an alternative to instant access bank accounts, while pooled funds whose value changes with market prices and/or have a notice period will be used for longer investment periods.
- 6.23. Bond, equity and property funds offer enhanced returns over the longer term, but are more volatile in the short term. These allow the Fire & Rescue Authority to diversify into asset classes other than cash without the need to own and manage the underlying investments. Depending on the type of pooled fund invested in, it may have to be classed as capital expenditure. Because pooled

funds have no defined maturity date, but are available for withdrawal after a notice period, their performance and continued suitability in meeting the Fire & Rescue Authority's investment objectives will be monitored regularly.

Real estate investment trusts (REITs)

- 6.24. Shares in companies that invest mainly in real estate and pay the majority of their rental income to investors in a similar manner to pooled property funds. As with property funds, REITs offer enhanced returns over the longer term, but are more volatile especially as the share price reflects changing demand for the shares as well as changes in the value of the underlying properties.

Operational bank accounts

- 6.25. The Fire & Rescue Authority may incur operational exposures, for example through current accounts, to any UK bank with credit ratings no lower than BBB- and with assets greater than £25 billion. These are not classed as investments, but are still subject to the risk of a bank bail-in, and balances will therefore be kept low. The Fire & Rescue Authority's operational bank account is with National Westminster, and aims to keep the overnight balances held in current accounts as positive, and as close to £0 as possible. The Bank of England has stated that in the event of failure, banks with assets greater than £25 billion are more likely to be bailed-in than made insolvent, increasing the chance of the Fire & Rescue Authority maintaining operational continuity.

Risk assessment and credit ratings

- 6.26. Credit ratings are obtained and monitored by the Fire & Rescue Authority's treasury advisers, who will notify changes in ratings as they occur. Where an entity has its credit rating downgraded so that it fails to meet the approved investment criteria then:
- no new investments will be made,
 - any existing investments that can be recalled or sold at no cost will be, and
 - full consideration will be given to the recall or sale of all other existing investments with the affected counterparty.
- 6.27. Where a credit rating agency announces that a credit rating is on review for possible downgrade (also known as "rating watch negative" or "credit watch negative") so that it may fall below the approved rating criteria, then only investments that can be withdrawn on the next working day will be made with that organisation until the outcome of the review is announced. This policy will not apply to negative outlooks, which indicate a long-term direction of travel rather than an imminent change of rating.

Other information on the security of investments

- 6.28. The Fire & Rescue Authority understands that credit ratings are good, but not perfect, predictors of investment default. Full regard will therefore be given to other available information on the credit quality of the organisations in which it invests, including credit default swap prices, financial statements, information on potential government support and reports in the quality financial press and analysis and advice from the Fire & Rescue Authority's treasury management adviser. No investments will be made with an organisation if there are

substantive doubts about its credit quality, even though it may otherwise meet the above criteria.

- 6.29. When deteriorating financial market conditions affect the creditworthiness of all organisations, as happened in 2008 and 2011, this is not generally reflected in credit ratings, but can be seen in other market measures. In these circumstances, the Fire & Rescue Authority will restrict its investments to those organisations of higher credit quality and reduce the maximum duration of its investments to maintain the required level of security. The extent of these restrictions will be in line with prevailing financial market conditions. If these restrictions mean that insufficient commercial organisations of high credit quality are available to invest the Fire & Rescue Authority's cash balances, then the surplus will be deposited with the UK Government, via the Debt Management Office, or invested in government treasury bills for example, or with other local authorities. This will cause a reduction in the level of investment income earned but will protect the principal sum invested.

Liquidity management

- 6.30. The Fire & Rescue Authority has due regard for its future cash flows when determining the maximum period for which funds may prudently be committed. Historic cash flows are analysed in addition to significant future cash movements, such as payroll, grant income and council tax precept. Limits on long-term investments are set by reference to the Fire & Rescue Authority's medium term financial position (summarised in Table 1) and forecast short-term balances.

7. Treasury management indicators

- 7.1. The Fire & Rescue Authority measures and manages its exposures to treasury management risks using the following indicators.

Interest rate exposures

- 7.2. The following indicator shows the sensitivity of the Fire & Rescue Authority's current investments and borrowing to a change in interest rates.

Table 6: Interest rate risk indicator

	30 November 2019	Impact of +/-1% interest rate change
Sums subject to variable interest rates		
Investment	£18.9m	+/-£0.2m
Borrowing	(£0.0m)	+/-£0.0m

Maturity structure of borrowing

- 7.3. This indicator is set to control the Fire & Rescue Authority's exposure to refinancing risk. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of borrowing will be:

Table 7: Refinancing rate risk indicator

	Upper	Lower
Under 12 months	50%	0%
12 months and within 24 months	50%	0%
24 months and within 5 years	50%	0%
5 years and within 10 years	75%	0%
10 years and within 20 years	75%	0%
20 years and above	100%	0%

- 7.4. Time periods start of the first day of each financial year. The maturity date of borrowing is the earliest date on which the lender can demand repayment.

Principal sums invested for periods longer than a year

- 7.5. The purpose of this indicator is to control the Fire & Rescue Authority's exposure to the risk of incurring losses by seeking early repayment of its investments. The limits on the long-term principal sum invested to final maturities beyond the period end will be:

Table 8: Price risk indicator

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Limit on principal invested beyond a year	£10m	£10m	£10m

8. Related matters

- 8.1. The CIPFA Code require the Fire & Rescue Authority to include the following in its treasury management strategy.

Financial derivatives

- 8.2. In the absence of any explicit legal power to do so, the Fire & Rescue Authority will not use standalone financial derivatives (such as swaps, forwards, futures and options). Derivatives embedded into loans and investments, including pooled funds and forward starting transactions, may be used, and the risks that they present will be managed in line with the overall treasury risk management strategy.

Investment training

- 8.3. The needs of the Fire & Rescue Authority's treasury management staff for training in investment management are assessed annually as part of the staff appraisal process, and additionally when the responsibilities of individual members of staff change.

- 8.4. Staff regularly attend training courses, seminars and conferences provided by Arlingclose and CIPFA. Relevant staff are also encouraged to study professional qualifications from CIPFA, and other appropriate organisations.
- 8.5. CIPFA's Code of Practice requires that the Fire & Rescue Authority ensures that all members tasked with treasury management responsibilities, including scrutiny of the treasury management function, receive appropriate training relevant to their needs and understand fully their roles and responsibilities. All members were invited to a workshop presented by Arlingclose on 22 November 2019, which gave an update of treasury matters. A further Arlingclose workshop has been planned for November 2020.

Investment advisors

- 8.6. Arlingclose Limited is appointed as treasury management advisers and provides specific advice on investment, debt and capital finance issues. The quality of this service is controlled through quarterly review meetings with the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Resources' staff and Arlingclose.

Markets in financial instruments directive

- 8.7. The Fire & Rescue Authority has opted up to professional client status with its providers of financial services, including advisers, brokers and fund managers, allowing it access to a greater range of services but without the greater regulatory protections afforded to individuals and small companies. Given the size and range of the Fire & Rescue Authority's treasury management activities, the Chief Finance Officer believes this to be the most appropriate status.

Annex A – Arlingclose Economic & Interest Rate Forecast January 2020

Underlying assumptions:

- The global economy has entered a period of weaker growth in response to political issues. The UK economy continues to experience slower growth due to both Brexit uncertainty and the downturn in global activity. In response, global and UK interest rate expectations are low.
- Some improvement in global economic data and a more positive outlook for US/China trade negotiations has prompted worst case economic scenarios to be pared back.
- The new Conservative UK government will progress with achieving Brexit on 31st January 2020. The more stable political environment will prompt a partial return in business and household confidence in the short term, but the subsequent limited Brexit transitional period, which the government is seeking to enforce, will create additional economic uncertainty.
- UK economic growth stalled in Q4 2019. Inflation is running below target at 1.5%. The inflationary consequences of the relatively tight labour market have yet to manifest, while slower global growth should reduce the prospect of externally driven pressure, although escalating geopolitical turmoil could continue to push up oil prices.
- The first few months of 2020 will indicate whether the economy benefits from restored confidence. The government will undertake substantial fiscal easing in 2020/21, which should help support growth in the event of a downturn in private sector activity.
- The weak outlook for the UK economy and current low inflation have placed pressure on the MPC to loosen monetary policy. Two MPC members voted for an immediate cut in the last two MPC meetings of 2019. The evolution of the economic data and political moves over the next few months will inform policy, but upside risks to Bank Rate are very limited.
- Central bank actions and escalating geopolitical risks will produce volatility in financial markets, including bond markets.

Forecast:

- We have maintained our Bank Rate forecast at 0.75% for the foreseeable future. Substantial risks to this forecast remain, arising primarily from the government's policy around Brexit and the transitional period.
- Arlingclose judges that the risks are weighted to the downside.
- Gilt yields remain low due to the soft UK and global economic outlooks. US monetary policy and UK government spending will be key influences alongside UK monetary policy.

- We expect gilt yields to remain at relatively low levels for the foreseeable future and judge the risks to be broadly balanced.

	Mar-20	Jun-20	Sep-20	Dec-20	Mar-21	Jun-21	Sep-21	Dec-21	Mar-22	Jun-22	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23
Official Bank Rate													
Upside risk	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25
Arlingclose Central Case	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75
Downside risk	0.50	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75
3-month money market rate													
Upside risk	0.10	0.10	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30
Arlingclose Central Case	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75
Downside risk	0.50	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75
1yr money market rate													
Upside risk	0.10	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.25	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30
Arlingclose Central Case	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85
Downside risk	0.30	0.50	0.55	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65
5yr gilt yield													
Upside risk	0.30	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.40	0.45	0.45	0.45
Arlingclose Central Case	0.50	0.50	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.60	0.60	0.65	0.65	0.70	0.75	0.75	0.75
Downside risk	0.35	0.50	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.60	0.60	0.65	0.65	0.70	0.75	0.75	0.75
10yr gilt yield													
Upside risk	0.30	0.30	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.40	0.40	0.45	0.45
Arlingclose Central Case	0.75	0.80	0.80	0.85	0.85	0.90	0.90	0.95	0.95	1.00	1.05	1.10	1.10
Downside risk	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
20yr gilt yield													
Upside risk	0.30	0.30	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.40	0.40	0.45	0.45
Arlingclose Central Case	1.20	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.30	1.30	1.30	1.35	1.35	1.35	1.40	1.40	1.40
Downside risk	0.40	0.40	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.50	0.50
50yr gilt yield													
Upside risk	0.30	0.30	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.40	0.40	0.45	0.45
Arlingclose Central Case	1.20	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.30	1.30	1.30	1.35	1.35	1.35	1.40	1.40	1.40
Downside risk	0.40	0.40	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.50	0.50

PWLB Certainty Rate (Maturity Loans) = Gilt yield + 1.80%

PWLB Local Infrastructure Rate (Maturity Loans) = Gilt yield + 0.60%

Annex B - Existing Investment & Debt Portfolio Position at 30 November 2019

Investment position (treasury investments)

Investments	30/09/2019 Balance £m	Movement £m	30/11/2019 Balance £m	30/11/2019 Rate %	30/11/2019 WAM* years
Short term investments					
- Banks and Building Societies					
- Unsecured	6.50	(1.02)	5.48	0.83	0.15
- Secured	6.00	1.00	7.00	0.84	0.30
- UK Treasury Bills	3.00	(2.00)	1.00	0.71	0.18
- Money Market Funds	5.88	(3.20)	2.68	0.73	0.00
- Local Authorities	3.00	1.00	4.00	0.90	0.41
- Corporate Bonds	-	-	-	-	-
	24.38	(4.22)	20.16	0.83	0.23
Long term investments					
- Banks and Building Societies					
- Secured	1.00	-	1.00	1.01	3.37
- Local Authorities	1.00	-	1.00	1.30	1.57
	2.00	-	2.00	1.16	2.47
High yield investments					
- Pooled Property Funds**	3.25	-	3.25	4.14	n/a
- Pooled Equity Funds**	2.00	-	2.00	5.87	
- Multi-Asset Funds**	1.75	-	1.75	4.41	n/a
	7.00	-	7.00	4.70	n/a
TOTAL INVESTMENTS	33.38	(4.22)	29.16	1.78	0.44

* Weighted average maturity

** The rates provided for pooled fund investments are reflective of the average dividend return over the last 12 months.

Treasury management position

	30/11/2019 Balance £m	30/11/2019 Rate %
External Borrowing		
- PWLB	(8.25)	(4.70)
Investments		
- Total Investments	29.16	1.78
NET INVESTMENTS	20.91	

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Capital and Investment Strategy 2019/20 to 2023/24

1 Introduction

1.1 This report gives a high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of local public services along with an overview of how associated risk is managed and the implications for future financial sustainability. Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority (HFRA) has previously reported these matters in separate reports of the revenue budget, capital programme and the medium term financial plan (MTFP). In line with the latest statutory guidance, these inter-related issues are brought together in this one Capital and Investment Strategy.

1.2 This strategy covers:

- Governance arrangements for capital investment;
- Capital expenditure forecasts and financing;
- Prudential indicators;
- Minimum revenue provision;
- Treasury Management definition and governance arrangements;
- Investments for service purposes, linked to the Authority's commercial strategy;
- Links to the statutory guidance and other information.

2 Governance

2.1 The Authority's medium term financial plan (MTFP) ensures that we continue to invest wisely in our existing assets and deliver a programme of new ones, in line with overall priorities and need. This is kept under review by the Authority, with updates being provided on an annual basis for the MTFP.

2.2 The final capital programme is presented to the Authority in February each year. Any in year changes must be reported to the Authority and approval obtain for any increases to the plans.

3 Capital expenditure and financing

3.1 Capital expenditure is where the Authority spends money on assets, such as land, property, or vehicles, that will be used for more than one year. In local government this includes spending on assets owned by other bodies, and loans and grants to other bodies enabling them to buy assets.

- 3.2 The estimated level of capital expenditure (or ‘payment’) flows each year, together with forecasts of financing resources, are two of the factors taken into account in determining the funding available within the capital programme.
- 3.3 Capital expenditure may be funded directly from revenue, with a regular, annual contribution to capital currently being made from the revenue budget. However, the general pressures on the Authority’s revenue budget and council tax levels, limit the extent to which this may be exercised as a source of capital funding in future.
- 3.4 Prudential borrowing does provide an option for funding additional capital development, but one which then results in costs that have to be funded each year from within the revenue budget or from generating additional ongoing income streams.
- 3.5 Given the pressure on the Authority’s revenue budget in future years, prudent use could be made of this discretion to progress schemes in cases where there are clear Service or financial benefits. Such schemes focus on clear priorities for investment in new or existing assets, and those that generate revenue benefits in future financial years, in the form of clear and measurable revenue savings or longer term income generation either directly or through council tax or business rate yield.
- 3.6 Expenditure flows in 2019/20 and the following three years will result from works in progress (schemes started in 2019/20 and earlier years) plus those arising from the proposed programme for 2020/21 to 2023/24, as Table 1 below shows.

Table 1 – Forecast capital expenditure flows

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
	£0	£0	£0	£0
Works in progress at 31 March 2019 and schemes starting in 2019/20	8,088	338	0	0
Programmes starting in 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23		7,112	5,293	5,825
Total expenditure flows	8,088	7,450	5,293	5,825

- 3.7 In practice, expenditure flows in the years after 2019/20 may vary from those shown in Table 1 if further external contributions become available to fund additional capital schemes, or if prudential borrowing is used to fund the Station Investment Programme.

Table 2 - Resources to fund capital expenditure

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
	£0	£0	£0	£0
Contributions from other bodies including developers	0	0	0	0
Capital receipts	124	0	0	0
Revenue grants unapplied reserve	0	58	0	0
Revenue contributions to capital	3,905	3,965	3,965	3,965
New resources in the year	4,029	4,023	3,965	3,965
Use of the capital reserve: added to the reserve (-), or taken from the reserve (+)	9,997	10,392	5,593	5,825
Total resources available	-5,968	-6,369	-1,628	-1,860

4 Prudential Indicators

- 4.1 Prudential borrowing is only used by the Authority on a case by case basis as such there is no specific prudential framework in existence for HFRA. The current capital programme does not rely on prudential borrowing for funding and it is many years since the Authority took out any new borrowing.
- 4.2 As the loan repayments and interest charges have to be financed by the Authority from its own resources, it is important that the use of prudential borrowing is very closely controlled and monitored. Any decision to take out any new borrowing to fund capital expenditure (for example for the Station Investment Programme) will have to be considered and approved by the full Authority itself and would include an assessment of the impact and affordability on the revenue budget.
- 4.3 The Authority's cumulative outstanding amount of debt finance is measured by the capital financing requirement (CFR). In order to ensure that, over the medium term, debt will only be for a capital purpose, the Authority should ensure that debt does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of CFR

in the preceding year, plus the estimates of any additional CFR for the current and next two financial years. This is a key indicator of prudence.

Table 3 – Ensuring borrowing is only for capital purposes

	31/03/20 Revised	31/03/21 Estimate	31/03/22 Estimate	31/03/23 Estimate
	£m	£m	£m	£m
CFR	10.8	10.3	9.9	9.5
Debt				
Borrowing	8.3	7.1	6.7	5.9
Total Debt	8.3	7.1	6.7	5.9

4.4 Total debt is expected to remain below the CFR during the forecast period.

Affordable borrowing limit

4.5 The Authority is legally obliged to set an authorised limit for the maximum affordable amount of external debt. In line with statutory guidance, a lower 'operational boundary' is also set as a warning level should debt approach the limit. The operational boundary is based on the Authority's estimate of most likely (i.e. prudent but not worst case) scenario for external debt. It links directly to the Authority's estimates of capital expenditure, the capital financing requirement and cash flow requirements, and is a key management tool for in-year monitoring.

Table 4 – Affordable borrowing limits

	2019/20 Revised	2020/21 Estimate	2021/22 Estimate	2022/23 Estimate
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Authorised limit:				
Borrowing	16.4	15.9	15.5	15.1
Other Long-term Liabilities	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
Total Authorised limit	21.4	20.9	20.5	20.1
Operational boundary:				
Borrowing	13.6	13.2	12.8	12.4
Other Long-term Liabilities	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
Total operational boundary	18.6	18.2	17.8	17.4

Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream

- 4.6 This is an indicator of affordability and highlights the revenue implications of existing and proposed capital expenditure by identifying the proportion of the revenue budget required to meet financing costs, net of investment income.

Table 5 – Ratio of Financing costs to Revenue Budget Requirement

	2019/20 Revised	2020/21 Estimate	2021/22 Estimate	2022/23 Estimate
	%	%	%	%
Ratio	0.62	0.58	0.43	0.37

Incremental Impact of Capital Investment Decisions

- 4.7 This is an indicator of affordability that shows the impact of capital investment decisions on Council Tax levels. The incremental impact is the difference between the total revenue budget requirement of the current approved capital programme and the revenue budget requirement arising from the capital programme proposed for the next three years.

Table 6 - Incremental Impact of Capital Investment Decisions

	2020/21 Estimate	2021/22 Estimate	2022/23 Estimate
	£	£	£
General Fund - increase in annual band D Authority Tax	0.09	0	0

5 Minimum Revenue Provision for debt repayment

- 5.1 Where the Fire and Rescue Authority finances capital expenditure by debt, it must put aside resources to repay that debt in later years. The amount charged to the revenue budget for the repayment of debt is known as Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), although there has been no statutory minimum since 2008. The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Fire and Rescue Authority to have regard to guidance issued by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on Minimum Revenue Provision (the MHCLG Guidance) most recently issued in 2017.
- 5.2 The broad aim of the MHCLG Guidance is to ensure that debt is repaid over a period that is either reasonably commensurate with that over which the capital expenditure provides benefits, or, in the case of borrowing supported by Government Revenue Support Grant, reasonably commensurate with the period implicit in the determination of that grant.

5.3 The MHCLG Guidance requires the Fire and Rescue Authority to approve an Annual MRP Statement each year, and recommends a number of options for calculating a prudent amount of MRP. The four MRP options available are:

- Option 1: Regulatory Method;
- Option 2: CFR Method;
- Option 3: Asset Life Method;
- Option 4: Depreciation Method.

6 MRP in 2020/21

6.1 Options 1 and 2 may be used only for supported (i.e. financing costs deemed to be supported through Revenue Support Grant from Central Government) capital expenditure funded from borrowing. Methods of making prudent provision for unsupported capital expenditure include Options 3 and 4 (which may also be used for unsupported capital expenditure if the Fire and Rescue Authority chooses).

6.2 The Fire and Rescue Authority will apply Option 1/Option 2 in respect of supported capital expenditure funded from borrowing and Option 3/Option 4 in respect of unsupported capital expenditure funded from borrowing.

6.3 MRP in respect of leases and Private Finance Initiative schemes brought on Balance Sheet under the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) based Accounting Code of Practice will match the annual principal repayment for the associated deferred liability.

6.4 Capital expenditure incurred during 2019/20 will not be subject to an MRP charge until 2020/21.

6.5 Based on the latest estimate of its Capital Financing Requirement on 31st March 2019, the budget for MRP has been set as follows:

	31.03.2020 Estimated CFR £'000	2020/21 Estimated MRP £'000
Supported capital expenditure before 01.04.2008	10,637	426
Unsupported capital expenditure after 31.03.2008	128	3
Total General Fund	10,765	428

7 Treasury Management

- 7.1 Treasury management is concerned with keeping sufficient but not excessive cash available to meet the Authority's spending needs, while managing the risks involved. Surplus cash is invested until required, while a shortage of cash will be met by borrowing, to avoid excessive credit balances or overdrafts in the bank current account. The Authority is typically cash rich in the short-term as revenue income is received before it is spent, but cash poor in the long-term as capital expenditure is incurred before being financed. The revenue cash surpluses are offset against capital cash shortfalls to reduce overall borrowing.
- 7.2 The Authority's Treasury Management Strategy (contained at **Appendix E** of this report) is scrutinised and approved by the Authority each year. Actual performance is reviewed by the Authority on a six monthly basis.

8 Investments for Service Purposes

Utilising Property Assets

- 8.1 The Authority's Strategic Property & Estates Plan (SPEP) was approved by the Finance & General Purposes Committee of Hampshire Fire Authority in November 2016. The document sets the strategic direction for the estate until 2020. The strategy sets out seven core principles which are used to govern the management of the estate.
- 8.2 The principles are:
1. All our properties are recognised as HFRS corporate assets. This approach allows decisions to be made centrally with strategic overview.
 2. The prime 'customer' of our properties are our operational and support teams which deliver our services. As far as possible, decisions are made recognising these primary users of our buildings.
 3. We have a strategy to retain the current service provision across Hampshire. This may result in retaining and/or re-providing fire stations to meet the changing needs of the organisation and of the communities we service.
 4. We will seek to wholly own our estate.
 5. We will ensure our estate remains fit for the organisation's purposes, through continued investment in maintenance, improvements and replacement where this is deemed necessary.
 6. The estate needs to work harder for the Service and be cost effective to maintain and operate. Where possible, we should maximise the

potential use of land and buildings, generating income and implementing cost recovery.

7. Our environmental and energy strategies will set out approach to reduce risks, increase resilience and take advantage of opportunities presented by a changing climate in Hampshire.

- 8.3 These principles aim to ensure that a fit for purpose estate is maintained at all times in the most cost-effective way. Principles 4 and 6 specifically relate to the Capital and Investment Strategy, with the aim of using assets to reduce the annual revenue cost of the estate and to maximise the potential for income generation, where appropriate.
- 8.4 This is a deliberate outcome of the overall strategy and has been achieved through the pursuit of a range of initiatives targeting increased income generation. However, without over exposing the Authority to excessive risk or considering radical changes that take the Authority into areas that are not its core business, or indeed pursuing more niche opportunities that simply do not offer with any confidence anything like the scale of income to merit the effort and upfront investment.

Pooled Funds

- 8.5 Higher yields can be accessed through investments in assets other than cash, such as equities and property. The Fire and Rescue Authority has made investments in pooled property and equities funds.
- 8.6 The principle mitigation for risk is ensuring that investments in non-cash assets are held as long-term investments. This will enable the initial costs of any investment and any periods of falling capital values to be overcome. In order to be managed as long-term investments the amounts invested need to be taken from the Fire and Rescue Authority's most stable cash balances, and the proposed target allocation of £7.0m forms part of the Fire and Rescue Authority's forecast future minimum balance.
- 8.7 The selection of investments to target higher yields is carefully managed with the assistance of Arlingclose, the Fire and Rescue Authority's treasury management advisor, who recommend that the Fire and Rescue Authority diversifies its investments targeting a higher return between asset classes. This is in order to mitigate the loss of capital value, so that there is no over exposure to an event that impacts the value of investments in a particular asset class, such as a fall in property prices.
- 8.8 The Fire and Rescue Authority utilises pooled investment vehicles as the most appropriate means to access asset classes such as property or equities. Pooled funds are managed by external specialist investment managers who are best placed to select the particular investments and then manage them, for example for property investments managing the relationship with tenants and maintenance of the building.

Developing joint ventures that yield additional income or generate a return

- 8.9 The Authority is pursuing a number of opportunities either through its land holdings or through the relationship it has with partners or contractors that look at new and innovative ways of generating a financial return. To date the Authority has formed partnerships with other emergency services, both by sharing building space and through operational changes.

9 Knowledge and skills

- 9.1 Through the Hampshire Shared Services Partnership, the Authority is advised by professionally qualified and experienced staff in senior positions with responsibility for making capital expenditure, borrowing and investment decisions in accordance with the approved strategies. Performance against targets and learning and development needs are assessed annually as part of the staff appraisal process, and additionally when the responsibilities of individual members of staff change.
- 9.2 Staff attend training courses, seminars and conferences provided by CIPFA, Arlingclose and other providers. Relevant staff are also encouraged to study professional qualifications from CIPFA, and other appropriate organisations.
- 9.3 CIPFA's Code of Practice requires that the Authority ensures that all members tasked with treasury management responsibilities, including scrutiny of the treasury management function, receive appropriate training relevant to their needs and understand fully their roles and responsibilities. All members were invited to a workshop presented by Arlingclose in November 2018, which gave an update of treasury matters. A further Arlingclose workshop has been planned for November 2019.

Investment advisers

- 9.4 As part of the Hampshire Shared Services Partnership, the County Council has appointed Arlingclose Limited as treasury management advisers and receives specific advice on investment, debt and capital finance issues. The quality of this service is controlled through quarterly review meetings with the County Council's Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Resources, her staff and Arlingclose.

10 Chief Finance Officers conclusion on the affordability and risk associated with the Capital and Investment Strategy

- 10.1 This Capital and Investment Strategy has been developed alongside the Treasury Management Strategy (Appendix E) and the Reserves forecast (Appendix D). Together, they form an integrated approach adopted by the Authority to balance the need for capital investment to support service priorities with consideration of affordability and the consequent impact on the revenue budget whilst recognising and managing risk to an acceptable level.

10.2 The forward planning of capital funding, including being in a position to maximise the use of external grants, contributions and capital receipts, together with the process of regular monitoring of actual income, expenditure, and project progress, provides assurance to the Chief Financial Officer that the proposed capital programme is prudent, affordable and sustainable.

11 Links to statutory guidance and other information

11.1 The Local Government Act 2003, section 15(1) and the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003 [SI 3146] require Local Authorities to have regard to the following guidance:

- MHCLG - Local Government Investment* [MHCLG Investment](#)
- CIPFA's Prudential Code 2017
- CIPFA's Treasury Management Code 2017

* Where a local authority prepares a Capital Strategy in line with the requirements of the Prudential Code, a Treasury Management Strategy in line with the requirements of the Treasury Management Code, the Investment Strategy can be published in those documents instead of a separate document.

11.2 The Authority's Strategic Property & Estates Plan can be found at the following the link [Full SPEP](#).

11.3 Details of the 7 Core Principles can be found at [Core Principles](#) .

11.4 The proposed capital programme is included at Appendix C within this report.

Section 25 Report from the Chief Financial Officer

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 requires the Chief Financial Officer to report to the Authority when setting its council tax on:
- the robustness of the estimates included in the budget, and
 - the adequacy of the financial reserves in the budget.
- 1.2 The Authority is required to have regard to this report in approving the budget and council tax. Section 25 concentrates primarily on the risk, uncertainty and robustness of the budget for the next financial year rather than the greater uncertainties in future years. Given the significance of the previous funding reductions announced to the end of the decade and the delay in the next Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR), this report considers not only the short term position but also the position beyond 2020 in the context of the Authority's Interim Financial Plan presented in the main report.

2. Robustness of Estimates in the Budget

- 2.1 The budget setting process within the Authority has been operating effectively for many years and is based on increasing the budgets each year allowing for pay and price inflation and other marginal base changes in the cost or levels of service. Each year a zero based budgeting exercise is also carried out to review whether or not there are elements of the budget that do not reflect the current activity or need. In more recent years adjustments have also been made to the budgets to reflect the savings that have been implemented in order to balance the budget in the face of government grant reductions.
- 2.2 Appropriate provisions for pay and price inflation are included within each successive MTFP and these are then refined by the Chief Financial Officer in rolling forward the detailed budget for the next financial year.
- 2.3 In general terms, the forecasting for the MTFP is undertaken on a very prudent basis, particularly in respect of allowances for pay and price inflation and increases in the council tax base and business rate income.
- 2.4 Growth pressures are considered corporately and agreed by the Authority and are factored into future budgets on a recurring basis. In the main, these growth pressures have been absorbed within the bottom line of the budget without the need to increase future years savings targets, this is as a result of the prudent approach to forecasting.
- 2.5 Budget management within the Authority remains strong as demonstrated by the outturn position each year since funding reductions began and as reflected in the annual opinion of the External Auditors who has given an unqualified opinion on the annual accounts and in securing value for money / financial resilience.
- 2.6 As Chief Financial Officer for the Authority I have a close involvement with the budget setting process and I am content that the estimates are robust based on the knowledge we have available to us at this time.

3. Risks in the Budget 2019/20

3.1 In some respects, the significant changes to local government finance since 2010 have changed the profile of risk faced by most public sector organisations. In reality, the biggest financial risks now relate purely to reductions in government funding and government policy. As a Fire and Rescue Authority we do not face demand pressures in the same way as those with social care responsibilities, therefore key cost risks tend to be around pay and price inflation and the impact of pensions. These items together with other traditional risks are outlined below:

- a) **Government Funding and Policy** – The one year Spending Round announced in September last year represented a shift in the policy in respect of grant reductions in the local government and fire sector. The provisional local government settlement announced in December included a real terms increase in Revenue Support Grant for Fire Authorities and this is reflected in the estimates in this budget setting report.

Any other significant changes to funding or policy during the year would have to be covered by contingencies or general balances, but generally once grant levels have been set in the final settlement due in January they do not change.

- b) **Council Tax** – The Government have granted additional flexibilities in relation to council tax that allow local authorities with responsibility for adult social care to raise the social care precept by up to 2% on top of referendum limit of 2% for 2020/21.

Despite lobbying from the sector the Government did not grant Fire Authorities the ability to set a £5 council tax increase (as is the case with Districts) which is disappointing as this would have made a significant difference the finances of the authority going forward.

Increases in council tax form a key part of closing the predicted budget deficits over time and this report therefore recommends that an increase of 1.99% is applied in 2020/21, in line with the assumptions in the previous MTFP, particularly given the uncertainty of the funding position post 2020/21.

- c) **Pay and Price Risk** – The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) contained provision of 2.5% per annum for increases in firefighter pay. Recent awards have been less than this provision and the impact of this is reflected in the detailed budgets set out in this report. National policy changes on the role of the firefighter will be something to consider in future MTFP updates.

The impact of price inflation has been considered in setting the budget and it would take a major departure from the Authority's assumptions to create a financial problem that we could not deal with.

- d) **Employers Pension Risk** – Changes to the actuarial assumptions applied by the Government Actuary Department resulted in significant increases to employers pension contributions for 2019/20, which were not budgeted for within the MTFP.

The Government provided a grant to meet 90% of this cost in 2019/20 but this underestimated the overall impact across the schemes. The

Government therefore increased the overall funding available and this has provided a benefit of £493,000 to Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority (HFRA) in 2019/20.

Going forward, the Government has agreed to provide the same grant amount in 2020/21, but there is still uncertainty around the long term position for this funding, which will not be decided until the next Spending Review is completed and this therefore remains the key risk to the Authority's financial stability going forward.

- e) **Treasury Risk** – The Authority has limited exposure to interest rate risk as most long term borrowing is undertaken on a fixed rate. At the present time we are not undertaking any new long term borrowing as the capital programme does not require it. However, if the Authority were to approve future investment for the Station Investment Programme, this is likely to require significant prudential borrowing and decisions on when best to take out this borrowing would need to be considered.

On the investments side, the Authority has a very prudent approach to forecasting its investment returns and they also represent a very small part of the overall funding for the budget. The investment strategy protects capital ahead of yield and most of the medium term investments are in products that should return a stable income yield each year.

4. The Adequacy of Reserves

- 4.1 The Authority's policy on general balances is to hold a minimum prudent level which is currently set at £2.5m. This was increased significantly at the beginning of the period of austerity to reflect the potential volatility caused by grant reductions and the need to implement savings programmes. The projected level of general fund balances will be 3.6% of net expenditure at the beginning of 2020/21. It is worth noting that the Authority has never needed to dip into its general fund balance.
- 4.2 The Authority has two key earmarked reserves that it uses to effectively manage its medium term financial position. The Capital Payments Reserve receives contributions each year and is the major source of funding for the capital programme. The balance on the account mainly reflects the timing differences between planning for capital spend and the profile of capital spend which can be over several years for major projects.
- 4.3 The Transformation Reserve receives regular one-off contributions from underspends in the year and is used to pay for transformational change that achieves further savings.
- 4.4 As grant reductions and savings programmes impact on the level of budgets, the ability to make contributions to the Transformation Reserve will be restricted and to mitigate this, the MTFP includes a recurring contribution to the Reserve each year that aims to increase over time, and should therefore provide sufficient funding for future change programmes.
- 4.5 The Authority does however need to be cognisant of the rate of spend on transformation programmes and the extent to which these could be resourced by existing capacity rather than through additional new spending.

- 4.6 More recently, the Authority has also set up reserves in respect of equipment and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) replacement in order to provide funding for and to smooth the impact of high cost replacements and refresh in these areas. This change only further strengthens the Authority's financial resilience.
- 4.7 Similarly, following savings arising from the pension contributions towards past deficits in the Hampshire LGPS Pension Fund, a contribution of £625,000 per annum (at least for the next three years) is being made into a Grant Equalisation Reserve (GER) which will help to mitigate some of the risks as outlined in the Interim Financial Strategy included in the main report.
- 4.8 As pointed out within the strategy, despite the uncertainty of funding beyond 2020/21, the Authority is well placed to mitigate the risks that this creates, due to the high level of revenue contributions to reserves contained within the base budget.

5. Budget 2019/20 – Conclusion

- 5.1 Given the details outlined above, provided that the Authority considers the above factors and accepts the budget recommendations, including the level of earmarked reserves and balances, a positive opinion can be given under Section 25 on the robustness of the estimates and level of reserves for 2019/20.

6. The Position Beyond 2020/21

- 6.1 Given the announcement of a one year Spending Round for 2020/21, the Authority is still in the position of not knowing what its financial prospects are beyond a one year planning horizon.
- 6.2 Once the next Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) takes place, it is likely that local government and Fire Authority finances will be impacted over this period not only as a result of the total amount of funding that will be made available but also as a result of the Fair Funding Review and the extension of Business Rate Retention, on which consultation papers have previously been published. By December next year the multi-year position for funding should be better known and a more robust plan can be put in place.
- 6.3 At this stage, in response to this position, the budget report for 2020/21 includes an Interim Financial Plan which seeks to strike a balance between maintaining financial stability and ensuring that the Authority is well placed to respond to the potential future financial challenges that may arise from the CSR.
- 6.4 Whilst there are risks with the Interim Financial Plan these have been mitigated as far as possible and it would take a significant change in the funding regime to create a scenario which the Authority could not cope with and such a change would have a significantly greater impact on the rest of the sector whose financial position is not as stable as Hampshire's.

Rob Carr

Chief Financial Officer

25 January 2020



**HAMPSHIRE
FIRE AND
RESCUE
AUTHORITY**

Purpose: Approval

Date: **19 February 2020**

Title: **RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY**

Report of Chief Fire Officer

SUMMARY

1. This report proposes a risk management policy position for the Fire Authority, setting out how the Fire and Rescue Service in Hampshire and Isle of Wight will approach risk management (**Appendix A**).
2. If agreed this policy will support the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority (HFRA) and the Isle of Wight Council (IWC) Safety Plan (Item 9 on today's agenda) which identifies the external risks present in our community, establishes our new priorities based on those risks and details how we will seek to mitigate internal delivery risks.

BACKGROUND

3. The risk management policy provides a clear direction to the Service to create mechanisms to identify, prioritise and manage risks that may impact on our community in a negative way.
4. Understanding our community in its broadest, diverse sense is vital to creating a suitable set of priorities that keep them safe. By using risk factors that are recognised to cause risk and mapping them across the community, means an effective set of priority areas for action can be created. This is referred to as our strategic assessment of risk.
5. Through our proposed risk management approach, we will align our external risks far more closely with our internal risks creating a truly integrated risk management process.
6. Our priorities ensure Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Services maintain a risk-based focus on our delivery. We then analyse risks that could impact upon us achieving our commitments. We capture those risks within our risk register.
7. The Organisational Risk Register is used to monitor and mitigate organisational delivery risks and forms a key part of the corporate planning process.

8. The current Strategic Risk Register will be replaced by the Organisational Risk Register. Detailed risks will be monitored through Directorate Board meetings. This ensures appropriate focus and priority is provided at Director level.
9. The internal audit report on risk management arrangements within Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service (HFRS) 2015/16, highlighted limited assurance. The proposed approach set out within this policy will ensure we have a far more robust and appropriate approach to risk management.

SUPPORTING OUR SERVICE PLAN AND PRIORITIES

10. The Risk Management Policy approach has supported the development of our priorities:
 - a) Our Communities. We work together to understand different community needs and deliver accessible, local services which build safer places.
 - b) Our People. We look after each other by creating great places to work and promoting the health, wellbeing and safety of our people.
 - c) Public Value. We plan over the longer-term to ensure our decisions and actions deliver efficient and effective public services.
 - d) High Performance. Our diverse teams are trusted, skilled and feel equipped to deliver a leading Fire and Rescue Service today and into the future.
 - e) Learning and Improving. We have the support of policy and guidance, with the freedom to use our discretion to do the right thing, learn from ourselves and others.
11. Our planning processes, performance management framework and audit processes are an integral part of our arrangements to identify new and emerging risks and issues which could impact on delivery. The identification of risks and issues through the planning process also provides a focus for developing new organisational priorities and objectives.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

12. There are no specific financial implications from the contents of this paper. Any financial impacts of future control measures would need to be assessed against the related risks and opportunities. Any plans with financial implications will be subject to appropriate review and governance.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

13. There will be no negative environmental impacts associated with the adoption of this policy. The strategic assessment of risk has identified emerging issues through changes in climate, and these are accounted for in our prevention and response controls.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

14. The requirement for each Fire and Rescue Authority to have an integrated risk management plan is set out within the National Framework for Fire and Rescue Services as set out within the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.

PEOPLE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

15. The implementation of the policy will have no negative impact as identified through the attached impact assessment. However, through a more effective approach to identifying, assessing and mitigating risks to our communities, a positive impact will be achieved through better understanding of protected characteristics within our communities.
16. A People Impact Assessment has been conducted (**Appendix B**).

OPTIONS

17. Option 1 – The Policy is approved by the Fire Authority.
18. Option 2 – The Policy is not approved by the Fire Authority and HFRS undertake the creation of a new or altered Policy.

RISK ANALYSIS

19. It is essential that a risk management policy and framework is in place. Work is continuing to ensure there is a consistent and robust approach to the identification, analysis and treatment of risks. This, in turn, ensures that major threats and opportunities are considered and managed appropriately with adequate control measures implemented.

EVALUATION

20. The Policy will provide the appropriate prioritisation of risk management and ensure risks are well managed and governance of plans and activities undertaken.

CONCLUSION

21. This report sets out the rationale for our revised approach to risk management and establishes a policy position that establishes the importance of sound risk management to the Authority.

RECOMMENDATION

22. That the Risk Management Policy be approved by Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority.

APPENDICES ATTACHED

23. Risk Management Policy – Appendix A
24. People Impact Assessment – Appendix B

Contact: DCFO Steve Apter, Director of Policy and Planning,
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Description

This document details the organisation’s policy position on managing risks both internal and external.

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Risk Management

The Fire Authority has a statutory responsibility to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan that takes into account ‘external’ risks to the community it serves.

‘Together, We Make Life Safer’ is the purpose of Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service, therefore, in this context, we define risk as “those factors in our community that may cause harm to it or detrimentally impact on normal life”, effectively making life less safe.

The Fire Authority will identify, prioritise and manage community risks to achieve this purpose via the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Safety Plan.

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service will deliver the Safety Plan and report on progress throughout the year. Internal risks, i.e. the risks threatening the organisation’s ability to deliver the safety plan, will be identified, prioritised and managed by the Chief Fire Officer through the Executive Group who will be responsible for the Organisational Risk Register.

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People Impact Assessment (PIA) Stage 1 is completed at the start of any project, process or strategic decision to assist in identifying any significant impact on people, and in particular, those who share a characteristic which is protected under equality law.

If a negative (or possible negative) impact is identified, **Stage 2 will need to be completed.**

Please note: For the purposes of this document, the term ‘proposal’ can refer to any policy, activity, function or project that the people impact assessment relates to.

Name of proposal and brief description	Development of a new Organisational Risk Register. The proposal is being brought to the attention of Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority (HFRA) and the attention of Isle of Wight Council (IWC) Executive.
Aims and objectives of the proposal	The aim of the proposals is that the Executive Team will have an Organisation Risk Register to identify and monitor risks the Services priorities.
Who will this affect within HFRS and IWFRS?	The introduction of a new organisational risk register will have no negative impact upon anyone within HFRS or IWFRS.
Who will this affect within our communities and businesses?	This proposal will have no impact upon any of our wider stakeholders.
Potential positive impacts	This proposal allows for the Executive team to more effectively manage risks which may impact upon the Services priorities.
Responsible Manager	Kevin Evenett
Date	04/12/2019

Potential impacts identified (Internal and external)

Disability	No Impact Identified
Age	No Impact Identified
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No Impact Identified

Pregnancy and Maternity	No Impact Identified
Race	No Impact Identified
Religion and belief	No Impact Identified
Sex	No Impact Identified
Sexual Orientation	No Impact Identified
Gender Reassignment	No Impact Identified
Other Impacts e.g. health and wellbeing, financial, morale etc.	This will have a positive impact by providing a more effective understanding of organisational risks and more appropriate mitigations to be implemented.

If you have identified possible impacts in any of these areas, you will need to complete Stage 2 of the People Impact Assessment.

Even if you haven't initially identified an impact, it is possible that unknown impacts still exist or will occur as the proposal moves forward.

We would encourage you to:

- Review your impact assessment regularly
- Have conversations with those you have identified as being affected by the proposal generally
- Ensure you speak with a broad range of people about your proposal
- Seek the assistance of the Inclusion and Diversity Team (id@hantsfire.gov.uk)



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Purpose: Approval

Date: **19 February 2020**

Title: **HAMPSHIRE AND ISLE OF WIGHT FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES SAFETY PLAN**

Report of Chief Fire Officer

SUMMARY

1. This paper seeks approval for the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Safety Plan 2020-25 (**Appendix B**).
2. The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Safety Plan 2020-2025 discharges the statutory requirement to produce an integrated risk management plan, and if approved, will replace all current plans.
3. Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority (HFRA) and the Isle of Wight Council (IWC) agreed that due to the agreed and imminent Combined Fire Authority (CFA) that this would be a fully aligned Safety Plan for both HFRA and the IWC

BACKGROUND

4. Integrated Risk Management Plans (IRMP) are a statutory requirement and set out how the Fire Authority intends to identify, evaluate, assess and control foreseeable risks across the communities it serves.
5. The Safety Plan incorporates the IRMP requirement and the annual Service Plan into a single document. The Safety Plan is a live document which is updated annually. This approach to managing risk in our communities will ensure the Service is able to report on how effective its risk reduction activities are.
6. The new Safety Plan outlines the activities the Services will undertake in support of the IRMP while also setting the standard for how our teams will work via our newly agreed values.
7. These values, developed by our teams, underpin the way we work and are a key part of our strategic planning as set out within the Safety Plan.

8. Through our strategic assessment of risks across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, we have set out five strategic priorities to ensure we remain focussed on those issues that are important to all stakeholders:
 - a) Our Communities.
 - b) Our people.
 - c) Public value.
 - d) High performance.
 - e) Learning and improving.
9. These priorities identify the strategic direction for both Services and are translated into measurable actions against which the Services are measured and held to account.
10. For the past five years, Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service (HFRS) and the Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service (IWFRS) have worked in a strategic partnership.
11. A statutory Combined Fire Authority will be in place in April 2021. As such, both HFRA and IWC agreed (on 25 September and 18 September 2019 respectively) to fully align the Safety Plan allowing for a common strategy to be set across both Services.

SUPPORTING OUR SERVICE PLAN AND PRIORITIES

12. The Safety Plan sets out the strategic direction for the next five years and established our priorities. These priorities and the activities to deliver them are embedded within the Safety Plan.
13. The Safety Plan incorporates what was previously the IRMP and the annual Service Plan into one document.
14. This document ensures that the HFRA meets its statutory duty to have an IRMP in place which suitably addresses identified risks within the communities it serves.

CONSULTATION

15. As a public body, we have both a legal and moral obligation to listen to the opinions of those whom we serve. We also believe that consultation with our stakeholders will add considerable value to our future direction; ultimately assuring the quality and suitability of our Safety Plan.
16. HFRA and Isle of Wight Council (IWC) undertook joint formal consultation for the IRMP which ran for eight weeks from 30 September to 24 November 2019.

17. The Consultation Process was facilitated by an external provider Opinion Research Services (ORS). ORS produced a consultation report of findings which has been circulated to all Authority Members to allow them enough time to fully consider the feedback before approving the Safety Plan.
18. The findings from the Consultation process and have been considered and have influenced the content of the Safety Plan.
19. The Consultation Institute quality assured the process to ensure that every part of our formal consultation met best practice standards.
20. Representation Bodies have been engaged with throughout the process.
21. The 'Consultation Report of Findings' can be found at **Appendix A**.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

22. The actions identified within the Safety Plan are subject to specific budget processes and will inform and align with the medium-term financial plan, agreed by the Authorities

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

23. An aligned Safety Plan is a more efficient use of resources than producing two separate plans thus reducing the amount of resources required which had a minor carbon emission benefit.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

24. Fire and Rescue Authorities have a legal obligation to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan to ensure appropriate management of risk and discharge of their duties.
25. An aligned Safety Plan for HFRA and IWC has been deemed legally acceptable for the purposes of meeting this duty.
26. The Safety Plan is subject to the governance and approval arrangements of both the HFRA and IWC.

PEOPLE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

27. The Safety Plan has been developed over a period of months and has gone through the following phases; Strategic Assessment of Risk, Co-production and Engagement, Development, Appraisal and Consultation.
28. Through this process there has been a continual review of the impact on people and consideration has been given to the feedback from the consultation with our staff, stakeholders and the public.

29. Action Hampshire, a not-for-profit organisation, were engaged to check our thinking around protected characteristic and hard to reach groups. They have strong connections and experience with many of our communities. They supported our approach
30. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight and no negative impacts to any of the protected characteristics were identified. The Equality Impact Assessment can be found as **Appendix C**.
31. However, through the plan we are proposing, the risk-based approach to resourcing and prioritising our prevention, protection and response activities, we will have a positive impact upon the most vulnerable in our communities including but not limited to those with protected characteristics. This is through more effective targeting and use of shared data to identify, for example, those at greater risk of fires through social isolation and limited mobility.
32. There are no negative impacts from producing an aligned Safety Plan which combines the IRMP and Service Plan into one document. The individual activities within the plan will have their own impact assessments as part of their development.

OPTIONS

33. **Option 1** – That HFRA approve the aligned Safety Plan. This will allow the plan to go live for both Hampshire and the Isle of Wight in April 2020 and set out the strategic direction for both Services.
34. **Option 2** – To not approve the aligned Safety Plan. This would require a new Safety Plan to be developed which would create a high risk of being unable to produce an aligned Safety Plan by April 2020. This would place the Fire Authority at risk of not suitably discharging its obligation to ensure a robust IRMP is in place for the management of risk and discharge of its duties.

RISK ANALYSIS

35. Option 2 would mean a delay in approving the Safety Plan and create a high-risk of being unable to produce an aligned Safety Plan by April 2020.
36. This would result in non-compliance in the legal obligation for Fire and Rescue Authorities to produce a Safety Plan every five years.
37. This could be further highlighted with the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) visit which is due to take place in early 2020.

EVALUATION

38. The successful delivery of the Safety Plan will be regularly monitored by the Chief Fire Officer and wider Executive Group for both Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.
39. Progress on deliverables and key actions will be routinely reported to the HFRA (and future CFA including Shadow Authority arrangements) to ensure appropriate accountability is maintained for the discharge of duties as part of the Safety Plan.

CONCLUSION

40. The report and appendices propose approval of the aligned Safety Plan for HFRA and IWC for the five-year period 2020-2025.
41. Both Services currently share strategic leadership and are set to be formally joined under a CFA in April 2021, therefore this approach has been deemed the most effective in ensuring an aligned strategic direction is established for both Services.

RECOMMENDATION

42. That Option 1 be approved by Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority to adopt the aligned Hampshire and Isle of Wight Safety Plan for 2020-25.

APPENDICES ATTACHED

Appendix A – Hampshire and Isle of Wight Consultation Report of Findings
Appendix B – Hampshire and Isle of Wight Safety Plan
Appendix C – HFRA Impact Assessment

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

Draft report of findings by

Opinion Research Services

December 2019

As with all our studies, findings from this report are subject to Opinion Research Services' Standard Terms and Conditions of Contract.

Any press release or publication of the findings of this report requires the advance approval of ORS. Such approval will only be refused on the grounds of inaccuracy or misrepresentation

This study was conducted in accordance with ISO 2052:2012 and ISO 9001:2008.

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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



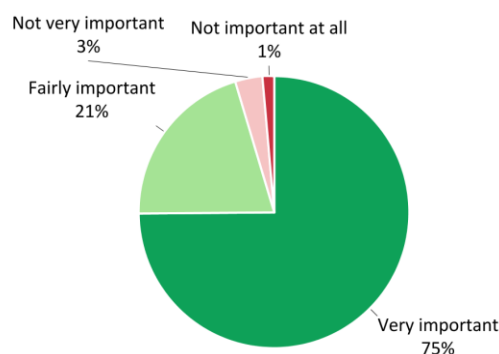
Communities

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)



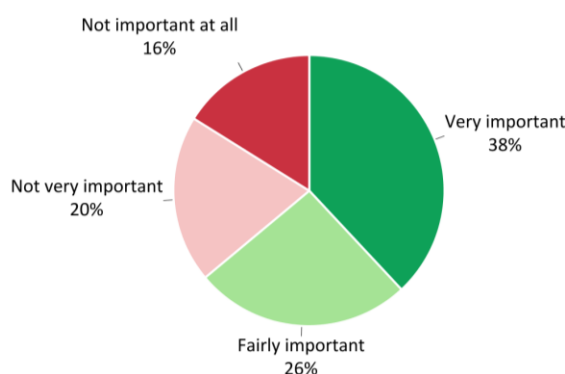
A diverse workforce

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”



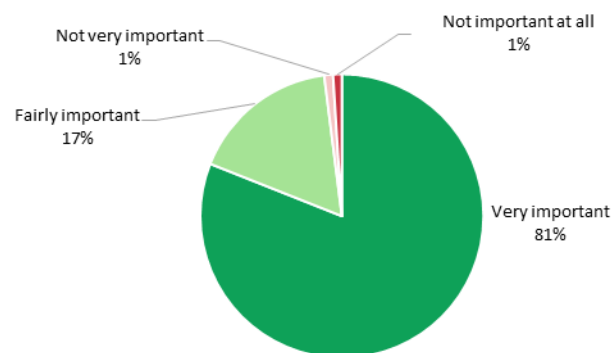
The built environment

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?

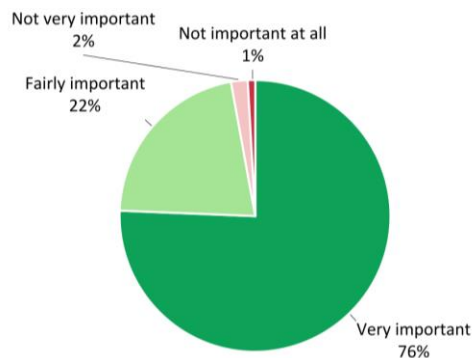


Base: All Respondents (604)

- 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?

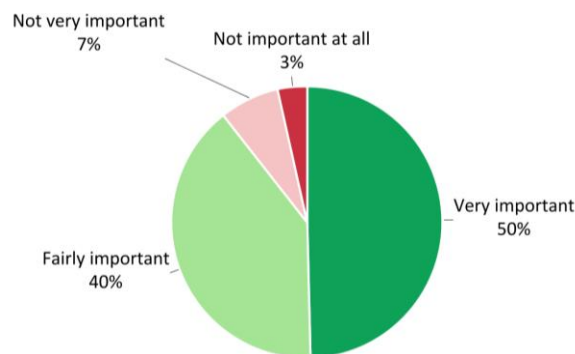


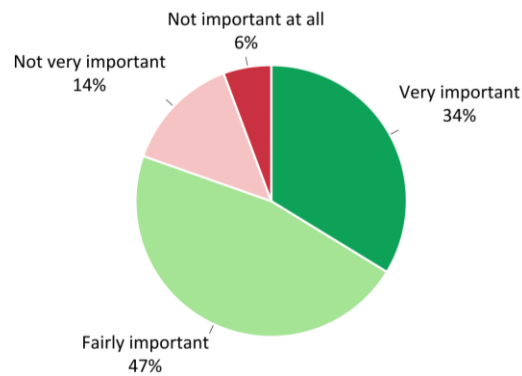
Figure 5: How important is it to you that HFRS and IWFRS support work to protect heritage sites?

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

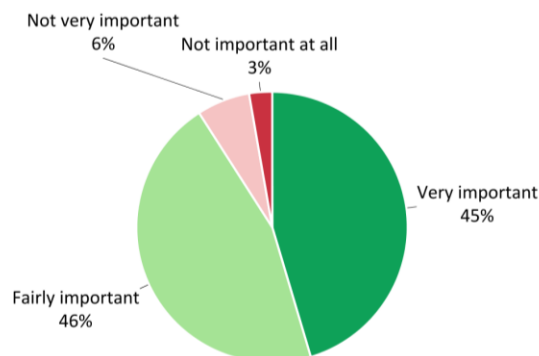
HFRS and IWFRS recognise the risks presented by the natural environment and that these risks are now increased due to the effects of climate change.

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?

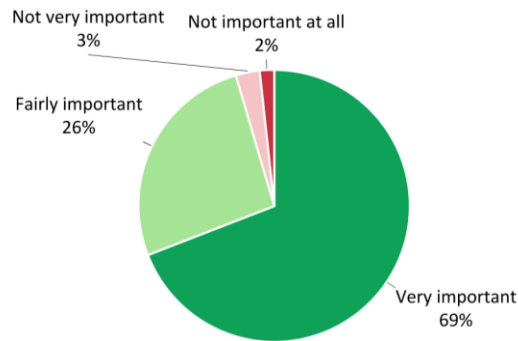


Base: All Respondents (595)

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)



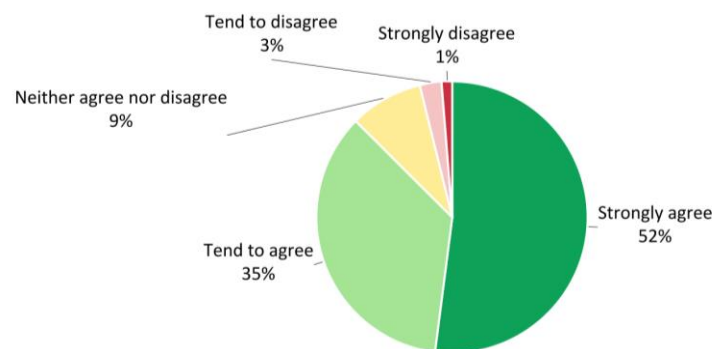
Measuring Performance

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?



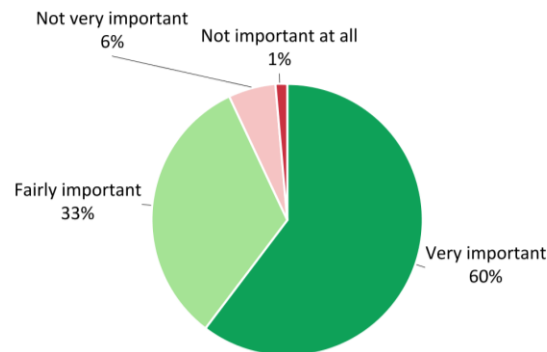
Base: All Respondents (573)

- 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.

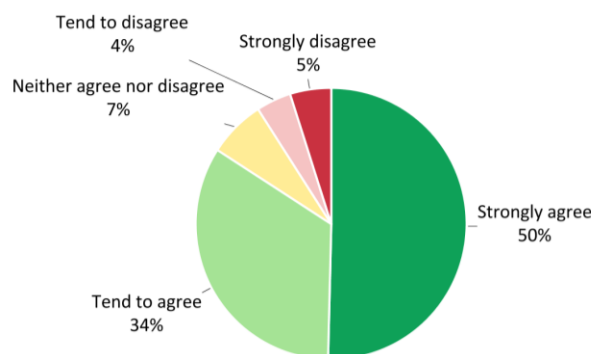
Figure 10: How important is our speed of attendance over other measures?



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?

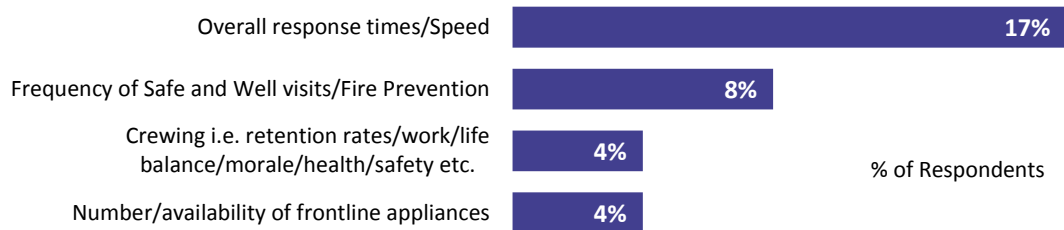
Figure 11: To what extent do you agree or disagree that HFRS and IWFRS should adapt their response standards based on risk to ensure resources are utilised as effectively and efficiently as possible to keep communities safe?



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 in 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.

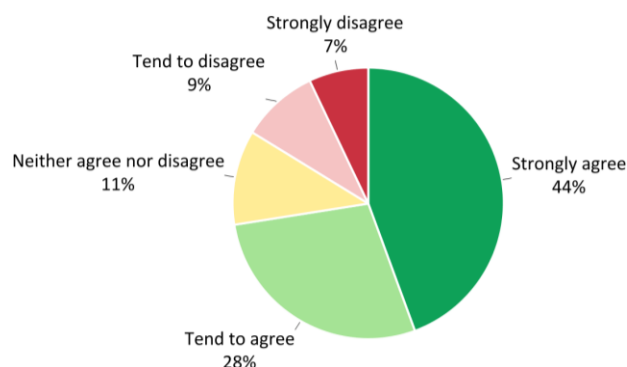


Responding to medical emergencies

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

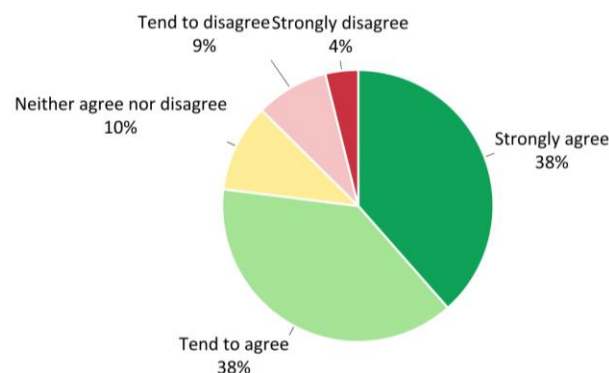
HFRS and IWFRS recognise that they must continue to evolve and work in new ways to meet the new risks and challenges they face; risks that should not be looked at in isolation but rather as more widely connected issues to be addressed in collaboration with partners. Widening the scope of their activities 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)

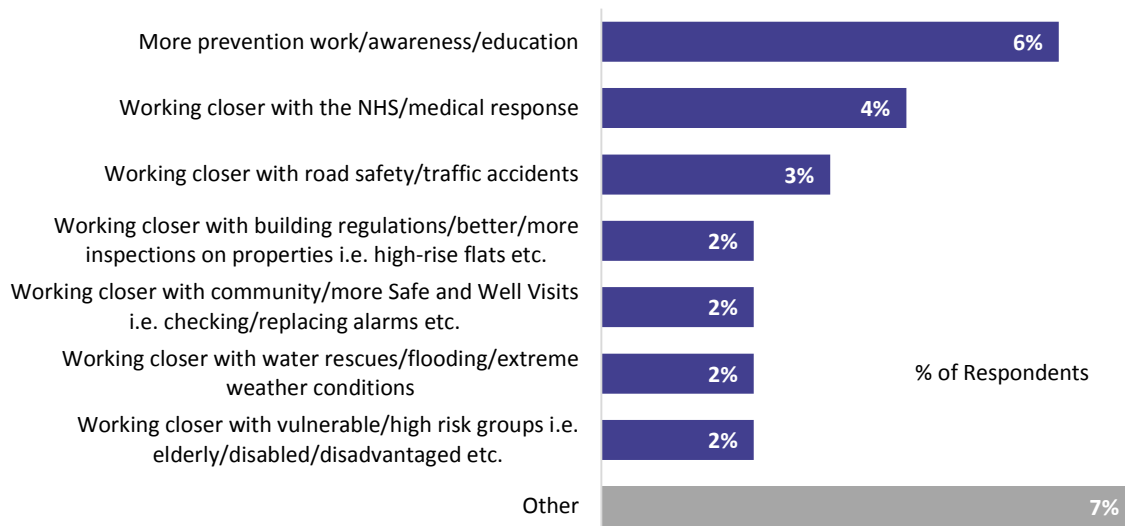
- 3.31 Figure 14 shows that just under two fifths (38%) of respondents strongly agree that HFRS and IWFRS should use their skills and capabilities to respond to a wider range of risks and demands to make their communities safer; the same proportion (38%) of respondents tend to agree. One free-text comment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



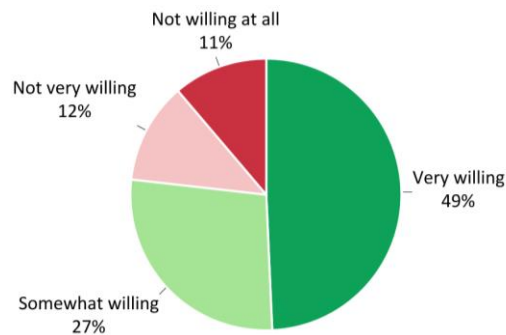
Data sharing

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

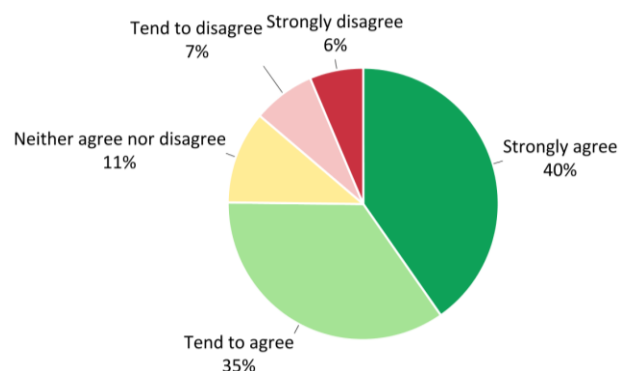
HFRS and IWFRS are funded in several ways including via collection of council tax. Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority currently collects £67.71 per year in council tax for a Band D property to provide a fire and rescue service to the communities of Hampshire, while the Isle of Wight Council currently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

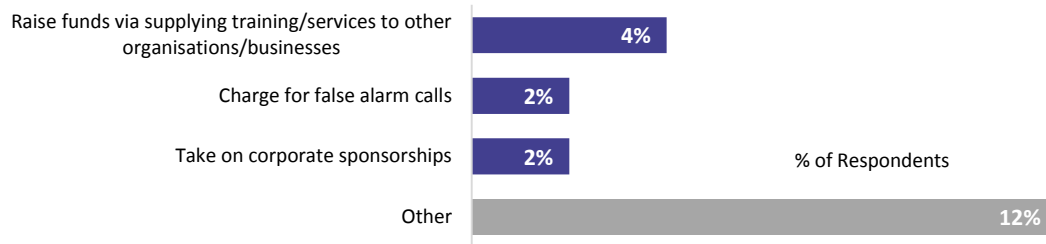


Base: All Respondents (551)

- 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.”

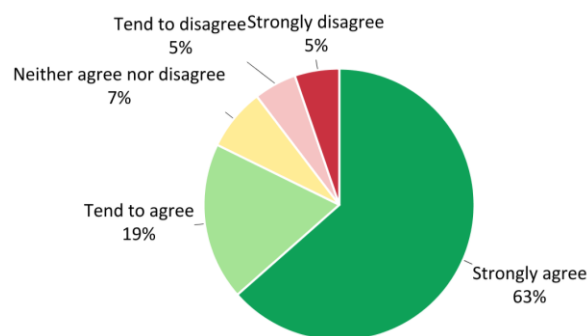
- 3.43 Of the ‘other’ responses given, these included: encouraging funding links with parish councils; further partnership procurement; local/regional lotteries; fundraising in the community at public events; and selling a Fire Service ‘experience’ session to children at schools.



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)

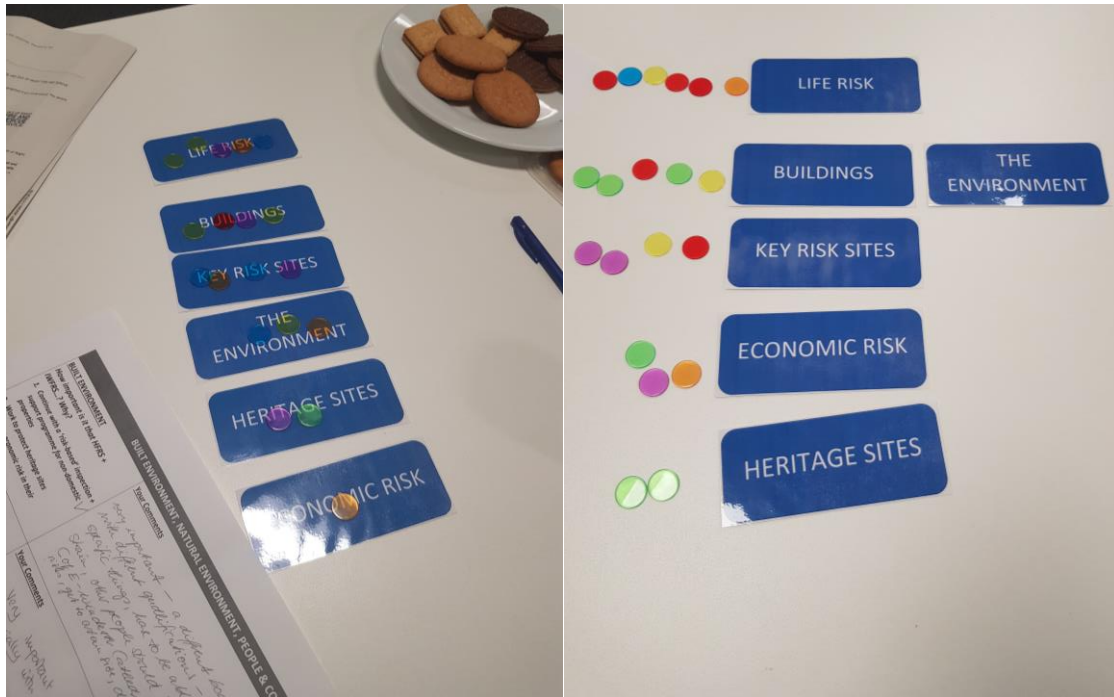
“It’s nice that they involve themselves with children with low self-esteem etc. but it’s not really a priority for the FRS” (Eastleigh)

“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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Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service
and
Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue
Service

Safety Plan

2020-2025

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Foreword

Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service (HFRS) and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service (IWFRS) are rightly proud of the role we play in making people safe across our communities and are recognised by the public for the high quality service we provide every day.

Using the support of a specialist organisation, we have consulted widely to help us to more effectively communicate our proposals and approach. The comments and feedback received from the public, our staff and key partners have informed and helped to shape our Safety Plan.

Both Services have been recognised as good for their effectiveness and efficiency by the new Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS). HFRS and IWFRS were the first and second Services to be inspected respectively. As with many other fire and rescue services across England, we have identified some areas for improvement. This five year strategy sets out our priorities, how we seek to build on our strengths, and how to address the areas that require improvement, particularly regarding our people.

In 2015, the Isle of Wight Council (as the Fire Authority) and Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority, entered into a strategic partnership, which was the first of its kind in the fire and rescue service. This brought about a shared senior leadership team and opportunities to improve resilience. We are now working towards a Combined Fire Authority (CFA) for Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight. This sharing of knowledge, pooling of resources and single, dedicated point of governance will have significant benefits across the Services.

Recent years have seen central government funding reductions and, like other public services, we have worked hard to address this shortfall whilst remaining high performing. Through innovation, collaboration and harnessing new technology, we have met these challenges and continue to make lives safer, giving our communities the best possible service.

This Safety Plan sets out our five year strategy to ensure we constantly provide a service to our communities that makes life safer and that our staff are proud to deliver.

Councillor Chris Carter
Chairman
Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority

Councillor Dave Stewart
The Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Partnerships
Isle of Wight Council

Neil Odin
Chief Fire Officer
Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service
Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service

Your Fire and Rescue Services

The core functions of UK fire and rescue services are to make provision for the purpose of promoting fire safety in their area, to protect buildings and the people in them, respond to fires, rescue people in road traffic collisions (RTC) and attend other emergencies.

Both Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Services have been on a long and progressive journey of continuous improvement. Successive approaches to integrated risk management planning have brought about significant changes and improvements in order to meet a changing risk landscape. A period of austerity has also created challenges that both Services have delivered against.

For example, following a review of HFRS's service delivery model during 2014-2015, HFRS adopted a significant and radical approach to how response resources were matched to risk profiles, including introducing different types of response vehicles and crewing models.

IWFRS, through its risk based approach, introduced new crewing systems to meet changing risk profiles across the Island. It was one of the first Services to introduce new firefighter technologies in recognition of the rural nature of its risk area.

Building upon a growing closer working relationship, alongside sustainability and resilience challenges for the IWFRS, the Isle of Wight Council (IWC) and Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority (HFRA) entered a strategic partnership in 2015 (the first of its kind within the UK Fire and Rescue Service). This put in place a shared senior leadership team, built resilience and supported the financial challenges.

We are now on the road to combining the two Services, which aims to be in place by April 2021. Many of our activities within year one of this Safety Plan are focussed on aligning the two Services and continuing to be a learning organisation with the most diverse talent delivering the best service for our communities.

Our continuous improvement journey and the introduction of a new inspection by HMICFRS has been welcomed. The recent publication of the HMICFRS State of the Fire and Rescue Service 2019 report raises several challenges whilst highlighting the great work we do.

Our communities have told us how proud they are of our fire and rescue services. Our teams across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight continue to be rightly held in the highest regard by the public and our partners. This Safety Plan sets out how we intend to build upon that and ensure we continue to deliver an exceptional service to our communities.

Our Safety Plan

We recognise we must continue to evolve as an organisation to meet the new risks and challenges we face. These risks should not be considered in isolation but rather as more widely connected issues to be addressed together with our partners.

The fire and rescue service has a statutory duty to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). Our Safety Plan fulfils this function by setting out how we look at risks to our communities and how we respond to those risks.

The Fire and Rescue Services National Framework for England says that fire and rescue services should work with their local partners to carry out a range of public service work to protect their communities. However, this must not distract from the core functions.

HFRA and IWC have agreed, in preparation for the forthcoming combination, to produce a fully aligned Safety Plan that establishes a long term approach to achieving our purpose of 'Together We Make Life Safer.'

Through our approach, we were keen to consider how we make life safer and have therefore taken a wider view of risk and safety in our approach. We have considered how we are:

- Keeping communities safer
- Keeping our staff safer
- Keeping the organisation safer

We are rightly proud of our success in driving down the numbers of fires and those people killed or seriously injured. However, we know that risks are changing and the tragedy at Grenfell Tower was a stark reminder of that. Therefore, we must build on our work in understanding risks now and in the future and develop plans to manage these.

Our staff are proud to work for the fire and rescue service, however, we also know from recent inspections that we have more to do to support our staff. We are already well on the way, but we want all staff to feel supported, valued and safe. Within this plan we have set out our new values, which have been developed with and by our teams across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. These values will define the way we deliver our services.

Finally, as a vital service to our communities, we must ensure the organisation is always able to deliver our services and therefore we are improving the systems and processes to provide that assurance.

Our Safety Plan is underpinned by our strategic assessment of risk which is a detailed and constantly updated analysis. The Safety Plan has been developed by:

Identifying risk

We identify risk through the detailed analysis of a range of information from across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. Response data on all our incident types, from fires to road traffic collisions, gives us a clear understanding of the hazards faced. Using this quantitative data alongside information we have gathered (from national and community risk registers, partner organisations, local intelligence, computer modelling, national and local statistics and our knowledge of the community we serve, such as age, living alone, deprivation and health information) we are able to truly identify risk.

Assessing the risk

The next stage in assessing our risk is to understand the likelihood of an event occurring and, if it were to occur, the severity of it and impact on the community. We do this through the use of quantitative data collected by our teams, alongside a process of co-production with partners utilising their risk information and our own specialists to allow us to understand each other's risks. We use this information gained from co-production to provide meaning to our risk data. Our partners and specialists are engaged through workshops and focus groups to gather their professional judgements and experience to inform how the risks we have identified may impact our counties and communities. This enables us to assess these risks.

Prioritising the risk

We carried out a consultation to assist us to prioritise these risks. We used the findings from the consultation alongside professional judgement to decide upon the optimum provisions and services required to reduce these risks. These are then delivered through the Service's prevention, protection, response and resilience teams. This enabled us to rate those risks and understand the likely impact on our communities. We used this phase to develop "Our Priorities".

Mitigating the risk

Mitigating the risk is both reducing the likelihood of an incident occurring and reducing the severity should one occur. For example, by the education of occupiers in domestic properties through Safe and Well visits, where we can fit domestic smoke alarms and prepare escape plans. We work closely with building owners to protect their buildings, encouraging the fitting of sprinkler systems and preparing response plans should an incident occur. This approach ensures we integrate our prevention, protection and response activities to best manage foreseeable risks.

Effective management of some of the risks requires a partnership approach between other emergency services, local authorities, health providers and partner agencies. For example, the Adult Safeguarding Boards in all of our Unitary Authorities use a multi-agency approach to identify and help those individuals most at risk. We also work together with a range of partners to prepare and plan for mitigating emergencies. We regularly test these plans through joint training exercises.

Reviewing the risk

We will monitor the progress we make in delivering our Safety Plan activity and evaluate the associated outcomes to see whether it is impacting the risks we have identified. It is important that we continue to learn and improve. We will return to this plan after each year of delivery to report against it and continually reassess the risks and the organisations' priorities to ensure it is still accurate and relevant.

The activity in the Safety Plan will be overseen by the Chief Fire Officer and the senior team. We will report into the new Combined Fire Authority on progress at the end of each year in line with our annual performance reporting timelines, with a more comprehensive evaluation of progress at the end of the five year period.

It is important we continue to develop as an organisation and we are committed to continually learning and developing throughout this process, and continuously improving how we deliver our services to our communities.

Hampshire and the Isle of Wight

Hampshire

Hampshire is a large county based in the South of England which covers an area of more than 1400 square miles. The county is home to a population of 1.85 million dispersed across rural, urban and coastal areas.

Hampshire is bordered to the west by Dorset and Wiltshire, to the east by West Sussex and Royal Berkshire and Surrey to the North. The county is bordered by the Solent to the south which is one of the busiest shipping lanes in the world served by the commercial ports of Southampton and Portsmouth.

Hampshire is rich in history with national parks, significant places of interest and heritage sites of international importance. The cities of Southampton and Portsmouth are urban areas of growing populations with universities that are seeing significant growth in student numbers and accommodation requirements. The growth in industry around Winchester and Basingstoke highlights the changing landscape. Balanced with this are large numbers of remote villages with many thatched and listed buildings.

Hampshire is home to several significant military bases and ports. There are also several businesses that are classified as Control of Major Accidents and Hazard (COMAH) sites. These locations have specific plans in place to manage the risks they have on site. There is a large and diverse range of commercial and industrial elements across Hampshire with heavy industries including Fawley oil refinery and BAE systems.

The county also has several major transport hubs including airports, ferry terminals, commercial ports, major motorways and several major hospitals, prisons and key infrastructure.

Isle of Wight

The Isle of Wight is an island off the south coast of England. Home to around 140,000 and with an estimated 2.5 million visitors annually, the Isle of Wight is the largest and second most populated island in England.

Its economy is primarily based around light industry, tourism and service sectors and with its natural landscape, coastline and buildings of historical importance, it is a popular tourist attraction.

The Isle of Wight is also home to HMP Isle of Wight (which holds 1100 prisoners across two prison locations) and St Mary's Hospital.

The island is sparsely populated with 80% of the population based in 20% of the land mass.

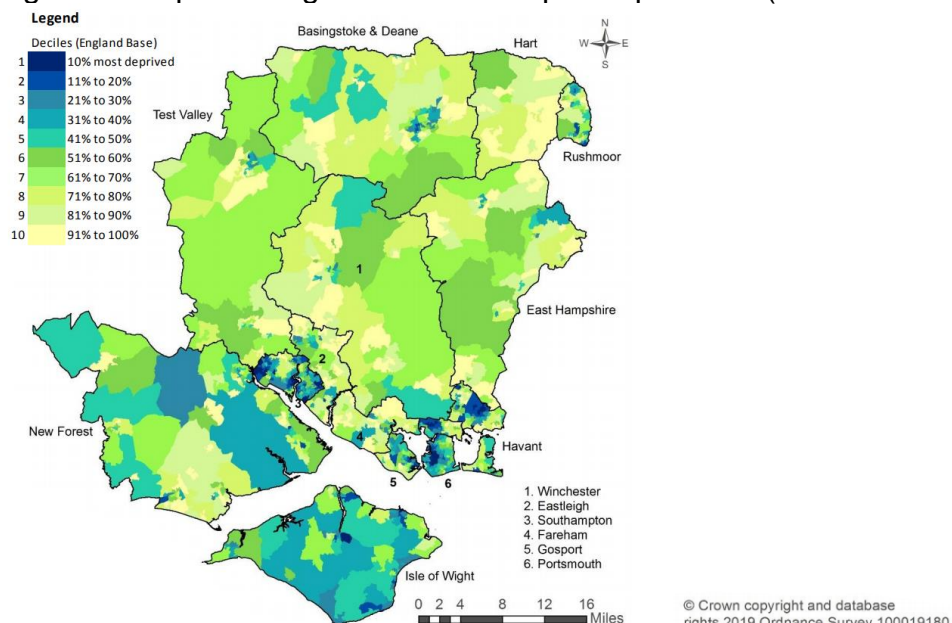
The people in our communities

The risks for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight change as the people in those communities change and it is important for us to understand the way people live and how this impacts upon our service and, importantly, how we seek to prevent, protect and, if needed, respond to those changing risks.

The Isle of Wight has a higher elderly population than the national average. Research shows that there is a greater impact from fire to people over 65 and those with long term health conditions.

A key indicator of risk is social deprivation. Communities that are more deprived pose greater fire risk due to a number of common factors that we have identified following past fire investigations such as mental health, alcohol and drugs, smoking and frailty. Identifying where in the communities these people live can help us to make them safer through prevention and protection activities.

Figure 3: Map showing Indices of Multiple Deprivation (Source Data: MHCLG 2019)



No area will stay the same and we need to be aware of how this will impact our work and prepare for this. In Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, there are anticipated changes to the demographics of our communities:

Growing population: By 2024 the population of Hampshire is set to increase from 1.83 million (2017) to 1.95 million, with the Isle of Wight increasing from 141,000 to 146,000 by 2026.

Ageing population: Of this, the number of residents over the age of 65 is expected to increase by more than 20% between 2017 and 2024. People in this age range are statistically more at risk.

Social changes: The risk profile of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight is likely to change with more people now living alone. This exacerbates other risk factors, specifically mental health and frailty.

A combination of all these factors will mean that we must constantly reassess our communities to make sure our assessment of risk is still accurate.

Our Purpose

‘Together we make life safer’

Our purpose drives us in everything we do. To be successful, all the work we do must contribute to making life safer in our communities. We can only fully succeed in making life safer by working together with partners and our communities.

Our Values

Values are a vital part of our organisation’s effectiveness. Our teams understand what we stand for and feel inspired to demonstrate these principles in their everyday work. These values are central to everything we do and the way we do it. We must demonstrate these values through our actions. Our values feed into all the ways we work, including recruiting new people, managing teams and our approach to leadership.

These values were created by our workforce through a series of workshops and a staff survey to find out what matters to them. We worked with an expert partner who facilitated the sessions across both Services and a high proportion of our staff engaged in the process.

Through everyone living the agreed values across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Services, we believe there will be improved trust and leadership, and everyone will feel proud of our Services.

In Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, we believe in:

Showing respect

Fairness, honesty and integrity in everything we say and do.

Supporting others

Listening and acting with compassion and empathy.

Everyone playing their part

Recognising the contribution we all make.

Reaching further

Inspiring and challenging ourselves and others.

Our Priorities

Our strategic assessment of risk provides the understanding for us to set out what our Services should prioritise in order to manage, control and mitigate that risk. We also consider the learning from significant events locally, nationally and internationally to inform our planning, while gaining information about best practice from inspections by HMICFRS.

To achieve our purpose, we must fully understand the risks that our communities face. By engaging with those most affected by the risks identified we are able to create the most effective services to protect them. On this basis we have developed five priorities that we are committed to for the life of this plan.

These commitments will inform all that we do to make Hampshire and the Isle of Wight safer:

Our communities

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

Our people

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

Public value

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

High performance

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

Learning and improving

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

In the following sections we describe the services that we already provide, the views that our communities shared with us about these services during our consultation, and then we provide a description of the improvements we would like to make in the coming year to make us even better.

Our Communities

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

Every community is different. For us to make life safer, we must understand the needs of our communities and how this impacts risk.

The wide scope of our activities, informed through a better understanding of risk, has helped us engage directly with our communities, how and where they need us most, as well as helping with any immediate need.

We help people to stay safe in their own homes

Keeping people safe in their homes is a high priority for us and we will dedicate significant resources to further reduce the number and seriousness of fires in the home.

There are approximately 800,000 homes in the area we cover which is where the most serious fires usually take place. The number of homes is set to increase in the coming years and with it comes a likely increase in domestic dwelling fires.

Hampshire and the Isle of Wight have a good track record of preventing fires, with a lower rate of domestic fires per household than the national average.

Identifying vulnerable people and reaching them in their homes to reduce their fire risk is critical to our purpose. Our Safe and Well visits reduce the risks for vulnerable people to keep them safe in their own homes. While identifying fire risks we must also be on the lookout for other hazards. Our highly trained staff also identify wider risks such as fuel poverty or those more likely to fall; we offer support or refer them to a relevant agency.

We work with the National Health Service, with proven results, to identify and reduce the risks of frailty which can lead to falls. This more joined up approach helps us and our partners to make our communities safer. Participants have experienced a 14% decrease in the chance of falling and a 40% improvement in balance following completion of our Safety Through Education and Exercise for Resilience (STEER) course. This is a key group of people who are at risk in the event of fire due to their mobility, who we now have contact with to help with fire prevention activity.

We employ Community Safety Officers who provide specialist support for their communities, working with local partners, to help people live longer in their own homes. We also have Safe and Sound, an internet based service to help people undertake a self assessment and get advice and receive a follow up visit where needed.

[Our communities and stakeholders said: The public felt life risk should always be prioritised and supported working with vulnerable people as long as it does not detract from core functions]

We work with our communities to prevent fires

One of our core functions, as required by law, is to prevent fires. To keep the public safe, we aim to identify and help those in our communities who are most vulnerable and work with our partner agencies for the benefit of these people.

We engage with our communities in a number of ways including Safe and Well visits and giving fire safety advice. We work with young people and run courses such as Fire Cadets, the Prince's Trust Programme, A Better Me and Teen Fire Fit, to instil positive values, develop skills, build confidence and promote healthy living. This reduces our four risk factors of mental health, alcohol and drugs, smoking and frailty.

In schools, our crews and specialist staff provide fire safety education. We also regularly engage with the community at events, after incidents and via our social media channels.

Our Arson Task Force is seen as the leading team nationally for detection and conviction. Prior to the team being formed, the arson detection rate was 6% and the conviction rate was 3%. At the end of 2018 the conviction rate stood at 81%. This demonstrates the benefits of the close working relationship between police and fire as well as the upskilling on both sides. This team leads on several national and regional projects, including Adult Fire Setters, Restorative Justice and Victims of Crime Service.

[Our communities and stakeholders said: 96% of respondents think it's important that we identify and target vulnerable groups.]

We undertake inspections of buildings based on risk

As part of our prevention work, we undertake inspections of buildings where others have a statutory duty to consider fire risks. Where necessary, we will enforce fire safety legislation and use it to make people safer.

We prioritise inspections of non-domestic premises assessed as those most likely to have a fire or most likely to have fire safety issues. Our Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP) allows us to target our resources effectively and gives us better information to continue to develop our programme.

Commercial properties, including hospitals, schools, leisure facilities, care homes, hotels, offices, shops, factories, waste sites and chemical plants, pose different fire risks. Some non-domestic building fires have the potential to be larger than domestic fires in terms of resources and impact on the community.

There are more than 60,000 non-domestic buildings in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. We are required by law to ensure those responsible for these buildings maintain appropriate fire safety measures.

We pro-actively offer advice to businesses, at events and online, on issues such as standardising fire safety, licensing requirements and complying with the law. We also consult on building regulations on new buildings or where fire safety measures need to be improved and undertake regular inspections based on risk. Our teams work with partners and site operators to promote best practice, offer fire safety advice and ensure we have the most up to date risk information.

[Our communities and stakeholders said: Risk inspections of non-domestic properties were considered essential.]

High-rise buildings are a priority

High-rise premises present specific challenges to fire and rescue services due to the number of residents and the potential difficulties for firefighters. This has been highlighted on a national level in the wake of the Grenfell Tower tragedy.

Within Hampshire and the Isle of Wight there are currently 273 high-rise buildings, six of these being on the Isle of Wight. We have legal obligations to respond to, train and prepare for the challenges presented by fires, including those in high-rise buildings. As an enforcement agency of fire safety legislation, we will work with landlords and building owners to reduce the likelihood and severity of an incident.

We lobby for sprinkler systems in all high-rise premises and our partnership work with Southampton City Council has seen a retrofit into all of their residential blocks. Crews visit blocks to familiarise themselves with every high-rise building, each of which is subject to a fire safety audit. We also benefit from the use of new technology meaning we can tackle high-rise fires more quickly and safely.

[Our communities and stakeholders said: It is important to inspect high rise buildings based on risk.]

We focus on higher risk places

There are some buildings within our communities that pose a specific risk due to the way they were built or how they are used. Considering the likelihood of fire and the potential for harm with each type of building enables us to respond more effectively in the event of an incident.

There are locations across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight that manage substances that could have significant fire and environmental impacts. These are called Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) sites. These sites have stringent regulations in place to reduce the possibility of an incident.

Hampshire and the Isle of Wight has 15 COMAH sites and a Major Accident Control Regulations (MACR) site, the military equivalent of COMAH. We are legally obliged to prepare for an incident at a COMAH site and we work to reduce these risks as far as possible. We do this by liaising with those responsible for COMAH and MACR sites, putting plans in place and taking part in exercises to test the multi-agency response to incidents.

[Our communities and stakeholders said: It is very important to support our key risk sites, according to 98% of respondents.]

Heritage sites are of significant cultural and economic importance and they also present particular risks from fire due to their methods of construction. Hampshire and the Isle of Wight has 12,797 listed properties. The character of some of the historic properties means that fire is a major threat to the site and its artefacts.

We provide fire safety advice, work with those responsible for these premises and encourage the installation of sensitive water suppression systems. We visit them to familiarise ourselves with these sites and collect risk information to ensure that we provide the best response should an incident occur.

[Our communities and stakeholders said: Of those who responded, 90% believed this area to be important as the heritage sites were “irreplaceable” but of a lower priority than life and environmental risk.]

Fires in thatched properties bring their own specific fire risks due to the use of flammable materials in large concentration and therefore require a large amount of resources if a fire occurs. Hampshire and the Isle of Wight contains more than 1,840 thatched dwellings and 125 other thatched buildings. It is likely that thatch as a building material will continue to be popular locally.

To promote fire safety to this group, we offer online fire safety advice for thatch property owners and work with the National Society of Master Thatchers.

We work with our partners to deliver shared outcomes

Working together with our partners we achieve more than as individual organisations. Together we help each other understand our community’s needs. This provides not only a better service to keep the public safe but also greater value for money.

We fully support and contribute to our partners’ plans, such as Hampshire County Council’s Vision 2050 Partnership and Isle of Wight Council’s Corporate Plan and the ‘One Public Service’ initiative ensuring we are all working together to support those we serve.

Our skills and equipment make a difference to our communities in many ways. Alongside our operational partnerships, we have many other partnerships which bring benefits to our organisation and communities; such as sharing buildings, equipment and information.

We take a leading role in the Local Resilience Forums (LRF) working with a wide range of partners to plan for and respond to emergencies which threaten our communities.

[Our communities and stakeholders said: According to 76% of the respondents, we should respond to a wider range of risks using our skills to better support our partners.]

We support medical emergencies

Many lives have been saved through our medical interventions. Although this is not a statutory responsibility, our teams are trained, equipped and located across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight to respond rapidly to this type of incident.

Our co-responders are firefighters mobilised by the ambulance service and then supported by its nearest ambulance. Frontline crews have immediate emergency care medical training and equipment with defibrillators on all frontline appliances. This enhanced level of training has directly saved the lives of our own personnel as well as members of the public. In HFRS, officers have been trained in the use of defibrillators and carry them in their cars.

Attendance at these incidents also helps us identify those with vulnerabilities who we may then assist with a Safe and Well visit.

[Our communities and stakeholders said: We should continue to develop and widen the medical response activities we provide to the public according to 72% of respondents.]

We help to keep Hampshire and the Isle of Wight moving

We are required by law to respond to transportation incidents, this includes not just road traffic collisions (RTCs) but also incidents involving rail, air and ships in port.

Hampshire and the Isle of Wight feature an array of transport infrastructure from major motorways and trunk roads (M3, M27, A3M, A34) through to Southampton and Farnborough International Airports, Southampton Docks and Portsmouth International Port. This transport infrastructure is critical to Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, with closures having far-reaching consequences to our communities.

Vehicle crashes are our most frequent transport related call-outs although the number of these incidents attended during 2014-2018 has remained stable, reflecting the national trend. For the year ending March 2019, 19 people were killed, and 391 people were seriously injured on the roads in Hampshire. On the Isle of Wight, two people were killed and 77 seriously injured.

We plan, train and equip our teams to deal with the range of transportation incidents. We provide medical care to casualties, make the scene as safe as possible and extricate trapped casualties. We also support safety awareness campaigns through the Road Safety Partnership. On the Isle of Wight, we are the lead agency for RTC prevention and both Services deliver initiatives such as Safe Drive Stay Alive, Biker Down, and Head On.

We focus on water safety

We have a responsibility to respond to inland water rescues. We have large areas of inland water including many rivers, lakes and canals. National figures show about 400 people drown every year in the UK and a further 200 take their own lives in water.

We have water rescue trained crews across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight including a specialist Water Rescue Team at Fareham. Our current training and equipment make us well placed to respond and our work in community safety and education helps us make a significant impact.

Through our prevention activities we work closely with partners such as the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, Royal Life Saving Society and the Maritime Coastguard Agency (MCA) in the Water Safety Forum who are committed to reducing deaths from drowning.

We respond to incidents at sea

The Solent is a busy shipping area and a popular location for recreational water-based activities. This creates a risk of various emergencies occurring on the Solent for which we prepare and respond to in accordance with a locally agreed plan.

We have a statutory responsibility for the Solent forts and for vessels that are moored alongside in ports and marinas. We have no statutory powers to attend vessels that are at sea, however, significant risks exist within the Solent area and we believe there is an expectation by the public and marine professionals that we are able to respond to such incidents.

In 2019, Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority decided to continue to provide a maritime response to incidents occurring in the Solent.

We have a number of specially trained officers to assist in dealing with marine incidents when requested by the MCA and we work closely with our partners in the Solent area.

We work with our partners to reduce the impact of flooding

Recent events indicate that there is an increasing risk of flooding and as these events become more frequent Services will be required to respond accordingly. Homes, businesses and infrastructure can all be vulnerable to flooding.

When dealing with extreme weather, we work closely with our partners and the LRF and support the work of the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the Environment Agency. Although we receive no direct government funding to deal with flooding, we remain committed to continued close collaboration with our partners to prepare for and respond to these incidents.

[Our communities and stakeholders said: It is important that HFRS and IWFRS prioritise preparations to be ready for and respond to the risks posed by severe weather, according to 95% of respondents.]

We respond to wildfires

A wildfire is defined by HFRS and IWFRS using National Operational Guidance as uncontrolled vegetation fires of one or more hectares in size, requiring four or more appliances, lasting more than six hours and presenting serious risk to life, environment or property.

During the past four years HFRS and IWFRS have attended 71 wildfires and the majority of these were caused by people, either accidentally or deliberately.

We have specialist vehicles such as 4x4 and wildfire vehicles which enhance our ability to respond to wildfires. We have developed an exchange programme with the US Fire Service in Oregon to benefit from their extensive experience in dealing with wildfires. We have National Tactical Advisors who participate in the Wildfire National Working Group to improve best practice measures for supporting the prevention and recovery from such incidents. These advisors have also deployed in support of largescale incidents nationwide.

We continue to reduce the risk of wildfires through liaison with stakeholders such as Forestry England, Councils, National Park Authorities and landowners.

[Our communities and stakeholders said: Our partners in Forestry England responded to discuss further ways of working with them in the future.]

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

Our improvements for year one

We will improve our community risk profiling and insight tools enhancing our analysis and understanding of the most vulnerable individuals in our communities.

We will publish a campaign calendar detailing our community safety activities.

We will review and improve our People Impact Assessments process to ensure we give full consideration of how our activities could impact on our workforce and communities.

We will use our locally based teams to improve our ability to reduce fire safety risk in our communities.

Our People

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

Our people are our greatest asset and the wellbeing and safety of our staff is important to us. We want to make sure they are looked after and have the right support in place when and how they need it.

We employ nearly 1900 people across both organisations including approximately 300 non-uniformed specialists.

For our people to be as effective as possible, we ensure they have the skills, training and equipment they need. We ensure excellent learning and development opportunities are made available to everyone so they can continue to grow.

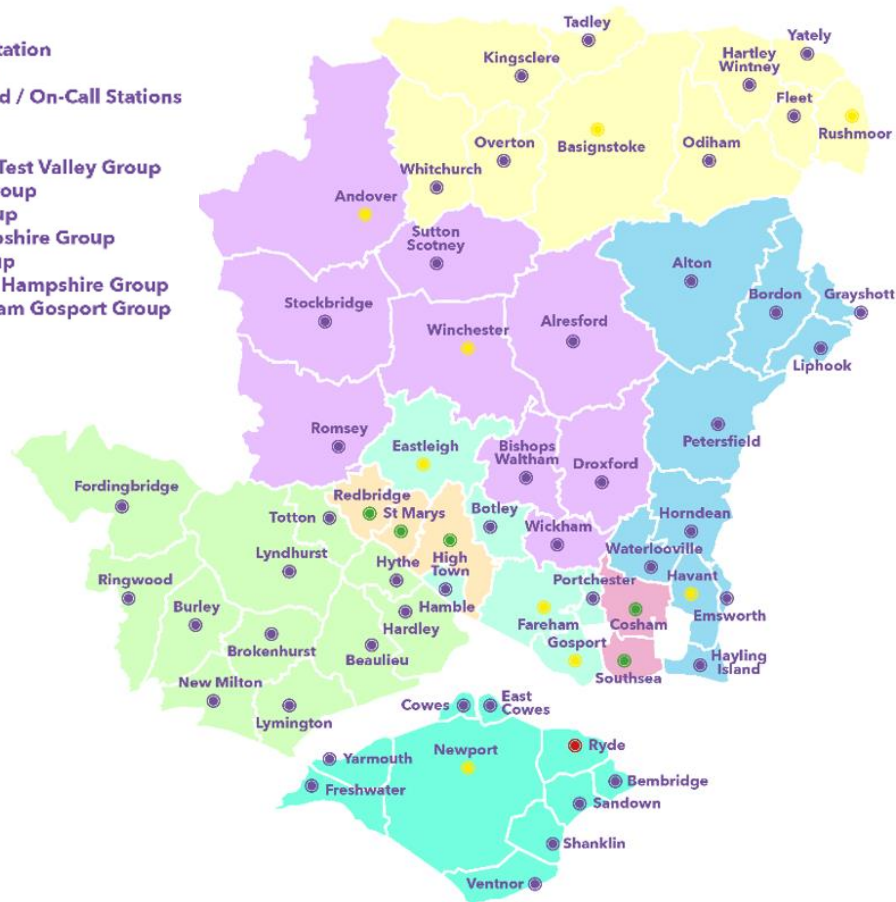
We operate from 62 locations across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. Our stations at these locations are crewed in different ways according to local risk profiles.

Figure 4: Map indicating locations and crewing systems across both Services:

LEGEND

-  WDS / On-Call Station
-  On-Call Stations
-  WDS Day Crewed / On-Call Stations
-  WDS Stations

-  Winchester and Test Valley Group
-  Southampton Group
-  Portsmouth Group
-  North East Hampshire Group
-  New Forest Group
-  Havant and East Hampshire Group
-  Eastleigh Fareham Gosport Group
-  Isle of Wight



The health and wellbeing of our staff is vital

Research suggests many of our staff will suffer from mental health issues during their careers and much work has been done to ensure support is in place and people are encouraged to talk openly.

We value our staff and want them to reach their full potential when working to keep the people of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight safer.

We have a mental health programme and use a pioneering psychological screening programme to ensure our people are properly equipped to deal with potentially difficult situations. Our teams can access support processes such as Trauma Risk Incident Management (TRiM), Employee Assistance Programme, Mental Health First Aiders, The Firefighter's Charity, and Occupational Health and Wellbeing.

Steps are being made towards being more open at all levels of the organisation in terms of discussing health and wellbeing, but there is always more that can be done. Our operational employees also undertake physical health screenings and fitness assessments so they are able to meet the physical demands of their roles.

Alongside the physical and mental wellbeing of our staff, we support our people through the innovative use of technology and by investing in our estate and facilities. We have committed to ensuring that our buildings and facilities promote a healthy and inclusive place to work and visit.

We are committed to providing the highest levels of health, safety and wellbeing for all our staff and anyone who may be affected by our work activities. We will ensure that health and safety is at the heart of everything that we do.

We have four staff groups – FireINSPIRE, FireABLE, FireREACH and FireOUT – which provide support and networking opportunities for the proportion of our staff who are part of under represented groups. These groups provide peer support, bringing together individuals, and can play a significant role in driving change within our organisations and raising awareness of different issues. They can influence policy and introduce new ways of doing things and help us engage more effectively with our diverse communities.

We recruit staff based on our values

It is vital that we have the right people in the right roles to be effective. We must focus on our recruitment to find and retain talented people who embody the values we feel are central to representing our organisation. Embedding our values throughout our recruitment processes will help us to build a great working environment of which our workforce will be proud.

More than half our firefighters are on call. This means they live or work near a fire station and respond from their home or normal place of work to incidents when needed.

Recruiting and retaining firefighters to work from on call stations is a challenge faced by all fire and rescue services, especially in rural areas. This is constantly changing due to the dynamics of working life and house prices in the countryside, making it hard to find people who live close enough to be ready at very short notice.

Our people have the right skills

It is important that our staff at all levels are skilled and feel equipped to undertake their responsibilities. We align the skills and capabilities of our teams to ensure they can perform at the highest levels, based on our priorities.

Our leadership development framework supports the growth of our staff in their capacities as both leaders and managers.

Based on the insights we gained from our cultural survey and HMICFRS inspections, we have developed a People and Development Strategy. This will help make our Services a great place to work for everyone whilst delivering excellent services to our communities through a professional, well equipped and agile workforce.

Our People: Creating great places to work which promote the health, wellbeing and safety of our people.

Our improvements for year one

We will introduce our new values that define the way we work and embed them in inclusive recruitment, induction and promotion processes.

We will seek to understand and drive down the impact of poor mental health on our organisation.

We will provide an accessible wellbeing portal for our teams to ensure our employees are well supported.

We will commission an independent review of our current Health and Safety arrangements to improve our performance.

We will work to better understand the impact to our diverse workforce of ageing, fire ground contamination, menopause and heat stress.

Public Value

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

To be effective, we must prepare. We consider risks and opportunities from the outset so we can make decisions that consider all the information available. This means we can maximise our value to the community within our budget.

We must be prepared for new and emerging risks

Risks faced by the UK are continually changing and evolving with potential major incidents such as natural disasters, industrial accidents and terror attacks. In partnership with the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Resilience Forum we maintain preparedness to respond to a wide range of potential incidents and emergencies. Doing this planning means we are able to be more effective when the worst happens.

The resilience of the Services makes sure we have the ability to respond to new risks as they emerge. We are ready to work with our neighbouring fire and rescue services by receiving and providing support and specialist capabilities. We must be able to continue to deliver critical services in all circumstances.

National Resilience is a programme in place to provide a range of equipment, people and procedures to deliver a co-ordinated response. We have specialist teams that are capable of dealing with all types of emergencies and we are committed to supporting large scale incidents. These teams have deployed nationally to areas such as Yorkshire for the recent flooding as well as to international disasters, such as earthquakes and providing humanitarian assistance in Bangladesh for the Rohingya refugees.

Cyber security is at the forefront of our thinking as we harness the power of new technologies. Our Information and Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure is crucial to what we do as a modern fire and rescue service, so we ensure we have resilience, disaster recovery plans, cyber security tools and security training for staff in this area.

The need to protect our data and systems has never been more critical with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the threat of online attacks and other cyber crime.

We are aligned with the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC)

The aim of the NFCC, as the professional voice of the UK Fire and Rescue Service (UKFRS), is to drive improvement and development throughout the UKFRS. We are committed to supporting the NFCC and have been encouraged by HMICFRS to identify additional funding to strengthen the role of this organisation.

Our buildings need to be fit for purpose

Our premises play a vital role in our ability to engage with the communities we serve and respond to incidents in many different ways.

A number of these buildings are now over 50 years old and, as such, require some attention in order to ensure they are fit for purpose. Older buildings also cost more to maintain and run; this makes investing in our existing facilities to improve standards and introduce lower cost technologies a sensible approach to take.

We have established a Station Investment Programme, giving us the opportunity to improve our operational buildings. This will provide better working environments for our staff, increase our environmental sustainability and in doing so reduce the costs of our premises allowing us to be more efficient.

We must maximise the use of our estate while ensuring that our buildings allow us to do our job effectively and enable us to work better with our partners. We already utilise many of our buildings in a wide variety of ways by sharing a number of stations with our partners. These include blue light services such as the Police, Ambulance, HM Coastguard, charities such as the Royal National Lifeboat Institute (RNLI) and Red Cross, and with statutory partners such as Public Health. In this way our estate allows us to provide facilities for response, community safety and resilience in HFRS and IWFRS.

Our partnerships are not only operational

We regard corporate service partnerships in our back-office functions as highly as we do in our operational roles. We see the need to share services and form partnerships in order to provide high quality support functions to our staff and communities in an efficient manner.

We are part of the Emergency Services Network (ESN) which brings together communications for the police, fire and rescue and ambulance services, as well as a range of other users.

We also have a Corporate Shared Services which shares specialist support functions such as finance, payroll, pension services, human resources and workforce development across other public sector organisations. This is now the largest public sector partnership of its type in the UK. These partnerships enable us to offer high quality services required to future-proof a modern fire and rescue service.

Our technical services facility, which includes fleet and equipment maintenance, stores, supplies and logistics functions, is of critical importance to our Services. Our commitment to partnership working is embraced as we partner with Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service for the delivery of fleet management and maintenance services.

We work closely with other agencies in a variety of partnerships which are focussed on improving public safety, including Multi-Agency Safeguarding Boards, health and wellbeing and local authority partnerships.

We use technology to help us be more efficient

We must ensure we are using technology to drive efficiency and effectiveness throughout the organisation. We ensure that our workforce is well supported so that technology is always benefiting what we do and not hindering us. There are also opportunities for more closely aligning our technological needs with our partners for procurement efficiencies.

We are also committed to using technology to assist us in making our communities and firefighters safer and allowing us to respond more effectively. Improvements in technologies, such as vibrating alarms for the hard of hearing, help us to keep people safer in their homes. Advances in operational equipment increase firefighter safety such as ultra high pressure lances and body-worn cameras.

How we are financed

Like many public services we have experienced reductions in government funding and the forecast for the UK economy is uncertain. Our aim is to maximise the use of all available funding while lobbying government to provide sustainable funding for a diversifying emergency service that makes life safer for the people of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. Potential reforms, along with issues around firefighter pension arrangements and the national debate on the role of the modern firefighter, may impact on the level of public funding we receive going forward.

Our financial strategy ensures our core functions are sustainable and incorporates our income, estate and investments, partnerships, efficiencies and ultimately any changes in resources.

HFRA currently collects £67.71 per year (£1.30 per week) in council tax for a Band D property to provide a fire and rescue service to the communities of Hampshire. This is 56% of HFRS income.

The IWC collects £66.91 per year (£1.28 per week) in council tax for a Band D property to provide a fire and rescue service to the communities of the Isle of Wight.

Government grants for Hampshire provide 14% of HFRS funding. This funding for the Isle of Wight is contained within general funding for the council. HFRS finances are managed by the HFRA while those of IWFRS are managed by the IWC. Business rates for Hampshire generate 20% of HFRS income. The IWC also receives business rates for the services it provides.

A small amount of income is generated from fees, charges, interest and from government grants for specific purposes. HFRS also generates a small income through their trading arm. HFRS ensures we maximise the use of our assets by sharing space with partner organisations which generates annual income to protect frontline services.

We must ensure our approach to integrated risk management includes robust financial planning and management that considers future government grant levels, contract and supplier costs, inflation, business rates retention and maintenance of sufficient reserves.

In anticipation of the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) during 2020 we have produced an interim financial plan that seeks to balance the budget up to 2021/2022 without the need for further budget reductions, although we will continue to pursue service efficiencies where it makes sense to do so.

We will update the Medium Term Financial Plan in light of the CSR, which will provide greater clarity around the medium term financial prospects for the new CFA. We will prioritise our spending based upon the strategic direction set by this Safety Plan.

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

Our improvements for year one

We will bring together HFRS and IWFRS to become a single CFA to improve resilience and enhance capability.

We will update our medium term financial plan following the completion of the government's CSR and in preparation for the introduction of the CFA.

We will put forward business cases to invest in Bishops Waltham, Cosham and Redbridge Fire Stations, and develop an investment plan for the Isle of Wight estate as part of our wider Station Investment Programme.

We will publish an improved suite of information for our communities and stakeholders so they can hold us to account.

We will broaden our existing plan to significantly reduce our impact on the environment.

We will review our staffing arrangements to ensure that our resources are focussed on supporting our priorities.

High Performance

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

How well we do our job is crucial to making life safer and maintaining the trust and confidence of our communities. We need to understand how well we are doing so we know where we need to focus resources. We also need to ensure our data is useful and available as we are accountable to the public for our performance.

Diverse and inclusive teams make us better

It is important the workforces of HFRS and IWFRS reflect the communities they serve. This diversity brings a breadth of skills and experience to our organisation that can only improve our performance.

Our Inclusion and Diversity Team are integral to our recruitment and promotion processes. We are attracting more diverse candidates than ever before but there is more to be done. While we actively encourage applications from all sections of the community, candidates are always selected on merit alone.

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. We have seen an increase in on call female firefighters since the launch of our digital campaign targeted at under represented groups.

We use our data to better understand our work

Our ability to monitor and use performance data has been strengthened. We recently introduced a new and more efficient way of storing data combined with a set of organisational performance dashboards.

For the first time, we can view 'real time' information to assist managers, stations and staff. This will help contribute towards a positive performance culture of continuous improvement, a renewed focus on data quality, and evidence based decision making.

Our people are competent to undertake their work

All our staff are competent to undertake the role they perform through induction, development programmes and the Maintenance of Competence scheme.

Our Academy identifies and delivers training so that teams who are deployed to incidents are competent to undertake the role they have been sent to perform.

We support our teams' continuous professional development through individual development plans.

Our leadership framework supports the growth of our staff as leaders and managers.

We use National Operational Guidance (NOG) as the foundation for developing our operational policies, procedures and training to deal with incidents effectively and safely.

Our response to incidents

Despite little change in the percentage of critical incidents attended within the target time, public perception of our speed of response has remained exceptionally positive. We also want to create a standard for prevention and protection activity so our communities can understand how we are performing.

We recognise the importance of responding to incidents quickly and effectively. We have a legal duty to provide a set of standards that set out the expectation of how quickly we will respond when an incident occurs. Our response standards must be effective in helping us deal with emergencies and keeping our staff safe.

Our current standard for a critical response in Hampshire is to ensure that an appliance will be in attendance within eight minutes, 80% of the time (8/80), where there is risk to life or property. For the Isle of Wight, the standard is to ensure an appliance is at the incident within ten minutes, 80% of the time (10/80), however this does include call handling time.

For a non critical response, where there is no apparent threat to life or major risk to property, an appliance will be in attendance within 15 minutes, 100% of the time (15/100) for HFRS and within 20 minutes, 100% of the time (20/100) for IWFRS. Examples include bin fires or small fires in open areas.

All other incidents requiring a response will see an attendance within 60 minutes, 100% of the time (60/100) and these calls are often advice related. These are usually attended by a single officer to give guidance on a situation that may require further fire service intervention. Both Services aim to attend all of these incidents within an hour.

A review of our response standards will be undertaken during the lifespan of this plan which will include a review of the number of resources required to meet our risks.

We support the ongoing national work to understand the relationship between response standards and the outcomes of incidents and we are committed to setting researched, challenging, achievable and appropriate response standards that will make life safer.

We work with our Networked Fire Service Partners (NFSP), a collaboration with Devon and Somerset FRS, Dorset and Wiltshire FRS, IWFRS and HFRS. We have aligned our control rooms and are able to mobilise the most appropriate response regardless of county boundaries. We will continue to develop the way we share risk information and training with our partnering services.

[Our communities and stakeholders said: Adapting our response standards based upon risk was supported by 84% of respondents and 88% of respondents agree that response standards are an important measure of performance.]

Speed of attendance over other measures is important according to 93% of respondents.

Respondents would also like to see measures relating to the outcomes of our response to incidents, fire prevention and outreach work.]

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

Our improvements for year one

We will identify and challenge, using our existing network groups, those barriers preventing us attracting, recruiting and retaining a more diverse and inclusive workforce.

We will propose a new set of operational performance standards.

We will update our external website and our internal intranet so the public and our teams can see how we are performing.

We will equip our teams by providing a simple way to record and view information in real time.

We will roll out a leadership framework to ensure managers at all levels receive leadership and management development, inclusion and diversity training, and upskilling in core human resources processes.

We will develop our learning and development provision to identify and develop the leaders for the future.

We will review our availability and competency management systems, to ensure we have the most appropriate system for our future needs.

We will check how embedded our new values are across our teams and develop a process for testing their impacts on performance.

Learning and Improving

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

Learning helps us improve

We always challenge ourselves to improve so that we strive to deliver the very best service to our communities.

It is important that everyone has a personal responsibility to share their learning to help our organisation. In order to do this, we must have the right tools, such as body worn video, in place so that we capture this learning effectively.

All our operational incidents and training events have an active debrief which supports the aim of continual improvements. The debriefing process allows us to systematically analyse and evaluate the operational tactics employed during specific incidents. It is how we identify and discuss the hazards and risks present at the incident and evaluate the control measures used to manage them. This learning is then shared across the Services to ensure continual learning and improvement.

Learning can also be gained from positive experiences, so we need to celebrate these as well as reflecting on those which do not go well. We create a secure environment which is appreciative and facilitates learning.

It is vital that, if we are going to continue to grow and improve, we must share the learning across the whole organisation and embed this into policy and practice.

We evaluate our work to improve services

Evaluation is critical to us. Our ability to improve our performance ensures we are making life safer and building on the services we deliver.

As we continue to undergo organisational changes, we have implemented a Change Management Framework across the Services. This is designed to capture the learning from the change activity as well as the impact on our teams and our communities.

We prioritise the learning and development of our people

We provide workforce development for our staff with excellent learning opportunities including an apprenticeship scheme, personal development reviews, a leadership framework and opportunities for both internal and external secondments. We currently have our staff embedded into HMICFRS, Network Fire Services Partnership, Emergency Services Network, National Resilience, NFCC, Crown Premises Inspection Group (CPIG) and the Home Office. This brings benefits to our Services by bringing learning back on their return.

We use research and innovation to drive forward improvements

We have identified that the risk profile of our counties is changing as our societies, technology and environment change. As such we must continually develop our ways of working to improve and meet these new challenges.

We are committed to commissioning, undertaking or participating in research to better understand the risks we face, making use of new and improved ways to deal with these risks and continually aiming to improve and adapt to be as efficient and effective as possible.

We share facilities at Winchester Fire Station with Public Health England's Emergency Response Department (Science and Technology). This partnership will provide HFRS and IWFRS with access to expert research support allowing us to be intelligence led in all we do.

We also manage a UK research map on behalf of the NFCC to assist in the co-ordination and dissemination of fire and rescue research.

Our commitment to research and development allows us to continually improve and also supports our partners developments by sharing of our research.

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

Our improvements for year one

We will review our operational learning arrangements to ensure we are benefitting from our own and other Services' experiences.

We will refine our operational assurance system.

We will collate all the existing opportunities for organisational learning and set out recommendations for improvement.

We will review and evaluate the use of body worn video cameras to ensure we learn and make decisions safely at all levels.

Measuring our Performance

It is important that we can describe our performance so that our teams understand the progression we are making over the life of this plan and that the communities we serve are able to hold us to account on the commitments that we have made.

Understanding our performance within the context of the plan will help us deliver better services to the public as we will be continually reviewing the effectiveness and efficiency of our activities.

We have several mechanisms to ensure that our performance is scrutinised. From an external viewpoint HMICFRS will be monitoring our effectiveness, efficiency and how we look after our people, making independent judgements. In year one of this plan both Services will be inspected. There is a range of other external assurance mechanisms that we use to understand our performance; we seek to gain a wide view of learning from formal audits, peer reviews, benchmarking with other organisations similarly structured or facing like challenges.

Internally, the improvements undertaken to achieve our commitments will be overseen by the senior team and assured by a board focussed entirely on Service performance and assurance. This will ensure that we monitor the progress we make in delivering the specific Safety Plan activity and evaluate the associated benefits for the communities of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

We have a comprehensive set of performance indicators that enable us to monitor our performance against this plan. In year one we will further refine these performance indicators, enabling us to accurately describe our performance and understand the impact of our commitments on the communities of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. We will review this plan on an annual basis, adding in further improvements as we build on year one delivery.

By reviewing our performance on a regular basis, we can ensure that our Services remain tailored to the specific risks and opportunities facing Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

Summary

Our Communities

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

Our improvements for year one

We will improve our community risk profiling and insight tools enhancing our analysis and understanding of the most vulnerable communities.

We will publish a campaign calendar detailing our community safety activities.

We will review and improve our People Impact Assessments process to ensure we give full consideration of how our activities could impact on our workforce and communities.

We will use our locally based teams to improve our ability to reduce fire safety risk in our communities.

Our People

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

Our improvements for year one

We will introduce our new values that define the way we work and embed them in recruitment, induction and promotion processes.

We will seek to understand and drive down the impact of poor mental health on our organisation.

We will provide an accessible wellbeing portal for our teams to ensure our employees are well supported.

We will commission an independent review of our current Health and Safety arrangements to improve our performance.

We will work to better understand the impact to our diverse workforce of ageing, fire ground contamination, menopause and heat stress.

Public Value

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

Our improvements for year one

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We will update our medium term financial plan following the completion of the government's CSR and in preparation for the introduction of the CFA.

We will put forward business cases to invest in Bishops Waltham, Cosham and Redbridge Fire Stations, and develop an investment plan for the Isle of Wight estate as part of our wider Station Investment Programme.

We will publish an improved suite of information for our communities and stakeholders so they can hold us to account.

We will broaden our existing plan to significantly reduce our impact on the environment.

We will review our staffing arrangements to ensure that our resources are focussed on supporting our priorities.

High performance

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

Our improvements for year one

We will identify and challenge, using our existing network groups, those barriers preventing us attracting, recruiting and retaining a more diverse workforce.

We will propose a new set of operational performance standards.

We will update our external website and our internal intranet so the public and our teams can see how we are performing.

We will equip our teams by providing a simple way to record and view information in real time.

We will roll out a leadership framework to ensure managers at all levels receive leadership and management development, inclusion and diversity training, and upskilling in core human resources processes.

We will develop our learning and development provision to identify and develop the leaders for the future.

We will review our availability and competency management systems, to ensure we have the most appropriate system for our future needs.

We will check how embedded our new values are across our teams and develop a process for testing their impacts on performance.

Learning and Improving

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

Our improvements for year one

We will ensure our revised policy, procedures and guidance system is fully embedded.

We will review our operational learning arrangements to ensure we are benefitting from our own and other Services' experiences.

We will refine our operational assurance system.

We will collate all the existing opportunities for organisational learning and set out recommendations for improvement.

We will review and evaluate the use of body worn video cameras to ensure we learn and make decisions safely at all levels.

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**HAMPSHIRE
FIRE AND
RESCUE
AUTHORITY**



**HAMPSHIRE
FIRE AND
RESCUE
SERVICE**

**Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority - People Impact Assessment (PIA) –
Stage 1**

People Impact Assessment (PIA) Stage 1 is completed at the start of any project, process or strategic decision to assist in identifying any significant impact on people, and in particular, those who share a characteristic which is protected under equality law.

If a negative (or possible negative) impact is identified, **Stage 2 will need to be completed.**

Please note: For the purposes of this document, the term ‘proposal’ can refer to any policy, activity, function or project that the people impact assessment relates to.

Name of proposal and brief description	For Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority (HFRA) and Isle of Wight Council (IWC) to ratify and adopt the Fully aligned Safety Plan incorporating the functions of the IRMP from April 2020 until 31 st March 2025 and Year one of the service plan.
Aims and objectives of the proposal	The aim of the proposals is that Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service (HFRS) and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service (IWFRS) will have a fully aligned Safety Plan that will be implemented from April 2020.
Who will this affect within HFRS and IWFRS?	This plan will impact everyone who works for HFRS or IWFRS.
Who will this affect within our communities and businesses?	This proposal will aid clarity on our direction of travel as organisations, demonstrate our engagement with stakeholders not impact any of our wider stakeholders, partners and communities. However, the implementation of this plan will impact all of the above and as such each element of implementation must be delivered with a fully integrated PIA process.
Potential positive impacts	This fully aligned Safety Plan for HFRA and IWC will assist with combining the two authorities giving clear strategic direction for the next five years. The implementation of this plan will limit the impacts of change on HFRS and IWFRS teams by providing clear priorities for both services in five year and one year strategies.
Responsible Manager	Kevin Evenett
Date	09/01/2020

Potential impacts identified (Internal and external)

Disability	No Impact Identified
Age	No Impact Identified
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No Impact Identified
Pregnancy and Maternity	No Impact Identified
Race	No Impact Identified
Religion and belief	No Impact Identified
Sex	No Impact Identified
Sexual Orientation	No Impact Identified
Gender Reassignment	No Impact Identified
Other Impacts e.g. health and wellbeing, financial, morale etc.	Individual areas within the five-year plan will require actions taken by directorates and teams, work completed in each area will require dedicated PIA's to ensure consideration is given to their impacts.

If you have identified possible impacts in any of these areas, you will need to complete Stage 2 of the People Impact Assessment.

Even if you haven't initially identified an impact, it is possible that unknown impacts still exist or will occur as the proposal moves forward.

We would encourage you to:

- Review your impact assessment regularly
- Have conversations with those you have identified as being affected by the proposal generally
- Ensure you speak with a broad range of people about your proposal
- Seek the assistance of the Inclusion and Diversity Team (id@hanstfire.gov.uk)

People Impact Assessment (PIA) – Stage 2

Evidence of impact

1 Data capture

1a Quantitative data (numeric information)

Provide details of people who have been identified as being affected by the proposal.

All staff within HFRS and IWFRS to include all duty systems, green book colleagues and wider stakeholder will need to have access to the safety plan, understand its purpose and contents.

1b Qualitative data

Is there any other data in existence that relates to this proposal, such as feedback received, or data relating to grievances/informal complaints/consultation about the proposal?

Previous information includes the strategic assessment of risk for both HFRS and IWFRS, the consultation document and feedback report following consultation.

2 Consultation and involvement

Detail how and with whom you will gather additional information relating to the impact of this proposal, such as the use of external advisory groups etc.

Consultation on the production of the safety plan went well. Comments and feedback via ORS an outside company we employed the services of to provide an independent robust process have enabled relevant parties to consider and act as appropriate. Staff surveys will be completed throughout the lifecycle of this plan. Chief Officer's Group, Group and Station manager forums will continue to be engaged with to obtain feedback of the impacts on their staff.

3 Measures to mitigate/lessen negative effects

If a negative effect has been identified, you should consider whether it can be objectively justified.

The following table should include the areas you have identified there could be a negative effect and the action you intend to take as a result.

The action plan should demonstrate that you have considered:

1. How to lessen the negative effect; and/or
2. Ensure that the negative effect is legal under anti-discriminatory law; and/or
3. Provide an opportunity to promote equality

People Impact Assessment Actions

Issue	Justification	Action	Review Date
What has been identified as an impact/effect?	How can the identified impact be objectively justified?	What will be done to mitigate against that impact or lessen the negative effect?	On what date will you review to ensure the action has been done? Who will be responsible?
Sharing the message of the safety plan and ensuring all staff have sight of the plan.	This is a strategic document and some staff may not take the time to read and understand.	All staff to be briefed via a robust communications plan and the Executive Group members to explain this in the breakfast brief	April 2021 on review of year one objectives and staff understanding direction of the Services
Staff not fully understanding the Safety Plan and our strategic direction	The strategic direction helps for the directorate plans, enabling groups, partners and stations to link activity directly to priorities.	Within the Directorate, Group, Department and Station plans, detail on actions and tasks will be detailed.	April 2021 review of each plan.
Staff engagement and possible resistance to change	The new values, purpose and priorities will help set direction and framework to bring teams and individuals together. We have been through a long period of change and some staff may feel disengaged through this process.	This will become a living document and with good communication from our comms team to ensure we reach all areas of the organisation, we will work towards being an inclusive, values based organisation	April 2021 staff survey results and improvements made.

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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