

To: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

From: Deputy Chief Executive Officer (DCEO) - Matthew Warren

Presenting officer(s): Deputy Chief Executive Officer - Matthew Warren  
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## Draft Financial Strategy 2024/25 to 2027/28

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the Fire Authority with the draft financial strategy for review and agree the proposed budget and precept for consultation.

### 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Authority is asked to review and approve the proposed strategy and summary medium term financial plan for consultation (Appendix 1).

### 3. Risk Assessment

- 3.1 **Economic** – the significant risk to the Authority budget is the current economic uncertainty and associated inflationary pressures, particularly in relation to pay costs. The Authority must be cognisant of this risk when approving the budget and associated precept for financial year 2024/25.

### 4. Background

- 4.1 The Fire Authority has developed its medium-term financial strategy over several financial years, changing its focus depending on the specific financial and political environment at a given time.
- 4.2 Clearly, the ambition for the Authority is to be financially sustainable over the medium term. The Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) is pivotal in driving all other strategies and plans across the Service. The CRMP is the strategic plan that prioritises improvement to the way that the service is delivered and prioritises how money is spent. This prioritisation flows through the wider service plans. For example, the property strategy considers strategic stations for investment as these are highlighted as those stations that ensure resilience for the wider organisation.
- 4.3 The attached strategy attempts to take the current CRMP priorities to produce a financial plan that is achievable across the medium term. However it must

be highlighted that many factors will influence how effective it proves to be and whether it needs to be amended.

- 4.4 The Service's financial business continuity financial plan will ensure that it can respond to significant changes in the financial climate. The continuity plan provides options for making savings across the Service in a managed way where the impact of any such change is understood.

## 5. Funding Update

- 5.1 The on-going economic uncertainty continues to be a significant risk across the public sector. Given that a general election must happen by 17 December 2024, government strategy on funding can only be short term. This lack of certainty is a risk for the financial strategy.
- 5.2 It is hoped that the Authority will receive its financial settlement before Christmas. Information on Section 31 grants relating to business rates will not be received until late January 2024, although indicative figures should be included in the settlement figures expected before Christmas.

## 6. Council Tax Consultation

- 6.1 On 5 December 2023, Government announced the amount fire authority council tax levels can be increased by before a referendum is required. The rate has been set at 3%.
- 6.2 The attached draft strategy and associated financial plan details a forecast budget requirement for 2024/25 and includes a council tax increase of 3%.

## Source Documents

Budget Preparation Papers 2024/25

## Location

Hinchingbrooke Cottage  
Brampton Road  
Huntingdon

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