

# FIRE AUTHORITY



**Date: Wednesday, 20 December 2023**

**14:00hr**

**Red Kite Room, New Shire Hall  
[Venue Address]**

## AGENDA

**Open to Public and Press**

1. **Apologies for absence and declarations of interest**  
*Guidance on declaring interests is available at <http://tinyurl.com/ccc-conduct-code>*
2. **Minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held 15th June 2023 and Action Log** **5 - 18**
3. **Chair's announcements**
4. **Draft Community Risk Management Plan 2024 to 2029** **19 - 68**
5. **Draft Financial Strategy 2024-25 to 2027-28** **69 - 82**
6. **Draft Annual Governance Statement 2022-23** **83 - 94**
7. **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Compliance Report 2022-23 (including Gender Pay Gap)** **95 - 140**

8.	<b>Fire Authority Annual Report and Statement of Assurance 2022-23</b>	<b>141 - 184</b>
9.	<b>Systel Mobilising and Integrated Communication System Replacement System - Update</b>	<b>185 - 186</b>
10.	<b>Firefighters Pension Scheme Update</b>	<b>187 - 190</b>
11.	<b>His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) – Round Three Update</b>	<b>191 - 196</b>
12.	<b>Service Operational Improvement Opportunity</b>	<b>197 - 200</b>
13.	<b>Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies</b>	<b>201 - 206</b>
14.	<b>Draft public minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held 31st October 2023</b>	<b>207 - 214</b>
15.	<b>Draft minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held 4th October 2023</b>	<b>215 - 222</b>
16.	<b>Exclusion of Press and Public</b> <i>To resolve that the press and public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that the agenda contains exempt information under Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and that it would not be in the public interest for this information to be disclosed information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)</i>	
17.	<b>St Neots Community Fire and Rescue Station - Refurbishment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information);</li> </ul>	

The Fire Authority comprises the following members:

*For more information about this meeting, including access arrangements and facilities for people with disabilities, please contact*

*The Fire Authority is committed to open government and the public are welcome to attend from the start of the meeting.*

*It supports the principle of transparency and encourages filming, recording and taking photographs at meetings that are open to the public. It also welcomes the use of social networking and micro-*

*blogging websites (such as Twitter and Facebook) to communicate with people about what is happening, as it happens. These arrangements operate in accordance with a protocol which can be accessed via the following link below or made available on request.*

**Public speaking** on the agenda items above is encouraged. Speakers must register their intention to speak by contacting the Democratic Services Officer at least three working days before the meeting.

Full details of the public speaking scheme for the Fire Authority is available at:

<https://www.cambsfire.gov.uk/fire-authority/meetings/>

Councillor Edna Murphy (Chair) Councillor Andrew Bond Councillor Mohammed Jamil  
Councillor David Over and Councillor Scott Warren Councillor Simon Bywater Councillor  
Douglas Dew Councillor Ian Gardener Councillor Bryony Goodliffe Councillor John  
Gowing Councillor Ros Hathorn Councillor Sebastian Kindersley Councillor Catherine Rae  
Councillor Kevin Reynolds Councillor Philippa Slatter Councillor Mandy Smith and  
Councillor Simone Taylor

Clerk Name:	Dawn Cave
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## Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority: Minutes

Date: 15<sup>th</sup> June 2023

Time: 2:00-3.13pm

Venue: New Shire Hall, Alconbury Weald

Present: Cambridgeshire County Council:

Councillors: S Bywater, D Dew, I Gardener, B Goodliffe, R Hathorn, S Kindersley, M McGuire, E Murphy (Chair), C Rae, P Slatter and S Taylor

Peterborough City Council:

Councillors: A Bond, M Jamil (Vice Chair) and D Over

Officers present: J Anderson, D Cave, S Ismail, C Strickland and M Warren

### 71. Election of Chair

The Monitoring Officer called for nominations for Chair.

Councillor Jamil nominated Councillor Murphy, and this nomination was seconded by Councillor Kindersley. There were no further nominations. Following a show of hands, the Monitoring Officer announced that Councillor Murphy was therefore unanimously elected as Chair of the Fire Authority for the municipal year 2023-24.

### 72. Appointment of Vice Chair

The Chair called for nominations for Vice Chair.

Councillor Murphy nominated Councillor Jamil, and this nomination was seconded by Councillor Goodliffe. There were no further nominations. Following a show of hands, the Chair announced that Councillor Jamil was therefore unanimously elected as Vice-Chair of the Fire Authority for the municipal year 2023-24.

### 73. Apologies for absence and declarations of Interest

Apologies for absence were presented on behalf of Councillors Reynolds, Smith and Warren.

There were no declarations of interest.

### 74. Minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held 10<sup>th</sup> February 2023 and Action Log

The minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held 10<sup>th</sup> February 2023 were agreed as a correct record. The Action Log was noted.

## 75. Chair's Announcements

Appended. Cllr McGuire supported comments about Cllr Gowing, who had been a valued Member of the Authority.

## 76. Review of Integrated Risk Management Plan Performance

The Fire Authority received a report on the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) for 2020-2024. The Plan covers four key areas for management and monitoring, specifically People Excellence, Community Safety Excellence, Operational Delivery and Value for Money.

The following points were drawn to Members' attention:

- the Employee Engagement Survey showed an improvement in employee engagement, with an overall engagement score of 79%;
- the large number of safe and well visits to vulnerable people. The success of the partnership with Anglian Water was also noted, which had enabled the Service to identify those individuals most at risk;
- operational excellence activities including crews of three, providing 1000 additional hours of fire cover each month;
- the increased number of fire stations carrying out co-responding support to the Ambulance service;
- Value for Money activities including the Sustainability Strategy, which aimed to reduce the Service's impact on the environment, and the objective of achieving net zero by 2030.

Members noted performance against the IRMP performance measures for 2022/23, which included five year rolling figures:

- average attendance in urban areas was well within the nine minute target, at 7 minutes 39 seconds. Rural response times slightly exceeded the 12 minute target at 12 minutes 18 seconds, due to summer spate conditions. General attendance times were within or around targets;
- the Service had was slightly below the 95% target for responding to all incidents within 18 minutes, at 94.6%, again due to the summer spate conditions;
- there had been a significant increase in the number of fires in 2022/23, again due to the summer spate in July and August 2022. Similarly primary, secondary and non-domestic fires had all increased;
- the number of business engagements were now back up to the expected level, following the reduction in the Covid years;
- sadly, there had been one fire death during the year, which was a smoking related fire;

- there had been a continued reduction in fire casualties;
- there had been an increase in the number of Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs): there had been a reduction during Covid, but figures had now increased to near pre Covid levels. Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) figures had decreased slightly;
- Special service attendance had increased, due to factors such as the pressure on the Ambulance service and the impact of Climate Change resulting in increased flooding;
- The number of applicants for both on call service and whole time roles, including the number of female candidates;

In relation to mobilising technologies into operational service, the Chair advised that since the publication of the agenda, the Service had sadly received notice of intent to terminate the highly successful shared Control Centre arrangements with Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service. These arrangements had been in place for 13 years and saved the taxpayer approximately £12M. Suffolk intended to end the partnership and take the control system in house. However, the Chair commented that she wished Suffolk well, and the Service would continue to focus on what was right for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough residents, and Suffolk residents whilst arrangements were still in place.

The Chief Fire Officer outlined the history of the successful collaboration with Suffolk, which had delivered effective services and considerable savings, and had been recognised by HM Inspectorate. Fire and Rescue Services are risk based, responsive organisations, and the volumes and the way incidents were dealt with were outlined. It was noted that the end of this collaboration would have cost implications of around £500K pa. Members were aware that a replacement system to the existing Command and Control system, Remsdaq, had been procured by Cambridgeshire and Suffolk Fire Services from a new supplier, but this process had been delayed due to the Pandemic and subsequent issues within the company. At a recent meeting on 22/05/23 with the Suffolk Chief Fire Officer, it had been concluded that a decision would be taken in July as to whether to proceed with the new system. As a Service, it was vital that this was progressed as the existing system was not being refreshed. The logistics and likely timescales of introducing the new system whilst maintaining the joint arrangements with Suffolk in the short term were outlined. It was anticipated that the new system would be operational in Cambridgeshire by January 2024.

A Member expressed his disappointment at the withdrawal of Suffolk. He outlined the governance arrangement for Suffolk Fire Service, and urged Members to use any influence they may have with Suffolk County Council Members, where the Fire Authority was governed through the Public Protection Committee. He suggested that Members could also use their influence to make sure the both the public and Suffolk Members were aware of the impact, both financially and in terms of introducing new systems. The Chair agreed with these comments. Another Member observed that this was a very odd decision to be taking in these times of substantial financial constraints, especially as Suffolk would need to set up its own system which was a lengthy, expensive and risky undertaking. He noted the Chief Fire Officer's comments that there would continue to be a relationship with Suffolk for the foreseeable future, and every effort would be made to ensure there was a resilient, efficient and cost effective solution for them. It was noted that the Overview & Scrutiny Committee had reviewed risks relating to Integrated Command Control System (ICCS) and Mobilising Solution at its

recent meeting, and had been reassured by officers that progress with the new supplier, Systel, was now back on track, and Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service would effectively be a pathfinder in this technology. He suggested that it may be the case that there were partnership opportunities with other Fire Services in this undertaking.

A Member commented that Suffolk's decision was astounding at a time when the government actively encouraged Blue Light services to work together to achieve efficiencies, and he suggested that the Fire Authority could write to the Fire Minister, highlighting how much money the Combined Fire Control had saved. He also felt it was unusual that Suffolk's stance on the partnership arrangements could change so quickly, with no explanation as to why, and lead to inefficiencies for the residents of Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

In response to a Member question, it was confirmed that Norfolk and Essex Fire and Rescue Services did not have and Control Room partnerships.

A Member commented that he could not understand the logic of the decision, and the Chair had cross party support on this issue. It was important that relationships were maintained with Suffolk, but Cambridgeshire and Peterborough residents were the priority in this situation. The Chair appreciated the support given, and advised she would be writing as suggested to relevant individuals. She added that everyone must play their part in maintaining relationships and engaging with Suffolk, whilst working very hard to realise the ambitious and progressive vision for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

Turning to the other items on the IRMP report, Members raised the following issues:

- A Member asked for the reason behind the increase in domestic fires, and also whether the increase in electric scooters and pedal cycles being charged at home was a cause for concern. Officers agreed to get a breakdown of primary fires to establish how many were domestic dwellings. It was noted that most of the increase in primary and secondary fires was due to spate conditions. E-scooters were a increasing risk nationally, specifically lithium ion batteries on properties. A lot of work was being undertaken from a community safety perspective to raise awareness of the risks;
- There was a discussion on RTCs/KSIs, which had dropped significantly during the pandemic. A Member asked if comparative statistics were available with other local authorities, especially those where lower speed limits had been introduced. It was noted that the Service was part of the Road Safety Partnership, and this would be raised through that forum;
- With regard to environmental issues, a Member advised that Huntingdonshire District Council were trialling HVO (hydrotreated vegetable oil) fuel for vehicles, and asked if the Fire Service were looking at this option, as HDC officers were keen to pursue partnership opportunities. Officers advised that they were interested in this area, and would be undertaking a trial in the north of the county shortly. Officers confirmed that they would be interested in any collaborative opportunities, and the Member agreed to provide officers with the details of the relevant HDC contact information.

There was a discussion on Special Services attended and the extent to which the increase related to partner organisations being unable to attend or reducing the type of



incidents they attended, and whether this was an area requiring further scrutiny. It was noted that there was no indication that Cambridgeshire Constabulary would be refusing to attend Mental Health incidents. Duty officers always made a decision on any requests from other services or agencies to attend an incident, based on whether there was an immediate danger to life. Duty officers worked together regularly to ensure consistency. An important consideration was the extent to which this work diverted resources from core services.

It was resolved unanimously to:

note the contents of the report.

## 77. Final Revenue and Capital Budget Position 2022-23

The Fire Authority considered the final 2022-23 revenue and capital budget outturn position. It was noted that the statutory deadline to publish the accounts on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023 had been met, but the accounts were still draft and subject to external audit. The Deputy Chief Executive paid tribute to the Finance team for completing this work on time.

There was a £7,000 underspend at year end: whilst firefighter pay had exceeded the budget, there had been significant levels of professional staff turnover and delays in recruitment to those vacancies. The other issue was a significant increase in Business Rates income, where confirmation was awaited on whether this was a one off, as suspected.

Reserves had diminished significantly during the year, mainly as a result of funding the new Huntingdon Fire Station and Training Centre. The Capital programme was largely spent, the biggest challenge was around vehicles, where the Service was struggling to buy vehicles.

In response to a Member question on the additional Business Rates, it was confirmed it was significantly above the level of Business Rates funding usually budgeted for. The Fire Service was part of pooling arrangements with the County and District Councils, so there would be some growth in Business Rates to reflect the growing population, but this was considerably in excess of any national growth.

A Member asked if the facilities at the new Huntingdon Training Centre would be rented out to other fire services. Officers confirmed that they would probably wait at least another year to fully understand usage, and ascertain whether there was any spare capacity. It was noted that if it was rented out to other Fire Services, any profits would need to be channelled through a trading company, which was a requirement of the Fire and Rescue Services Act.

In response to a question about the disposal of the old Huntingdon Fire Station, it was noted that a response was still awaited from Huntingdonshire District Council. It was envisaged that it would be on the market in the summer, with a view to selling before the end of the financial year.

A Member asked if the same underspend in professional support staff was anticipated for the current financial year. It was confirmed that appointments had been made, but the Service was still suffering from an element of turnover, so there would probably be some underspend in the current year. It was also confirmed that senior managers paid

close attention when there were vacancies, to ensure that duties were prioritised but staff were not overworked.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- i. note the revenue and capital budget outturn position;
- ii. approve the requested budget holder carry forwards.

## 78. Pay Policy Statement 2023-24 – Update

Members considered an update to the Pay Policy Statement for 2023-24 that had been considered at the February Fire Authority meeting. This reflected retrospective pay rises awarded to Grey Book officers, Green Book officers, and the Chief Officer Group.

It was resolved unanimously to:

note the changes made to the current Pay Policy Statement, attached at Appendix 1, following the settlement of national pay negotiations.

## 79. Independent Remuneration Panel report on Members allowances

Members considered a report on the findings of the independent remuneration panel (IRP) which had reviewed the Fire Authority's scheme of allowances.

At their meeting in February 2023, Fire Authority Members had agreed to appoint a panel of three experienced independent individuals forming a panel, led by Mark Palmer. The review was based on the specific duties required of the Fire Authority's Members, and was benchmarked against other Fire Authorities and the wider sector.

The key implications of the IRP report were detailed, which included the confirmation of the one special responsibility allowance (SRA) only rule and the indexation of allowances, which would be confirmed at the Authority's annual meetings. The very modest increase to allowances was within the budget envelope allocated for Members' allowances.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- i. consider the IRP report, attached at Appendix 1 and determine whether to accept the recommendations as they stand or with amendments or alternatively to make a different scheme altogether;
- ii. confirm the date on which the new scheme will come into effect, thereby formally revoking the existing Members' Allowances Scheme with effect from that date;
- iii. authorise the Monitoring Officer to prepare a new scheme to reflect the outcome of the Authority's deliberations and take any consequential action arising from them.

## 80. Proposed changes to Fire Authority Constitutional documents

The Fire Authority considered a report which set out proposed changes to the Member/Officer Protocol and the Code of Corporate Governance. The changes to these documents were outlined.

A Member drew attention to paragraph 3.2.9 of the Member/Officer Protocol: *“that members will obtain agreement in advance from the Station Commander, or other senior Officer, to visit premises so as to avoid adverse impact on operational activities or planned training”*.

It was resolved unanimously:

- i. consider and approve the wording changes to both documents as indicated at Appendices 1 and 2 respectively;
- ii. approve an annual review cycle for all its constitutional documents, specifically that they are reviewed and any changes brought to the June meeting for approval as necessary

## 81. Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies

Members noted that there had been one change to appointments to Committees, resulting from changes in County Council proportionality, and the appointment of Councillor Hathorn.

The following changes and additions were noted to the published document:

- Conservative appointment to Appeals (Pensions) Committee should read Cllr Bywater rather than Cllr McGuire;
- Labour Substitute to the Appeals (Pensions) Committee – Cllr M Jamil;
- Labour Substitute to the Disciplinary & Grievance Committee – Cllr B Goodliffe;
- Labour Substitute to Appeals Committee – Cllr C Rae

It was resolved unanimously to:

agree the updated schedule of appointments, with the additions detailed above.

## 82. Appointment of Chairs and Vice Chairs

It was proposed by Councillor Dew, seconded by Councillor Jamil and agreed to reappoint Councillor Goodliffe as Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee for the municipal year 2023-24.

It was proposed by Councillor Goodliffe, seconded by Councillor Kindersley and agreed to reappoint Councillor Jamil as Vice-Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee for the municipal year 2023-24.

It was proposed by Councillor Jamil, seconded by Councillor Goodliffe and agreed unanimously to reappoint Councillor Kindersley as Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2023-24.

It was proposed by Councillor Kindersley, seconded by Councillor Jamil and agreed unanimously to reappoint Councillor Taylor as Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2023-24.

83. Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee held 31<sup>st</sup> January and 26<sup>th</sup> April 2023

The minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee held 31<sup>st</sup> January, and the draft minutes of the Committee meeting held 26<sup>th</sup> April 2023 were noted.

84. Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held 20<sup>th</sup> April 2023

The draft minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held 20<sup>th</sup> April 2023 were noted.

## **Chairs Announcements – Thursday 15 June 2023**

Firstly, I would like to formally welcome Councillor Ros Hathorn who was appointed to the Authority following full Council last month; she replaces Councillor John Gowing.

I would especially like to thank John for his contributions to the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. During his six years on the Authority he has led a number of reviews that were well received and the catalyst for improvements across several areas of the Service.

### **Home Fire Safety Week (12 to 18 June 2023)**

Today's meeting is being held in the middle of Home Fire Safety Week. The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) is running a public awareness campaign that focusses on the main risks of fire in the home and appropriate home detection and behaviours to help mitigate these risks. The campaign also seeks to highlight how fire and rescue services use an approach which puts people at the heart of their work to reduce fires in the home. This 'person-centred approach' underpins their online home fire safety check tool and by using the tool, people can explore whether they as well as loved ones or neighbours could be at greater risk from fire. Each area has looked at specific issues which may pose greater fire risk due to the impacts of the cost of living crisis and builds on existing fire safety messaging which can be used across the entire campaign. These areas have been identified using anecdotal information from some fire services and NFCC prevention leads ahead of national data being available.

Whilst CFRS supports the NFCC with regular Officer participation and contributes to its campaigns we have always had our own commitment to keeping Cambridgeshire communities safe with targeted activities based on robust risk data. Members will see from the IRMP report, under Community Safety Excellence Delivery (Paragraph 7), that our Officers have carried out a plethora of activities under this heading amongst which were a staggering **6322** safe and well visits to vulnerable people within our communities; this clearly demonstrates our 'person-centred approach' and is a service record.

Further information can be found via [Home Safety \(cambsfire.gov.uk\)](https://www.cambsfire.gov.uk)

### **Polite Reminder – Ernst and Young Member Independence Returns**

Thank you to those Members that have completed the questionnaire sent by a representative of Ernst and Young. This is an important document and there are currently six outstanding from Members of the Authority. If you are one of those yet to submit your return, please do it today.

### **Diary Date - Member Seminar**

It is hoped to hold a Member seminar on 12 July 2023 covering 'hot topics'; all Members are encouraged to attend and full details will be circulated in the next few days.



## Fire Authority

## Minutes - Action Log

This is the updated action log as at **7 December 2023** and captures the actions arising from the most recent Fire Authority meetings and updates Members on the progress on compliance in delivering the necessary actions.

<b>Minutes from the 4 November 2021 meeting</b>					
12	CPFA – Audit Progress Report 2020/21	Deputy Chief Executive Officer (DCEO)	The Fire Authority would receive an update on McCloud and Sargeant once these cases had been concluded and the exact implications for the fire service were known in terms of remedy.	<b>Update 20 December 2023</b> Agenda item detailing remedy and proposed timetable for processing to be presented at today's meeting.	<b>Complete</b>
<b>Minutes from the 10 February 2022 meeting</b>					
27	Proposed changes to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority Members' Code of Conduct	Monitoring Officer	It was suggested that if the Authority did adopt the new Code, that a Member seminar could be arranged to explore the implications of the Code and how it differed to the Codes for Cambridgeshire County and Peterborough City Councils.	<b>Update 20 December 2023</b> Covered during Member seminar on 12 July 2023.	<b>Complete</b>

Minutes from the 10 February 2023 meeting					
67	P126 Project – Update on relocation of Huntingdon Fire Station and Service Training Centre	DCEO	In response to a Member question, it was confirmed that an additional site visit could be arranged for those Members who had been unable to join the 10 February 2023 visit.	<b>Update 20 December 2023</b> Visits for those interested Members have taken place.	<b>Complete</b>



## Minutes from the 15<sup>th</sup> June 2023 meeting

76	Review of Integrated Risk Management Plan Performance	Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO)	A Member asked for the reason behind the increase in domestic fires and also whether the increase in electric scooters and pedal cycles being charged at home was a cause for concern. Officers agreed to get a breakdown of primary fires to establish how many were domestic dwellings. It was noted that most of the increase in primary and secondary fires was due to spate conditions. E-scooters were an increasing risk nationally, specifically lithium-ion batteries on properties. A lot of work was being undertaken from a community safety perspective to raise awareness of the risks.	<b>Update 20 December 2023</b> Email to be sent to Members with breakdown of primary fires when data analysed (December 2023). Report on the use of lithium-ion batteries and the response by CFRS was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4 October 2023 (Agenda Item 8 and Minute 71 refer).	<b>Complete</b>  <b>Complete</b>
		ACFO	With regard to environmental issues, a Member advised that Huntingdonshire District Council were trialling HVO (hydrotreated vegetable oil) fuel for vehicles and asked if the fire service were looking at this option, as HDC Officers were keen to pursue partnership opportunities. Officers advised that they were interested in this area and would be undertaking a trial in the north of the county shortly. Officers confirmed that they would be interested in any collaborative opportunities and the Member agreed to provide Officers with the details of the relevant HDC contact information.	<b>Update 20 December 2023</b> Contact was made and CFRS are to start an active pilot scheme with HDC early in the new year.	<b>Complete</b>



To: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

From: Head of Service Transformation – Tamsin Mirfin

Presenting officer: Head of Service Transformation – Tamsin Mirfin

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Date: 20 December 2023

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## Draft Community Risk Management Plan 2024 to 2029

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Fire Authority with the draft Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2024 to 2029.

### 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Authority is asked to approve the draft CRMP 2024 to 2029, attached at Appendix 1, for public consultation.

### 3. Risk Assessment

- 3.1 **Political** - the CRMP process, outlined in the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, requires the Authority to look for opportunities to drive down risk by utilising resources in the most efficient and effective way. The CRMP has legal force and it is therefore incumbent on the Authority to demonstrate that its CRMP principles are applied within the organisation.
- 3.2 **Economic** - the management of risk through a proactive preventable agenda serves to not only reduce costs associated with reactive response services but also aids in the promotion of prosperous communities.
- 3.3 **Social** - the CRMP outlines how we will deliver the services to our community. It is important that we engage with our communities to shape our activities and help to inform our understanding of risks.
- 3.4 **Legal** - the Authority has a legal responsibility to act as the enforcement agency for the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. As a result, ensuring both compliance with and support for business to achieve are core aspects of the fire and rescue service function to local communities.

## 4. Equality Impact Assessment

- 4.1 Due to the discriminative nature of fire, those with certain protected characteristics are more likely to suffer the effects. Prevention strategies aim to minimise the disadvantage suffered by people due to their protected characteristic, specifically, age and disability.

## 5. Background

- 5.1 Government has placed a legal requirement on each fire authority to produce an easily accessible and publicly available CRMP covering a three-to-five-year time span. The plan must;
- reflect up to date risk analysis of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect Cambridgeshire,
  - show how the Fire Authority will balance prevention, protection and response activities to reduce the impact of risk on communities in a cost-effective way,
  - outline service delivery outcomes and how resources are allocated to mitigate risks,
  - show that the fire authority has a management strategy and a risk-based programme for enforcing fire safety legislation,
  - show how the fire authority will meet the needs of the community through working with partners.
- 5.2 Our CRMP covers all the activity we are engaged in to reduce risk and exploit opportunities. The current Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2020 to 2024 is in its final year with an action plan in place for 2023/24. Planning work has been conducted to outline our approach to building a five-year CRMP spanning 2024 to 2029.
- 5.3 We are a data driven organisation and our data is continuously under review (quarterly) to enable us to target and evaluate our activities. This means that we have a good understanding of our communities' social demographics and risk profile. For the creation of our new CRMP we have taken a snapshot of the data to baseline our understanding and plan activities. Our new CRMP will maintain our quarterly data reviews to ensure appropriate targeting and evaluation of our activities.
- 5.4 Work is ongoing on the Operational Response Review project. This project has conducted in-depth data analysis using current modelling techniques. It has reviewed how and when our resources are used. In turn, this has enabled us to study in greater depth the capability of our response and to consider future changes to how we manage resources to deliver greater efficiency and effectiveness.
- 5.5 The 2021 census data has been reviewed along with our historic performance and incident data. We have considered planned developments within county including housing, road networks and rail works over the CRMP time span.

- 5.6 The data review helps to inform our risk and opportunity work not only in consideration of the risks to our communities but also national risks and our strategic organisational risks and opportunities. In line with our documented strategic risk appetite, we act on all risks and opportunities scored 'high' and 'very high'.
- 5.7 Using all the information and data gathered to consider our future risks and opportunities we were able to engage with our communities and our people to gather their views to inform the creation of our CRMP.
- 5.8 Our community engagement activities achieved over 1,000 responses with a diversity of demographics largely comparable to the 2021 census data. It has provided us with some useful information about people's perceptions of different risk, response times and accessibility of our services, as well as potential communication channels we can explore and groups we can work with to identify vulnerable people for safe and well visits. This has helped to inform the draft CRMP.
- 5.9 We asked our people to consider a selection of the risks and opportunities and provide us with their views on the actions we should take. This was completed across the organisation and a wide variety of ideas were provided. This activity has fed in to the CRMP; we found most of the feedback will assist us in the creation of the CRMP action plan, which is the annual detail of how we achieve our CRMP objectives.
- 5.10 His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services released our inspection report in summer 2023; we have reviewed the findings from this and incorporated the recommendations into our CRMP planning activities.
- 5.11 An equality impact assessment is an important part of our CRMP process. We have assessed our CRMP process including our engagement activities. It is important for us to understand the barriers that our process may present to those we are trying to engage with so that we may look at ways to overcome them. We will also assess our CRMP engagement responses as an evaluation measure of our approach to engagement with our diverse communities.
- 5.12 All of the above activities and associated work has culminated in the formulation of our draft CRMP for 2024 to 2029 and this is attached at Appendix 1.
- 5.13 Each project or work strand will be subject to an equality impact assessment once we initiate the delivery work as part of our standard practices and in line with our equality impact assessment processes.

## 6. Next Steps

- 6.1 We are now ready to move to formal consultation activities; subject to Authority approval we will commence these on 21 December 2023 and conclude on 31 January 2024. As detailed in Paragraph 5 above, we have already been out to engage with the community and our people over a period of 12 weeks so have reduced the formal consultation period accordingly.
- 6.2 The feedback from the consultation activities will be considered and a reviewed draft CRMP will be presented to Members for final approval at the Fire Authority meeting scheduled for 15 February 2024.
- 6.3 This timescale allows the CRMP to be published on 1 April 2024, replacing the current IRMP which expires on 31 March 2024.

## Source Documents

CRMP Preparation document 2024/2029

CRMP Planning Framework

Equality Impact Assessment for CRMP 2024/2029

CRMP Engagement Exercise

CRMP Community engagement

Data Review 2024/2029

## Location

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Huntingdon

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**Draft CRMP 2024-29**

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## The Community Risk Management Plan

The Government has placed a legal requirement on each fire authority to produce an easily accessible and publicly available Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) covering at least a three-year time span.

The plan must:

- Reflect up to date risk analysis of all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect Cambridgeshire
- Show how the Fire Authority will balance prevention, protection and response activities to reduce the impact of risk on communities in a cost-effective way
- Outline service delivery outcomes and how resources are allocated to mitigate risks
- Show that the Fire Authority has a management strategy and a risk-based programme for enforcing fire safety legislation
- Show how the Fire Authority will meet the needs of the community through working with partners.

As we have exited the pandemic, we have faced different challenges that continue to impact on our fire and rescue service. The ways of working for many have changed for many people, we have seen the war in Ukraine and the economic crisis and subsequent financial pressures hit us and our people. This means we need to continue to find ways to ensure we are using our resources in the best possible way, to maintain the quality of service we provide and further reduce the level of risk in the community, working in collaboration with other agencies where we can, to ensure we are providing best value to the public.

Our CRMP covers all the activities we are engaged in to reduce the risks associated with providing our service to the community and exploiting opportunities for continual improvement.

Our previous Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) focused on exploring and delivering through collaboration. We also worked on the sustainability of our on-call service and continuing our investment in technology. We continued to share data with partner agencies to help us with identifying those most at risk from fire and other emergencies so that we can proactively engage in activities to prevent incidents occurring.

Our CRMP is a live plan, we continue to monitor our performance and delivery against our objectives and so this CRMP is the evolution of our plans, building on our previous IRMPs.



There are many interdependencies in the planning process and for this reason, we monitor progress and review the measures set out in this document to ensure the CRMP process is fully integrated into the corporate planning process.

A glossary is provided in Appendix A at the back of this document explaining some of the terms used.

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## How we identify risk

Data is central to Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service. We review and monitor our data to ensure that we are focusing our resources in the right way and to monitor the changes in our community that may impact or evolve the risks in our county. In 2021 the Census data was released, and this has helped us to understand the changes that our community demographic has undergone over the past 10 years.

We use data about the location and purpose of non-domestic premises to understand the risks that these and their contents may present as well as helping us to define our firefighting and emergency response plans. We consider technological and societal changes that impact on the types of emergencies that we may be called to. Community and national risk registers also help us to plan and prepare. This wealth of data and information helps us to identify risks within our community.

Since the pandemic we have invested in modelling tools and techniques to help us understand the potential impact of these risks and how we could best respond to them. During our last IRMP (2020-2024) we initiated a project to look at our operational response. The data, analysis and outputs from this project have helped us to formulate this CRMP for 2024-2029.

During the review process, we looked at everything that had changed in Cambridgeshire, from the population and the county's infrastructure, to our own services.

Using a combination of data analysis, computer modelling, professional judgement and engagement with our colleagues and the community, the risk review has resulted in a set of proposals designed to realign our resources to risk.

This risk review has enabled us to assess foreseeable risks that could hinder our progress towards our vision, whilst also allowing us to recognise opportunities that will help us get there quicker.

This document sets out the high-level areas of work. Larger pieces of work will be taken forward through our programme management process with progress monitored and managed through our Business Development Programme Board. Other work will be delivered through the responsible group and monitored at the relevant strategic delivery group, where performance will be reported quarterly to the chief officer team.

The Service compiles an Annual Report and Statement of Assurance that provides a review of the Service's delivery against the Community Risk Management Plan and our performance measures. This can be found on our website under About Us/Documents

Our community risk management analysis and planning process is shown here.

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## Local Resilience Forum

In addition to our own detailed analysis of the risks facing our communities, our CRMP has paid due regard to the risk analysis process completed by the Local Resilience Forum via the National Security Risk Assessment publication to ensure that civil hazards and threats are captured.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Resilience Forum (CPLRF) is chaired by our chief fire officer, with senior managers actively engaged in the forum. The Service has supported the development of an agreed risk profile for the local area detailed in a local community risk register and matrix, in partnership with the police, ambulance service, local authorities, primary care trusts, health organisations, Environment Agency, category two partners and the military.

You can view the CPLRF Community Risk Register on the Local Resilience Forum's [website](#).

## **Context**

### **Our Service**

We currently operate from 27 fire stations across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Four are crewed 24/7 by wholetime firefighters, three are day-crewed reverting to on-call status at night, 19 are solely on-call and one is operated by the Peterborough Volunteer Fire Brigade. Our Combined Fire Control, management and professional support departments are all based at our Service Headquarters in Huntingdon.

Our current establishment is 242 wholetime firefighters (including principal officers) and 250 (full-time equivalent) on-call firefighters. The establishment in our Combined Fire Control - mobilising fire engines and specialist vehicles across Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Suffolk - is 36. We have 138 full time equivalent employees who work in support roles across the Service in essential business functions including health and safety, recruitment, learning and organisational development, property, fleet, finance, procurement, human resources and communication.

The number and locations of our stations, our management structures and resourcing model are continually kept under review to ensure we are delivering a service that continues to be effective and efficient within the constraints of the budget we have to work with each year. We will continue to do this throughout the next CRMP period and therefore information in this document is current only at the time of writing.

We have a fleet of 33 fire engines, two rescue vehicles, two aerial appliances and a number of other specialist vehicles.

More information about our vehicles and equipment can be found on our [website](#).

## The data

Cambridgeshire has a three-tiered local authority system, consisting of Cambridgeshire County Council and five district councils - Cambridge City, South Cambridgeshire, East Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire and Fenland. Peterborough City Council is a unitary authority located in the north of Cambridgeshire.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough are identified as areas for sustained residential and commercial development which, in addition to providing opportunities for economic growth, have the potential to impact on public service resources.

The population estimate of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is approximately 894,500 according to the Office for National Statistics Census 2021 figures. This represents an increase of around 11 per cent from the previous census in 2011. The population is 49 per cent male and 51 per cent female, living in around 362,100 households.

Usual resident population, Census 2011 to 2021

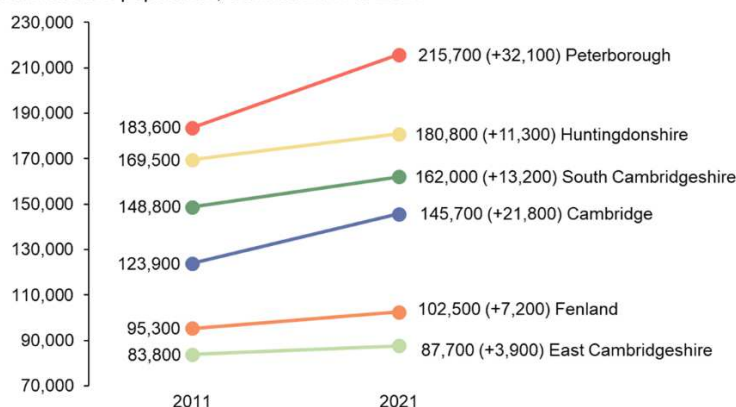


Image: [cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk](https://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk)

The population of Cambridgeshire is ageing with the number of people aged 65 and over accounting for 18 per cent of the population (around 160,000 people), based on Office for National Statistics Census 2021 data. Those most at risk from a fatal fire in the home are vulnerable people aged 65 and over.

The social demography of Cambridgeshire varies considerably, with the cities of Peterborough and Cambridge being particularly multi-cultural and multi-racial compared with other areas of the county. For example, around 20 per cent of those living in the cities identify as non-white (Census 2021 data), with most of that population identifying as Asian. In the rest of the districts, the population is around 90 per cent white. Across the county, 16 per cent of residents are disabled under the Equality Act definition. More than 35 per cent of the population work predominantly from home.

To accommodate the expected increase in population, several new sustainable developments have emerged in recent years and continue to grow. These include the country's first eco-town Northstowe, being built just five kilometres from the city of Cambridge and Alconbury Weald just north of Huntingdon.

Three new residential townships were developed with a full range of social and economic facilities and the fourth, Hampton, will continue this growth with over 5,000 homes and supporting infrastructure.

There is predicted to be over 40,000 new homes built across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough in the next five years in major developments alone.

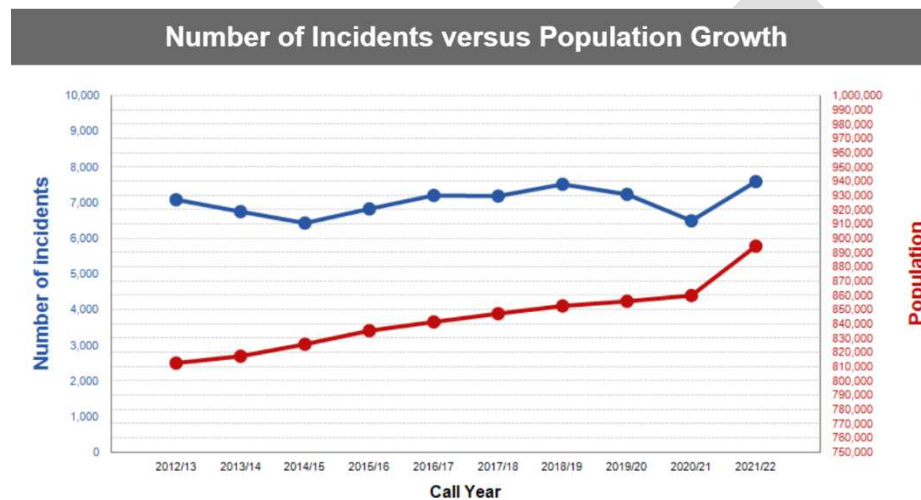


Figure 2 shows the correlation between population growth and our incident rates.

It is noticeable that to 2020/21, despite a steady increase in population, our incident rate had fallen, although the numbers have increased for 2021/22 as this also included an unprecedented summer of fires due to the prolonged hot, dry weather.

The reduction in calls is a result of the Service actively managing its demand through fire prevention and protection work, together with initiatives such as call challenge and management of premises with a large number of false activations of fire alarms. This success, together with the scale of financial pressures facing public sector agencies across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, demonstrates we remain committed to working with a range of partners to provide the best possible service to our communities.

We utilise data from the local councils to look at growth within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough including domestic, commercial and infrastructure developments and how this is likely to impact upon risk within the county.

We have new legislation which names fire and rescue services as a statutory partner. The Serious Violence Duty makes councils and local services work together to share information and target interventions to prevent and reduce serious violence. We discharge our duties through prevention and protection work as well as continuing to engage in and support all community safety partnerships (CSPs) across the county. More information can be found at [Serious Violence Duty - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/serious-violence-duty)

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## Our Partnerships

We work closely, daily, with our blue light colleagues in Cambridgeshire Constabulary and East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust, as well as our colleagues in both Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council to ensure a more efficient way of working for public sector agencies in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

We now share equipment and resources with Cambridgeshire Constabulary that enhances the operational capability of both services. Within Peterborough City Council, police, fire and council colleagues work side by side through the Safer Peterborough Partnership. We are active in community safety partnerships across all councils, including chairing some of these.

East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust also share our facilities, and, in some rural areas, our frontline firefighters respond to medical emergencies.

This and future collaborations are facilitated by the Bluelight Interoperability Board chaired jointly between the deputy chief constable and assistant chief fire officer.

We also work in partnership with other fire and rescue services and have achieved shared functions that include ICT, our Combined Fire Control and shared senior operational command. These arrangements have not only improved services and resilience, but in some areas allowed the authority to make efficiency savings.

In response to the county demographics and an increasingly ageing population, we have importantly developed an efficient way of working with local authorities and agencies to deliver targeted Safe and Well visits to the most vulnerable people within our communities. These are an enhanced home fire safety visit where we conduct winter warmth checks, fall prevention support, and crime prevention, as well as fire safety. Further opportunity exists as we continue to seek out new partners that provide access to residents in this targeted group.

## Financial Business continuity planning

Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service has continually demonstrated proactive financial management and planning. This has included, in the past 10 years, reducing its budget by around £8 million in real terms (when inflation is applied). Despite the reduction in available finances the Service has streamlined and continued to deliver an efficient and effective fire and rescue service that looks after its people, as evidenced by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in 2019 and 2021.

In the previous IRMP period we faced the uncertainty of the global economic crisis, increases in energy costs, increasing inflation and nationally negotiated cost of living pay increases. These all presented substantial risks to the Service, and to mitigate this risk we completed detailed financial business continuity planning. This ensured that we could continue to deliver our service to the public within our budget.

The Service was inspected by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in early 2023, with the report and findings released in summer 2023. This found the Service to be Outstanding in 'Best use of Resources':

*"The service is outstanding at making best use of its resources. It has comprehensive financial and resourcing plans aligned with strategic priorities and its sustainability strategy that are achieving value for money for the public."*

The report goes on to state:

*"The service is good at making sure it is affordable now and will be in the future. Its medium-term financial strategy is clearly linked to its integrated risk management plan (IRMP). It has developed good financial business continuity and efficiency plans to make sure that it can respond to changes in the financial climate."*

As a Service, we are enormously proud of this achievement and our people's hard work to put these plans in place. However, the work cannot stop here, the future is still not clear. We have only received a single-year settlement for 2023/24 and we wait to hear if we will be given a longer-term settlement in the future. With many costs outside of our control such as pension changes, national pay awards above two per cent and inflation, the work to ensure our future affordability must continue. Our ability to accurately plan and budget for the coming five-year CRMP period is significantly impacted by this situation.

We will continue to focus on our financial business continuity planning and look at ways in which we can continue to adapt and streamline the Service. This is done in conjunction with our operational response project to ensure that we continue to align our resources to the risks within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

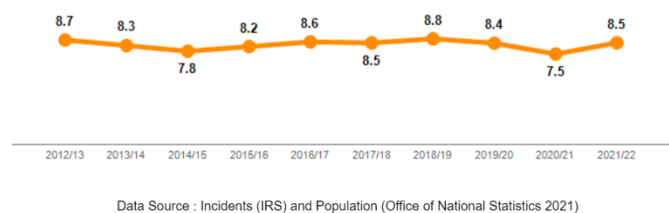
Our ability to mitigate risks and realise opportunities is directly impacted by our resourcing and the budget available to us. Our current budgetary plans and assumptions determine the speed at which we will deliver our action plans. As we gain further clarity on our future financial settlements and budget pressures, we will review our CRMP action plan and revise the timescales and scope if we need to, to ensure that our plans remain realistic and achievable.

### The calls we attend

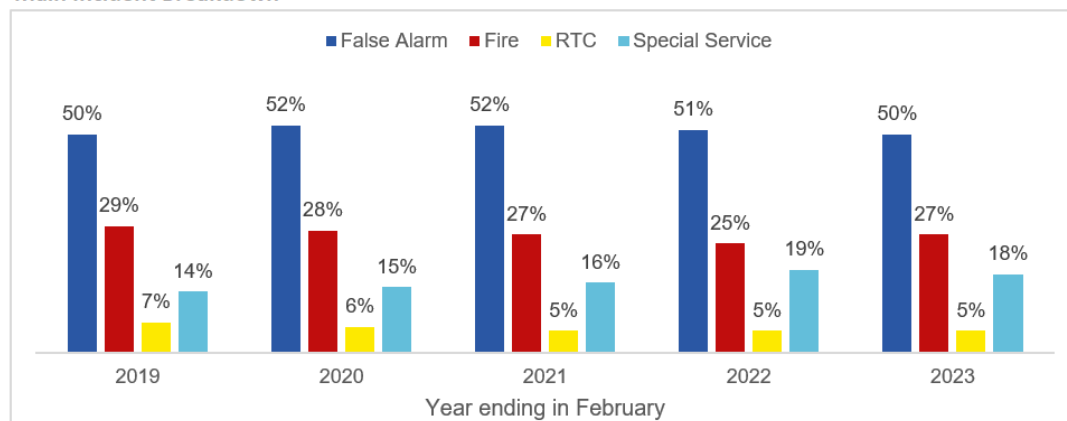
All the data used in this section, unless otherwise stated, is taken over a five-year period to February 2023.

There are two key factors that will have influenced our data. Firstly, the COVID pandemic began in January 2020 with restrictions finally being lifted across the UK in December 2021. We saw a general decrease in incidents during the pandemic due to the restrictions that people were living under. Post-pandemic we have seen an increase again to near the pre-pandemic levels as the incidents per 1,000 population shows.

**Number of Incidents per 1,000 Population**



Secondly, the heatwave in July and August 2022, which saw record numbers of calls coming into our Combined Fire Control and resulted in a major incident being declared. The hot weather and dry ground combined to see multiple fires across the county daily. Some days, crews were responding to double the number of incidents they would usually during this part of the year. The events of Summer 2022 will show an increase in the fires for that call year.

**Main Incident Breakdown**

There are four main categories of incidents that we attend - false alarms, fires, road traffic collisions and special services. The percentage distribution of these calls remains largely the same year on year, with the slight, yet consistent, increases being seen in special services.

### False alarms

We break down false alarms into three further categories - automatic fire alarms, false alarms good intent and malicious false alarms. Of our total incidents, 33.1% were automatic fire alarms, 17.2% were false alarms good intent (eg a fire that was out on our arrival or a reported fire that turned out to be a controlled burn such as a bonfire) and 0.8% were malicious. We operate a call challenge procedure for automatic fire alarms and have a policy that we do not attend automatic fire alarms to most non-domestic premises between the hours of 0900-1700 Monday-Friday to ensure that we are effectively utilising our resources.

### Over the border incidents

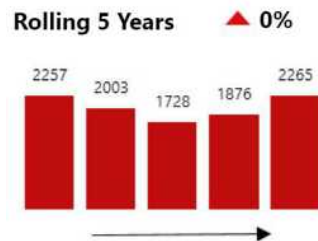
We also respond to calls in our neighbouring counties and our neighbours reciprocate the arrangement. We do this to provide the best possible service to the public. We continually monitor these attendances and those of our neighbouring counties to understand their impact to the service that we deliver.

### Fire trends across the county

The figure below shows the reductions in fires that we experienced during the Covid pandemic. The numbers have since risen to be similar to pre-pandemic levels. The split between primary and secondary fires has followed the same pattern as all fires, dipping during the pandemic but now rising to similar levels to pre-pandemic times.

We have noted a decrease in the number of deliberate fires in the past two years and are conducting further work to understand the factors that may have influenced this positive trend.

Total fires 1 April 2018 – 31 March 2023



### Special services

As well as attending fires, we provide other services which we define as special services. These special services are non-fire incidents that require a fire crew or an officer to attend.

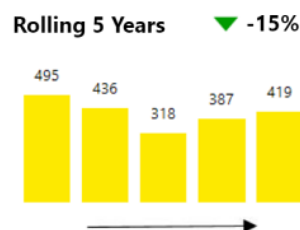
In 2018, the duty to collaborate was introduced for public sector bodies, including emergency services. It is therefore to be anticipated that since this time we have seen an increase in collaborative special services.

Over the past five years we have seen a 250% increase in assisting ambulance incidents, a 128% increase in the number of flooding related incidents and a 65% increase in the number of rescues from water.

### Road Traffic Collisions (RTCS)

Overall, our five-year average is down by 15% for Road Traffic collisions. The most significant reduction was during the pandemic, but we have not seen a subsequent increase to pre-pandemic levels. This will largely be due to the changes in people's working and commuting habits following the pandemic.

Road Traffic Collisions attended 1 April 2018 - 31 March 2023



### Lithium-ion

As technology advances, we have seen more technology available which utilises lithium-ion batteries. The accessibility and promotion of these technologies and products means that they are more prevalent in our communities. We have sadly experienced fires involving lithium-ion batteries and although the numbers of these are low, the impact of some of these has been devastating.

## Extreme weather

The 19<sup>th</sup> July 2022 was the busiest day on record for CFRS. We sent fire engines to 139 incidents in a 24-hour period. At the peak, we used 24 appliances simultaneously whilst maintaining cover for further fire calls.

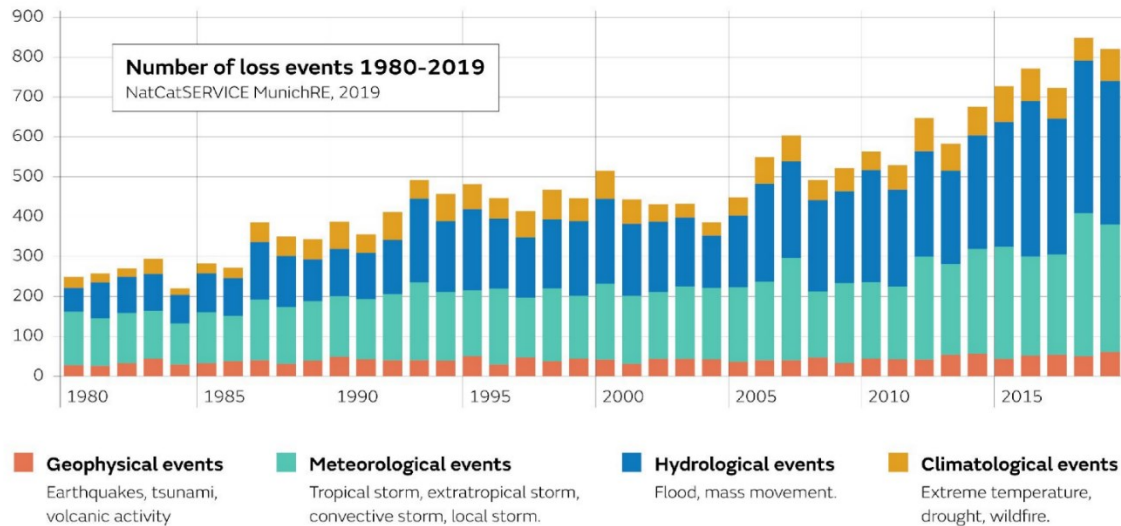
Our top 10 busiest days on record have all occurred over the last five years and all have been weather related incidents as a result of hot weather or widespread flooding.

### Total number of mobilisations per day (ranked highest to lowest)

Date	Total mobilisations	Cambs fire engine total	Other FRS fire engine total
19/07/2022	139	123	16
23/12/2020	90	90	0
27/07/2018	78	69	9
11/07/2022	74	66	8
18/07/2022	74	66	8
26/07/2018	71	57	14
24/07/2022	76	67	9
08/07/2018	71	68	3
21/07/2022	68	57	11
08/09/2021	67	56	11

The Met Office highlights in their 2020 report the rise in the likelihood of extreme weather events and the frequency in which these events occur.

## Met Office Are extremes becoming more frequent?



This graph from Munich RE shows events causing loss are becoming more frequent

The changing climate will have a direct impact on the volume and intensity of emergencies experienced within Cambridgeshire.

### Wildfire risk

Wildfires in the UK have been increasing in frequency over recent years and they could be five times more likely to occur by 2100. This is coupled with an increased likelihood that summers such as the one we experienced in 2020, will be every other year by 2050.

## Operational response review project

The operational response review project is designed to explore risks that may impact the Service and identify opportunities to counter these risks and enhance the service provided to the people of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

It focuses on the effectiveness, efficiency and people within our operational environment.

### Effectiveness

The project aims to challenge our current procedures and practices to understand how effective we are in responding to incidents within our community.

### Efficiency

The project aims to challenge our financial expenditure and use of people and resources to identify if we can do things in a more efficient way. These will include opportunities to redistribute resources and funding to improve service delivery and to identify options to support the Service's financial contingency business continuity plan.

### People

The project aims to review our current practices to further support the development of our people and to ensure that working practices are suitable for the future fire and rescue service.

The core objectives are:

**Objective 1** - Review the response standard within our CRMP to ensure that all incidents are responded to based on risk. This includes how we assign resources to incident types and the speed in which we respond.

**Objective 2** - Review the operational response model and identify options to deliver our response standards to the same standard with reduced budgets.

**Objective 3** - Review our operational response model and identify options to improve how it meets the demands of our current and future risk profile. This includes community safety and operational risk management.

**Objective 4** - Review our operational response model to identify if it can better meet the requirements of our People strategic objectives and Equality and Inclusion commitments.

The project team has completed several workstreams, these include:

- Reviewing our data leading to a revision of the definition of “most serious” incidents ensuring that we focus our resources to these



- Introducing two 4x4 off-road firefighting vehicles into the Service for summer 2023
- Financial contingency business continuity plan
- Enhancing animal rescue and water rescue provision within the county
- Implementation of an operational degradation procedure
- Adjustments to our incident command provision and introduction of evacuation boards
- Enhancements to developmental training and accessibility for continuous professional development for middle managers.

The project continues to review further adjustments to our strategic appliance planning which includes the location and quantity of fire resources, further enhancements to 4x4 provision, adjustments to crewing availability to further enhance the Service's operational degradation procedure and a review of the efficiency and effectiveness of activities undertaken by operational crews.

## HMICFRS Inspections

In July 2017, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Constabulary's remit was extended to incorporate fire and rescue services, becoming Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services, later to become His Majesty's Inspectorate for Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in 2022.

HMICFRS looks at all fire and rescue services and assesses and reports on how efficient and effective the services are, as well as how well they look after their people. CFRS has performed well in all three of the inspections that have been undertaken. We reflect on the feedback provided by HMICFRS and use this to support our plans to deliver an efficient and effective service to the public and to ensure the safety, wellbeing and engagement of our employees.

Our latest Inspection was conducted in early 2023 and the report was published that summer. The high-level gradings are shown in the box below.

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
Best use of resources	Understanding fire and risk	Responding to fires and emergencies	Managing performance and developing leaders	
	Preventing fire and risk	Responding to major incidents		
	Public safety through fire regulation	Right people, right skills		
	Future affordability			
	Promoting values and culture			
	Promoting fairness and diversity			

The full report can be found on the [HMICFRS website](#).

When considering our priorities and plans for this CRMP, it is important that we incorporate the findings of HMICFRS into our planning, ensuring that we continue to drive the positive practices identified and addressing the areas for improvement.

We were pleased to be recognised for three innovative practices around:

- Financial and resource planning
- Ecological sustainability strategy
- Using assessors from the local community to monitor recruitment.

The Service was also recognised for two promising practices:

- Providing facilities to support colleagues' physical fitness and health
- Improved maternity and menopause provision

Our areas for improvement included themes around:

- Ensuring our on-call employees are familiar with the risks in their areas
- Ensuring that our methods for sharing information and fire survival guidance to multiple callers are effective
- Training and developing our people and the monitoring of skills
- Recruitment and promotion processes.

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## Our Vision

Our vision is an aspirational statement of where we hope to be one day.

Our vision is for safe communities where there are no preventable deaths or injuries from fire or other emergencies.

Put simply, this means we will strive to reduce risk and save lives.

To succeed in this, we need to achieve community safety and operational excellence in the most cost-effective way, putting people at the centre of everything we do – people in the community in terms of their safety and diverse needs and our own people in terms of training, development and health, safety and wellbeing.

From this we get our four strategic aims and they drive everything we do:

**ADD STRATEGIC AIMS DIAGRAM**

## Our Strategic Aims

For each of our strategic aims we have a number of statements that describe what excellence in that area looks like to us, so we all understand what we are striving for.

### People

- We have a culture that embodies our values and one team behaviours.
- We listen and engage with our people, communities and our partners to improve what we do
- We develop our people and encourage them to reach their potential
- We continually improve the service we deliver.

### Community Safety Excellence

- We understand and target the risk in our communities
- We are inclusive in our approach and tailor our services to meet the needs of our diverse communities
- We work with partner agencies in a targeted, proactive and effective manner and are perceived as a key contributor to community safety
- We have a high level of success in our community safety activities and evaluate our impact.

### Operational Excellence

- We have competent, confident and skilled people
- We have the right skills, equipment and resources in the right places
- We have a learning culture looking to continually improve what we do and how we do it.

### Value for Money

- We actively seek collaborations
- We evaluate the impact of working practices to strive for efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability
- We continuously monitor how we are performing, sharing what we do and taking best practice from others.

### Our Values

At Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service we have three core values - welcome, dignity and respect - that we expect all our people to demonstrate in their behaviour to each other and to all members of the public:

- **Welcome** - we welcome people into the workplace and create an open and inclusive culture, which offers help and support.
- **Dignity** - interactions with our colleagues and communities are always in line with our one team behaviours.
- **Respect** - we respect differences in colleagues and communities and value diversity by taking into account the right for people to be themselves.

## Our resources and how we use them

### Response

Under the National Framework, we have a responsibility to maintain appropriate crewing levels to respond to all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect our fire authority area.

Assuring we have the right number of fire engines to meet demand, we also need the right resources to deal with what might foreseeably happen. To determine what resources we need and where, we analyse historic incident data and current and future risks. This is also set against our ability to meet our response standards (how long we take to get to an incident) of an average nine minutes in urban areas and 12 minutes in rural areas. We also aim to get to all incidents in 18 minutes on 95% of occasions.

We have recently refreshed our incident response model assumptions looking at 10 years of historic data. This analysis shows that we need to strive to have a minimum of 14 fire engines available across the county at any one time. This is based on us being able to respond to two incidents at the same time, both requiring six fire engines, with two fire engines being available elsewhere for resilience. We know this is not sustainable though in periods of high demand, which is why we are able to increase our resources to meet additional demand during these periods.

We have four wholetime (full time - permanently crewed) and three-day crewed stations (one is crewed in the day seven days a week from 9am until 6pm and two are crewed in the day five days a week Monday to Friday 9am until 6pm) to provide eight fire appliances (six at weekends). To supplement our current full-time crewing arrangements and to assist in meeting our response times, particularly in rural areas, we also have two roaming fire engines in the county which are crewed daily, seven days a week by wholetime firefighters from 9am until 6pm. Where possible, we also move our five-day crewed fire engines to strategic locations to provide flexible fire cover when the on-call fire engine is available at their home station (Ely and St Neots). On-call fire cover, together with our full-time resources, supports our drive to meet our planning assumptions for operational incidents.

In terms of location, mapping five years of historic incident data (most serious incidents – primary fires, RTCs and special services) has shown us which of our on-call fire engines we need to have available around the clock to best meet our response standards (these are in addition to the four wholetime stations, three day-crewed stations and our two roaming fire engines which are crewed by wholetime firefighters).

We have called these strategic on-call CRMP stations and they are:

- Yaxley
- Whittlesey

- March
- Chatteris
- Ramsey
- Cambourne
- Cottenham
- Soham
- Sawston

### **Protection**

Due to the increasing number of non-domestic premises within the county, we prioritise resources on a risk basis. We audit all very high and high risk premises. Where necessary, we sample premises in the medium and low risk categories to ensure compliance with the Fire Safety Order. This process is delivered through our risk-based inspection programme.

An example of how this can work is our response to the Grenfell Tower fire. Following this tragedy, we reviewed our audit programme to ensure that we had put in place appropriate actions to support partners and provide reassurance and advice to residents in tall buildings across the county.

### **Prevention**

We use data from a wide range of partners to target resources and activities to those who are most at risk of fire and other emergencies. We also work with partners to identify how we can make the most of every contact with the public and improve lives.

More information about our resources and how we use them can be found on our website in our Risk and Resource Methodology document:

[CFRS Risk and Resource Methodology- Updated 2023](#) [ADD DOCUMENT TO WEBSITE WHEN CRMP DRAFT IS PUBLISHED]

## **Risks and Opportunities**

Our review of risks and opportunities has highlighted a number of core areas for our focus and attention.

## **Emerging Technologies**

As technology advances and evolves so too can the risks this presents for our communities. We have tragically experienced several fires over recent years involving lithium-ion batteries. It is important that we provide our firefighters with the right skills, training and equipment to deal with fires involving lithium-ion as well as supporting wider work with the National Fire Chief Council (NFCC) to create appropriate guidance in response to fires of this type. We also work to provide appropriate safety advice and guidance to our communities on the safe use of batteries to help prevent further incidents. We must identify those most at risk from these types of fires and define the most appropriate, effective and efficient way of engaging with these groups.

## **Operational Response**

We have been assessed by HMICFRS (2023) as outstanding at making the best use of our resources. We align our resources with our risks and our statutory responsibilities. However, there are still opportunities for us to continue with this work. We must work to ensure that we have the right resources available in the right place, with the right skills, information and equipment to respond to fires and other emergencies. Our work in the previous IRMP reviewed how we currently meet our risks and explored opportunities to continue to evolve our Service. Our communities and risks continue to evolve, and therefore so must we to ensure we are providing the best service to the public in the most cost effective and affordable way.

## **Diverse communities**

We have been tracking predicted population data over the past 10 years to better understand our communities; however, the latest census data gives us an up-to-date picture of the changing demographic of our communities. We also see lifestyle changes post-pandemic and changes in the use of technology that may change the risks in our communities. Monitoring data about who is experiencing fires and emergencies helps us to better focus and shape our prevention and protection activities to ensure that we engage in the most appropriate manner. We have limited resources, so it is essential that we focus activities on those most at risk and ensure we measure the outcomes. We will be working to adapt our offerings and approaches to suit the needs of our communities and to ensure we provide value for money in how we engage. We found from our recent community engagement activities that there is little awareness of what we do outside of responding to fires and other emergencies and we will be working to address this in the future.

## **Youth Engagement**



We recognise the power of positive engagement at an early stage in life. Using opportunities to engage with young people in our communities enables us to help establish risk awareness to help prevent fires and other emergencies. Not only is this important for safer communities but also for the future of the fire and rescue service in promoting what we do and career opportunities.

## **Developing our people**

It is important that we make sure our people have the right skills to be able to do their role. It's also important for us to focus on their development for the future. We must ensure that we manage, develop and diversify our people and our talent within our Service, helping people to reach their full potential and supporting those who aspire to progress. We will be focusing our work on our development pathways and programmes, talent management and succession planning to ensure that not only do we have the right skills for today but also for leadership in the future.

## **Culture**

Our Service has a good organisational culture that embodies our values and expected behaviours and we put people at the centre of everything we do. We know we cannot be complacent though; the recent London Fire Brigade Culture Review, the HMICFRS Culture Spotlight report and other events in the media show us that it is essential this continues to be a priority. It is important to us that our people feel valued and engaged in what we do. We use engagement and culture surveys, commissioned with external organisations to ensure it is unbiased, to help us understand how our people feel about working for the Service. We measure our culture through these surveys and other listening channels and metrics. Our recent survey, conducted in 2022, showed that we had improved employee engagement and that colleagues were proud to work for CFRS. It also showed us further areas that we could improve on, for example improving our system for recording training, facilitating more opportunities for colleagues across different areas of the Service to engage with each other and showing greater transparency with recruitment processes. We will look at these, along with the recommendations from HMICFRS and NFCC, to continue to maintain and improve our positive and inclusive organisational culture.

## **Technology**

As with many organisations, we rely heavily on technology. We are a data-driven organisation, so we collect, process and share data across our organisation and with others. We use technology to deliver efficiencies and reduce administration activities where we can. Not only this, but our most important technology is how we receive emergency calls, mobilise fire engines and communicate with fire crews and officers across the county. We must protect our data and our systems and to do this we continue to invest in our technology. It is an ongoing journey to keep our systems and infrastructure up to date, ensuring value and efficiency, resilient communication links and enabling remote working.

## **Sustainability**

We're on a mission to create a more sustainable and environmentally friendly fire and rescue service.

Our sustainability strategy covers five key themes – people, transport, property, off-setting and procurement. It includes things like investing in and moving towards electric or hybrid vehicles, investing in our estates and trialling HVO fuel, and our objective is to be carbon neutral by 2030. This is an extremely challenging target. We have already created our baseline, understanding our Service's carbon footprint, and we will use this to measure our progress and review our plans. This is a topic that cuts across all areas of our Service.

### **So, what do we do now?**

Our review of risks and opportunities has identified a number of key areas for consideration that could impact our ability to achieve, or assist us to achieve, our vision and strategic aims.

This work has resulted in the creation of an action plan for the next five years. The action plan is split under our four strategic aims – people, operational excellence, community safety excellence and value for money - and will be managed by these strategic delivery groups. The action plan is detailed in the next section.

## Our action plan

### People

People are at the centre of everything we do, both our colleagues and those in our communities who we seek to protect and assist. Some People related objectives therefore cut across other strategic aim areas. Therefore, to avoid duplication, our commitment to the people in our communities and our action plan for our work in this area over the next five years is addressed in the Community Safety Excellence section (see page xxx). In addition, the operational training and development of our people is considered in the Operational Excellence section (see page xxx).

We aim to have a culture that embodies our values and behaviours. We will listen and engage with our people and develop and encourage them to reach their potential. By doing this we will continue to improve the service we deliver.

Through our review of risks and opportunities we have identified the following areas of strategic focus under People. We will continue to:

- Maintain and improve our positive and inclusive organisational culture and employee engagement and make us an employer of choice. This includes communication and facilitating more opportunities for colleagues from across different areas of the Service to engage with each other.
- Review how we manage, develop and diversify our people and our talent from within our Service, helping people to reach their full potential and supporting those who aspire to progress as leaders. This includes development pathways and programmes, talent management and succession planning.
- Review our processes for recruitment and progression, including our community engagement activity, to ensure they are accessible to people from a range of backgrounds and that they enable us to improve diversity over time, to greater reflect the communities we serve.
- Review our mechanisms for the management of safeguarding to protect our people and communities.
- Review our processes and means for supporting the health and wellbeing of our people.

## Community Safety Excellence

Community safety excellence will focus on meeting the diverse needs of our growing communities. To do this we will continue to strengthen our partnerships with other agencies and the voluntary sector. We will also ensure our resources are coordinated and targeted at those most in need. Our community safety activities will be evaluated regularly to ensure we are being effective in keeping people in our communities safe.

Through our review of risk and opportunity we have identified the following areas to further improve our community safety and fire protection activities:

- Greater collaboration with health, social care and other partners to improve the ways in which we identify and meet the needs of those most at risk of fire.
- Continue to develop our Fire Break programme to help vulnerable young people become resilient and valuable members of their communities. Explore other early intervention opportunities to positively influence children and younger people and keep them safe from harm.
- Continue to work with central government, the NFCC and local partners to educate communities and responsible persons on the growing risk of emerging technologies, primarily lithium-ion batteries.
- Continue to work with partners from the road and water safety partnerships to reduce the number of people killed or injured on our roads and waterways.
- Ensure effective evaluation focuses our community safety and fire protection activity to keep our communities safe and bring together expertise from across the Service to reduce risk to people, places and events, continuing to build long-term relationships with our diverse communities
- Continued work with our partners to protect and safeguard the most vulnerable in our communities and the most high-risk premises.

## Operational Excellence

Operational excellence will be achieved through a confident, skilled workforce, equipped to deliver the best possible service to our communities. We will continually review our resources to ensure we are able to competently deal with the range of emergencies we are called to. We will take every opportunity to learn from what we do to provide an even better service in the future and continue to mitigate the risk of rapid growth across the county.

A review of our risk and opportunities has identified the following areas to further improve our operational response:

- Work to align operational resources and skills (wholetime, on-call and fire control) to our risk and demand, understanding how we respond to incidents and the number of resources required to safely resolve them, and to ensure that we are maximising our productivity and efficiency.
- Continue to improve the collection and provision of risk data about identified premises, increasing knowledge of local risks and ensuring appropriate operational risk information is available for colleagues when responding to incidents.
- Continue our ongoing work to ensure our emergency vehicles and equipment meet our identified emerging risks.
- Continue to align Service procedures with national operational guidance to improve firefighter safety and our ability to work with other fire services, ensuring appropriate business continuity arrangements are in place for contingency situations.
- Review current arrangements for operational training and recording to ensure they meet the needs of operational colleagues and our identified emerging risks such as emerging technologies and extreme weather.
- Develop further assurance across all operational areas to achieve a high level of performance and support the continued development of our people ensuring we continue to learn from what we do.

## Value for Money

Since 2010, we have been delivering financial savings to meet the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) financial cuts. In our previous IRMP 2020-2024 we delivered further reductions and put in place detailed financial business continuity plans. During our CRMP for 2024-29, we will ensure these financial business continuity plans are updated annually so we are prepared for any future reduction in budget. The Authority recognises that ensuring value for money is an ongoing priority and we will continue to evaluate and evolve our activities so we can deliver the best possible value to our communities.

Through the review of risk and opportunity we have identified the following areas to further improve our value for money:

- Continue to update and enhance our mobilising systems, data, processes and procedures.
- Collaboration with other partner agencies, including a rationalisation and sharing of estates as well as looking for joined up working practices.
- Deliver efficient and effective working through existing and new technology, looking at how we can automate activities, enable greater mobile working and improve communication and engagement.
- Ensure our technology infrastructure and systems are robust and fit for our purposes, reducing the risk of cyber-attacks and ensuring our software is maintained and provides value for money.
- Delivery of the Service's sustainability strategies and plans.
- Continual review of our commercial arrangements for our equipment provision and maintenance to ensure these are appropriate and meet our requirements for now and for the future.
- Carry out scenario planning for potential future budgetary constraints and new financial burdens and seek appropriate opportunities to create revenue streams across the Service.

## Our Performance measures

In relation to the plans we set out in this document, we will be monitoring, reporting and publish our performance against the following performance measures:

- We will respond to the most serious incidents within an average of nine minutes in urban areas and 12 minutes in rural areas, for the first fire engine in attendance.
- We will respond to all incidents in our authority area within 18 minutes for the first fire engine in attendance, 95% of the time.

*The definition of most serious incidents is those that pose risk to life and the highest risk to property - we class these as category 1 and category 2 incidents.*

We have outlined a number of areas that we are going to focus on through our action plan. To help us deliver against these we will be monitoring the following areas to ensure that we are making effective decisions about the targeting of our resources and activities:

- The number of primary and secondary fires
- The number of associated deaths and injuries from fire
- The number of people killed and seriously injured on our roads
- The number and type of special services that we attend
- The number of Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV) against our target groups.

As well as looking at the numbers of fires, RTCs and other incidents, we also look at trends and seek to understand the underlying causes or factors that we are able to influence to reduce numbers.

We will be working to support businesses to ensure compliance with the Fire Safety Order and we will monitor this by tracking delivery against our Risk based audit programme, particularly:

- The number of high-risk premises within Cambridgeshire
- Achievement of planned inspections of our high-risk premises
- The county compliance rates with our inspections and actions taken to ensure compliance

We measure our work towards people excellence by looking at:

- Employee engagement and culture surveys and metrics
- The number of safeguarding referrals made both internally and externally
- Percentage of employees who have a valid (and at the appropriate level) DBS check

To ensure that we are delivering value for money for our communities, we will monitor:

- Spend against profiled budget
- Sustainability measures –
  - Offsetting of carbon footprint
  - Waste reduction - amounts that we send to land fills
  - Single use plastic usage

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## Consultation and engagement

As a fire and rescue service we have several important stakeholders – different groups of people with an interest in our Service. Among others, our stakeholders include:

- Employees
- Members of the public
- Business owners
- Local councillors and politicians
- Unions and representative bodies

Members of the public can be broken down into different sub-stakeholder groups that will depend on the situation, but examples could include residents living in a particular area, seldom heard groups, those at most risk of a fire, those living in particular accommodation types etc.

Stakeholder groups are important to us when we need to target specific people in the community, for example, home fire safety visits for those aged over 65 as this is the age group where we have seen most deaths or serious injuries from fires in the home historically. We also identify stakeholder groups when there is an issue or topic we wish to seek feedback on. We do this through consultation and engagement.

We generally carry out a consultation when the feedback we receive will be used to help with the decision-making process for something. Other times we will involve different stakeholders through an engagement exercise. Although similar to a consultation process, the outcomes of any questions we ask will not necessarily help inform the final decision, but will help us understand perceptions, views and consider the impact on different people so we can put in place mitigations or approach our communication in a particular way.

We make the intended outcome clear at the start of each process and always try and achieve responses from a diverse and representative mix of the community.

How we consult or engage communities and stakeholders on proposals or topics will vary depending on the nature of what we are seeking to do. With the increased use of technology and social media, online channels enable us to seek views effectively and efficiently, however we accept that there will be some demographics who are less likely to engage with social media and therefore some form of written and printed consultation may also be required.

The choice and form of consultation and engagement we adopt will depend on the issues under consideration, who needs to be considered and the available time and resources we have to complete the exercise. Where a shorter timeframe is appropriate, we will provide a clear rationale.

To achieve this, we adopt the following principles to our consultations:

- We will undertake a stakeholder impact assessment when considering an initiative and identify those groups affected.
- We will design a consultation/engagement plan specifically for the proposal, which is proportionate and targeted.
- We will make clear the nature of the consultation or engagement.
- The time frame for consultation and engagement exercises will depend on the nature and impact of the proposal.

Previous consultation and engagement exercises have included:

- Our response times and the performance measures we set for them.
- Perceptions of firefighters being called to medical emergencies (co-responding).
- Firefighting as a career choice for under-represented groups.
- Using crews of three for on-call fire engines when only three firefighters are available.
- Moving the Papworth fire engine to Cambourne.

### **Engagement with stakeholders for this CRMP**

In order to understand the views of people in our communities about local risk to inform our new CRMP, we devised a questionnaire and publicised it far and wide across the county utilising partner agency and community contacts, social media, a news release, posters in libraries and leaflets that were handed out at community events including Cambridge and Ely Pride.

The questions focused on people's expectations of the fire service and their thoughts on risk, including:

- Expectations of response times for different incident types
- Perception of different risks
- Fires in the home
- Preventing fires
- The services we offer
- Perceptions of our Service

We received just over 1,000 responses to the survey with a good demographic mix compared to the 2021 census data for gender, age, sex and disability. Ethnicity and religion were just below the community representative percentages. We thank everyone who took the time to give us their thoughts. The outcomes from the survey were analysed and fed into the relevant aspects of this plan. Feedback that was more service delivery level has been shared with the most appropriate department to consider and factor into their plans where relevant – for example, how to find and reach those most vulnerable from fires in our communities and additional communication channels for sharing Service news and information about the services we offer.

Headlines from the survey included:

- People had different expectations of how long it should take for a fire engine to arrive for different incident scenarios. Incidents with a higher risk to life or property had an expectation of a quicker response – 0-20 minutes (5-10 mins most popular). For incidents with less risk such as an animal rescue, person stuck, flooding or a bin fire the range changed with anything from 0-30 mins to not responding at all.
- 77% of respondents agreed that the fire service should prioritise calls.
- 67% of respondents would like to see more regular information on how we meet our response times. We review this information on a quarterly basis and will make this available externally too (we currently report this in a paper to Fire Authority which is a publicly available document, but we can make this information more accessible on our website and social media channels).
- Around 80% of respondents agreed we should start timing how long it takes for a fire appliance to arrive either after the location and details had been given to the 999 call handler, or once the call had ended.
- An electrical fault with an appliance or charger was believed to be the greatest risk of fire in the home. This was the same across all age groups with the exception of under 19s who believed cooking was the greatest risk of fire in the home. The reality is 32.3% of accidental fires in the home were caused by cooking and 18.5% by an electrical fault.
- Around 15% of respondents said they would not know what to do if a fire broke out in their home. This was slightly higher for respondents also citing a disability.
- The risks in the community that were of most concern to people were RTCs, house fires and the local fire crew not being available. Of least concern was civil unrest, pollution/hazardous materials, pandemics, flooding from rivers, weather and prolonged power cuts.
- Only 49% of people have a good knowledge of fire safety procedures in their place of work. 28.5% had some knowledge.
- When asked about the barriers that prevented people from accessing our services, 28.7% said that they do not know what services may benefit them and 12.9% said the accessibility of information prevented them from knowing what services we offer that could help them. Language barriers was higher for residents in East Cambs, Cambridge City and Fenland. This is something we will look to address.

An internal engagement exercise was also carried out to ensure all employees were able to contribute to this CRMP before it was drafted.

## Glossary

Appliances - the general term used to describe all firefighting vehicles, including the standard fire engine or pumping appliance (see pumping appliances).

Automatic fire alarms (AFA) - an emergency call automatically generated by remote monitoring equipment in non-domestic premises.

Community safety - the range of activities undertaken by the fire service, often in conjunction with partner agencies, to reduce harm to the public.

Day-crewed - a fire station that is crewed by wholetime firefighters in daytime hours and reverts to on-call status at night.

Fire Safety Order (FSO) - the fire safety legislation which the Authority has a duty to enforce.

HMICFRS - His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services are the government appointed inspectorate for fire and rescue services. They inspect each fire service approximately every two years.

CRMP - Community Risk Management Plan

Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs)- visits by firefighters or other trained employees, often including free smoke alarm fitting and other home safety and wellbeing advice. They can be arranged on request or by referral from other agencies.

Primary fires - fires in buildings, vehicles and outdoor structures, or any fire involving casualties, rescues, or fires attended by five or more fire engines.

Pumping appliances - a fire appliance with the capacity to pump water for firefighting.

On-call duty system - firefighters recruited to be available on-call close to their local fire station for a certain minimum number of hours per week, plus regular training. They carry an alerter to call them to the fire station when an incident happens in their area. They are paid a retainer plus a call-out fee for incidents attended. The on-call service is more widely used in rural areas. Many have other full-time employment or a lifestyle that enables them to commit a certain number of hours per week to be on-call.

Roaming pumps or appliances - roaming pumps are fire engines that are crewed by wholetime firefighters to cover on-call areas when the on-call fire engine is not available.

Secondary fires - most outdoor fires, including grassland and refuse fires, unless they involve casualties or rescues, property loss or four or more fire engines attend.

Similar services - a group of 11 fire and rescue services, similar in size and make up. Our family group is Bedfordshire and Luton, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Durham, East Sussex, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire, Suffolk and West Sussex.

Wholetime - full-time firefighters.

## **Appendix B – Resilience**

### **Local Resilience Forums**

The Civil Contingencies Act, (2004), requires all category one responders to undertake joint risk assessments, planning, training and exercising to ensure their emergency plans are current, comprehensive and that they will work in the event that an emergency occurs. The Act also requires consultation between category one (eg emergency services, local authorities, environment agency and health providers) and category two (eg utilities and transport services) agencies.

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Resilience Forum (CPLRF) exists to ensure that the duties under the act are fulfilled. The CPLRF is chaired by the Chief Fire Officer, with the wider Service represented at all levels, helping to ensure that all duties are met and that the CPLRF continues to develop and improve in effectiveness and efficiencies.

The CPLRF has developed a local Community Risk Register. The risks identified as relevant to us are considered as part of our CRMP process. These are reviewed regularly. For the most up to date highest rated risks, please see the website for the local resilience forum [www.cppprepared.org.uk](http://www.cppprepared.org.uk)

We have developed contingency plans to deal with these situations as well as the larger risk sites covered by the Control of Major Accident Hazard (COMAH) regulations, undertaking regular exercises and assessments in preparation for emergencies.

We continue to take a lead role and support the CPLRF to provide the public with the best capability in dealing with an emergency requiring a multi-agency response. The CPLRF is a valuable forum in ensuring any learning points arising from incidents and exercises are satisfactorily covered in future planning.

### **National Resilience**

The National Resilience Programme was introduced in 2003 to strengthen the ability of the country to respond to emergencies and crises. The national resilience assets are owned by the fire and rescue services which host them. Servicing of the vehicles and procurement of equipment for them is managed centrally.

The National Resilience Programme enhances the capability and capacity of the fire and rescue service to respond to a range of incidents as well as a national coordination facility.

The programme delivers:

- Mass decontamination
- Urban search and rescue
- High volume pumping capacity
- Operational logistics and support

- Long term capability management.

We operate one specialist vehicle – a high volume pump – which is available to the National Resilience Programme and for use within Cambridgeshire.

The High Volume Pump, (HVP), is crewed by on-call firefighters and is used to pump large quantities of water at an incident, or to move large quantities of water away from an area, such as in flood situations. The pump is capable of pumping 7,000 litres of water per minute with three kilometres of high capacity hose which is laid using a specially designed hose-laying unit.

We also jointly manage a second vehicle – a Detection, Identification and Monitoring (DIM) vehicle - for the Eastern Region. The DIM vehicle is available for deployment 24/7 for a major incident, involving chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive (CBRNe) materials within or outside the region. This vehicle is operated by Essex Fire and Rescue Service, with the specialist officers who operate the equipment provided by both Cambridgeshire and Essex fire services.

Other specialist units provided under the National Resilience Programme are available to us through the national co-ordination centre should we need them.

## Appendix C – Knowing our communities

Only by knowing the people that live and work in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough will we be able to provide an appropriate and quality service that meets the needs of the county's different communities. A number of complex characteristics contribute to the risk of being affected by fire or to being able to access services. We have focused on those characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010 and outline below the areas where there are known inequalities in health, safety and wellbeing outcomes.

Through the knowledge and information we have on our communities, we can effectively target our community safety work and community engagement to mitigate risks that our diverse communities may face. We use incident data to prioritise these risks.

### Age

Historic incident data shows that those most at risk of dying or being seriously injured as a result of fire are older people – particularly those with an additional vulnerability such as a disability, mental ill-health or isolation. Of the 17 people who died in accidental house fires over the past five years, nine were aged over 65. This is an increasing risk as the population of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is ageing. Census 2021 data shows the number of people aged 65 and over make up 17.6% of the population. The total number of people aged over 65 in our communities has increased by 25.6% since the last census from 125,107 people to 157,165 people. Our tactical prevention plans already include a focus on this most vulnerable group.

Children and young people are another group potentially at risk from the consequences of accidental fire (through lack of knowledge, maturity or judgement) and deliberate fire-setting (risk taking behaviours or anti-social behaviour). Initiatives to engage and educate them about the danger of fire setting behaviours through partnership work are already key areas of our prevention work.

Inexperienced and younger drivers are also more at risk of being involved in road traffic collisions and again education programmes to address this are in place with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Road Safety Partnership.

Homes with young families are more likely to have higher numbers of lithium-ion batteries in the home. Lithium-ion batteries have been identified as an increased risk for us as a cause of fire in the home.

The serious violence duty puts a statutory duty on a number of agencies, including us, with a particular focus on the reduction of knife crime injuries and deaths involving the under 25's. Our youth interventions will help to support this duty where appropriate.

### Disability and Ill-health

People with a long-term health problem or disability, including mental health, make up 23.7 per cent of the population in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. This means that

nearly a quarter of our community has either their day-to-day activities limited (either a lot or a little) or considers that they have a long-term physical or mental health condition. We use multiple data sets, including hospital bed data and those that have oxygen tanks to help us identify people that may have additional risk factors, enabling us to target our prevention activities to those most at risk. Our recent community engagement activities showed us that we need to do more to promote the services that we offer such as referral pathways, for our prevention activities, and the expansion of our on-line fire safety tool.

This risk is set to increase in the future given the nature of our ageing population which means targeting our resources and creating capacity is vitally important. Our work with partners such as Adult Social Care helps identify those most at risk and in need of our support. Services like Home Fire Safety Visits and free smoke alarm fitting are targeted at the over 65s. We give Home Fire Safety Awareness training to a range of home visitors including care providers and physiotherapists who visit people in our target groups and can refer residents to us for further support. Our data sharing with partners ensures an intelligent and effective way to identify those in need and target our resources efficiently. This includes receiving information on residents who have been issued with a hospital bed at home and therefore unlikely to be able to escape in the event of a fire.

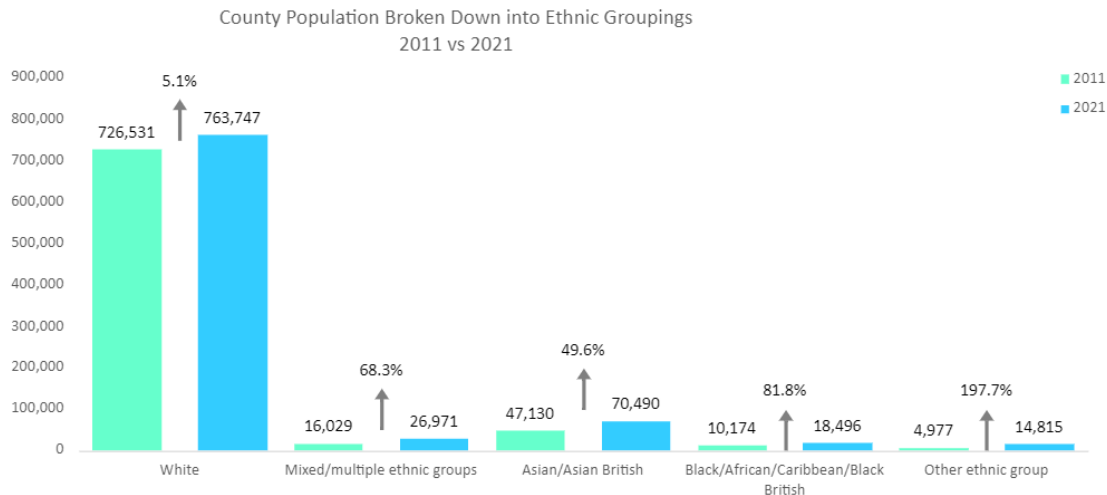
### **Ethnic origins and nationality**

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough both have a rich heritage of ethnic and cultural diversity. Understanding new communities as well as building and sustaining relationships with long standing communities is important in providing an effective prevention and response service.

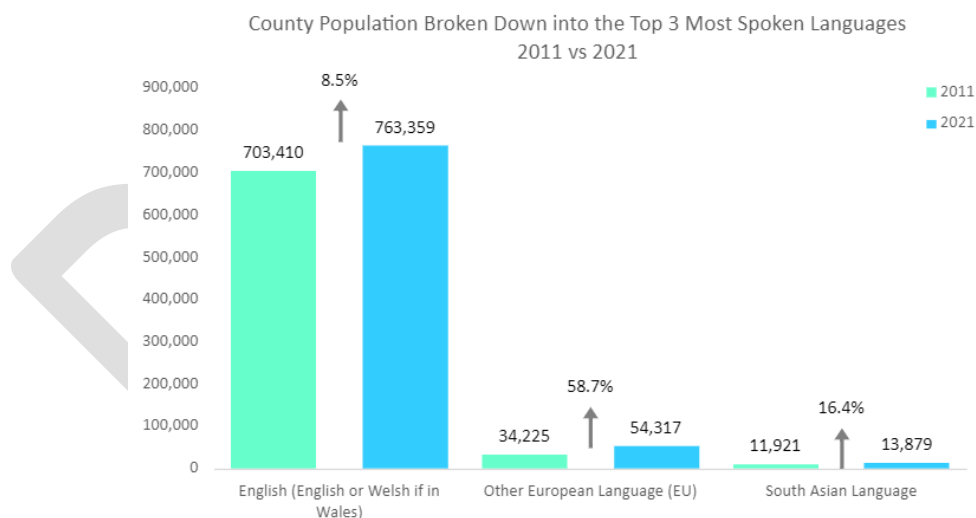
The census data shows us that the population in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough identifying as white has increased by 5.1% since 2011. People identifying as Black, Asian or minority ethnicity has increased by 67%. As a population distribution this means that 14.6% of our population is Black, Asian or minority ethnicity, up from 9.7%. Our white community has decreased from 90.3% of our community to 85.4% of our community. White British comprises 72.9% of our community and all white other 12.4% of our community.

Further breaking down the ethnic groupings, we see that other ethnic groups have increased by 197.7%. Those identifying as Black/African/Caribbean/Black British have increased by 81.8%. There has been a 68.3% increase in those identifying as mixed/multiple ethnic groups and a 49.6% increase in those identifying as Asian/Asian British.



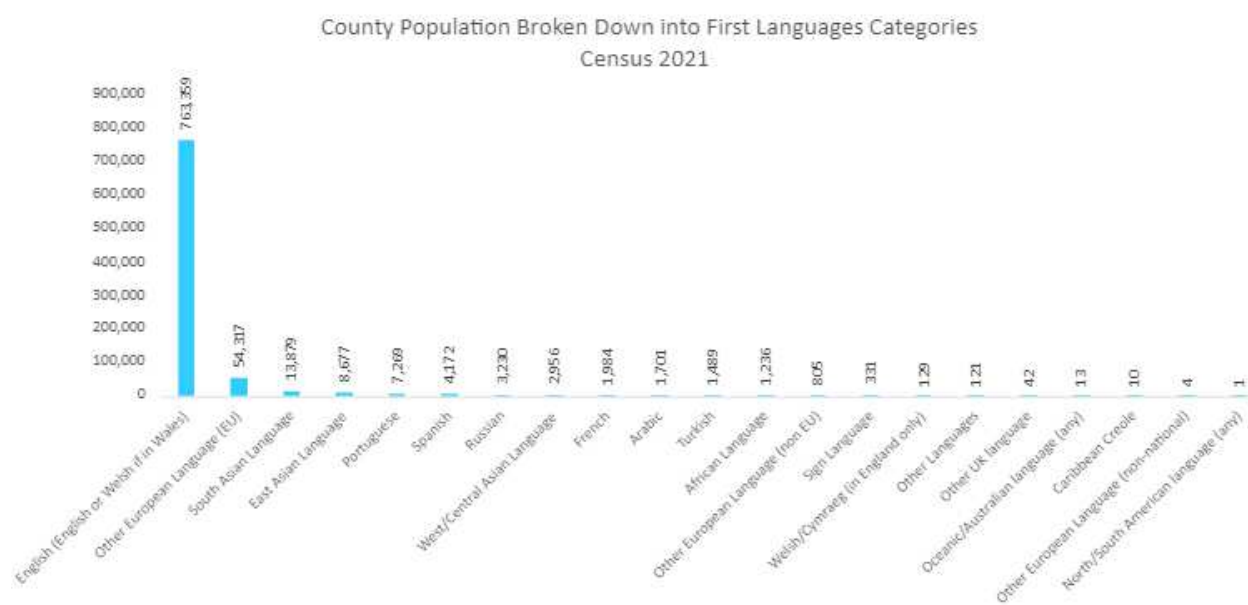


English as a first language spoken has increased by 8.5%, other European languages (EU) has seen a 58.7% increase. And south Asian languages have seen a 16.4% increase according to the 2021 census data. There are small rises in the proportion of residents who cannot speak English well or at all - 1.2% of residents in Cambridgeshire (8,200 people), ranging from 0.6% in South Cambridgeshire to 2.5% in Fenland and there are 4.5% in Peterborough (9,400 people).



Although only small numbers, there have been large percentage increases in Spanish (98.3% increase), Portuguese (92.9%) and other European language (58.7% increase). These are the top three largest increases amongst first spoken languages in Cambridgeshire.

Comparing the breakdown of first languages spoken in Cambridgeshire from the 2011 Census and the 2021 census data we can see that the prominence of each language remains largely the same, with English as the most spoken language, followed by other European language (EU), South Asian language, East Asian language and then Portuguese and Spanish. We will consider the languages spoken in our communities in the products that we offer going forward.



White Gypsy or Irish Traveller is the sixth highest ethnic group in Fenland with 591 people recorded in the 2021 Census. We will continue to work with our partners and the community directly to raise awareness across this community group about how to access our services.

## Sex

The gender ratio across the county has remained largely the same in the 2021 census data (49.4% male and 50.6% female).

Our own data from the past five years indicates that men are more likely to be injured from fire than women. Over the past five years 169 men were injured in fires compared to 78 females and four where sex was not known. This varies with age group and circumstances, for example, for all fire injuries, the number of men aged 35-54 injured from fire was significantly higher in proportion (60 men compared to 25 women in the same age category).

In terms of fatalities from fires in the home, the split between men and women is again predominantly men with 13 fatalities being men and three being women, one where sex was not known. Nine of those fire fatalities were 65 or over.

Men are still more likely to be injured or killed in road traffic collisions.

We will continue to monitor the circumstances and characteristics of those injured in fires and other emergencies to identify and respond to altering trends.

## Gender

The census data tells us that 93% of the population of Cambridgeshire identify with the same sex as registered at birth. A high percentage 6.4% did not answer this question in

the census. 0.3% of the population of Cambridgeshire answered that they identify with a different gender than their sex registered at birth (no specific identity given).

Those identifying as trans-women and trans-men were both 0.1% of the population of Cambridgeshire. Those identifying as another gender identity make up 0.2% of the Cambridgeshire population.

We continue to develop our colleagues' understanding about a range of inclusion topics, including gender identity, to ensure that we deliver our services to the community in line with our inclusive values.

### **Religion or Belief**

In Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, Christianity is the most prevalent religious belief (45.4%). This has decreased from 57.9% in 2011. In the census 2021, 40% responded that they had no religion, this is a large increase from 2011 where 29.1% stated no religion. 4.5% of the population of this county are Muslim, 1.2% are Hindu, 0.5% are Buddhist, 0.3% are Sikh, 0.2% are Jewish and 0.5% cited other religion.

The faith of our communities is relevant to us where we provide services in people's homes and in relation to understanding behaviours and observance of faith-based traditions. Our role and responsibilities in planning for large scale emergencies also provides an opportunity to engage and foster good relations with faith leaders who may be able to support and reassure their faith communities in national or large-scale emergencies.

### **Sexual Orientation**

The census data tells us that those identifying as straight or heterosexual constitutes 88.5% of the population of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. 8% of the population of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough - just over 71,000 - did not answer this question. 1.4% of the population identified as gay or lesbian and 1.6% identified as bi-sexual. 0.3% identified as pansexual and 0.1% identified as asexual. We continue to develop our colleagues in a range of inclusion topics, including sexual orientation, to ensure that we deliver our services to the community in line with our inclusive values.



To: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

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

Presenting officer(s): Deputy Chief Executive Officer - Matthew Warren  
Telephone: 01480 444619  
[matthew.warren@cambsfire.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.warren@cambsfire.gov.uk)

Date: 20 December 2023

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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

## Contact Officer

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## CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH FIRE AUTHORITY

### DRAFT MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2024 to 2028

## 1. Introduction

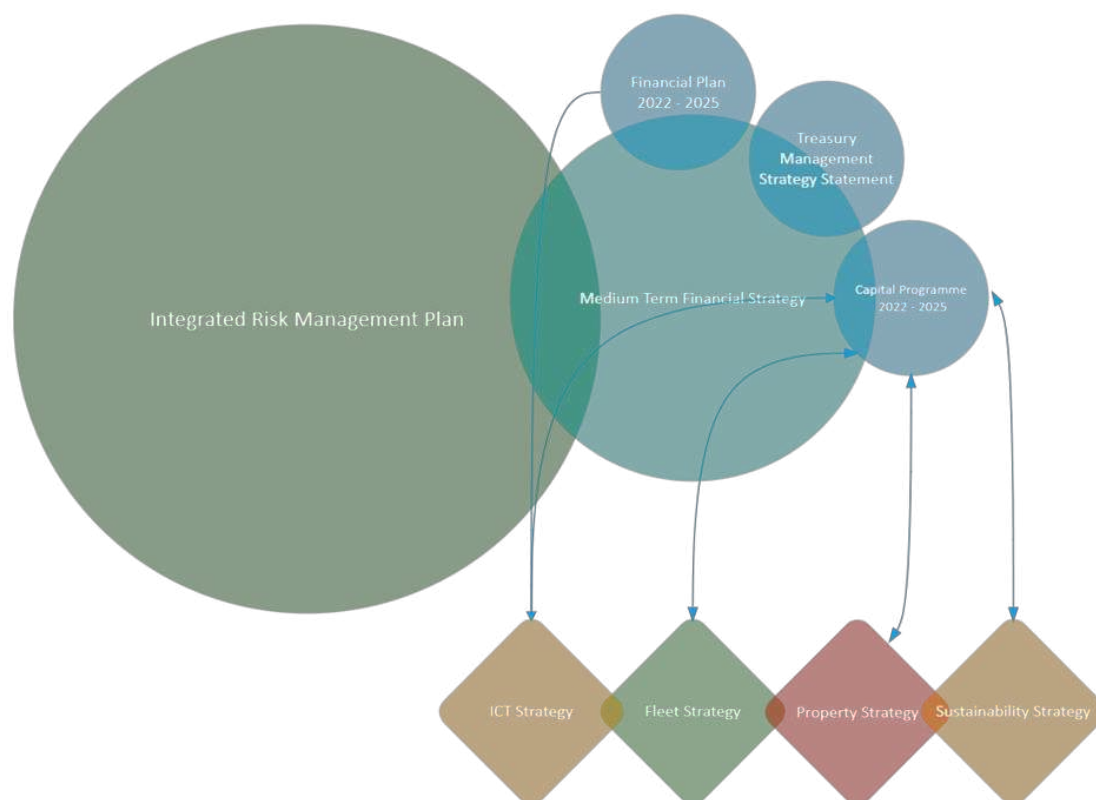
### 1.1 The Need for a Financial Strategy

1.1.1 The financial environment in which the Authority operates is likely to be extremely challenging in the medium term. It is likely that the Authority will be faced with some extremely difficult decisions as the impact of the financial crisis is properly understood. To this end, the Service has prepared a Financial Business Continuity Plan for the Authority that outlines how budget cuts can be made and the impact they will have on service delivery if they are required.

1.1.2 The uncertainty around future funding arrangements beyond 2023, along with council tax capping limits and potential Authority decisions around referendum, all require the Authority to take proactive steps to control its own destiny to mitigate against the threat of having to react to external events.

### 1.2 Background

1.2.1 In developing a financial strategy the Authority must consider the factors that may influence the future needs and plans of the Service. The diagram below provides a picture of how different plans and strategies influence the financial strategy. The diagram is not exhaustive but does provide an overview of the key documents and plans that must be considered within the strategy.



- 1.2.2 Government continues to make assumptions and offer guidance around council tax capping limits where they assume they will be increased in line with inflation. This strategy assumes that increases in council tax will be approved by the Authority. However it is important to highlight that a 1% increase in council tax will broadly cover a 1% increase in employee costs. If council tax is set below employee inflation, then budget savings will be required to balance the budget.
- 1.2.3 The Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) is the Service's overarching strategic plan that sets out the aims and objectives for the future. The financial strategy must consider and support the delivery of these aims and actions. Any future comprehensive savings review (CSR) programme will continue to focus on the most appropriate options for the Service to mitigate against the impact of potential future reductions in government funding and constraints on council tax. The Financial Business Continuity Plan will detail where reductions can be made and the relative impact, they will have on service delivery.
- 1.2.4 Revenue expenditure has been within budget each year for the last four years; this confirms the ability of the Authority to control expenditure. Considerable time and effort are spent ensuring that budget holders challenge current expenditure levels and project budgets are fully understood and funding allocated before any commitment is made.
- 1.2.5 The Authority holds reserves that are adequate to respond to the risks it currently faces. Part of this strategy is linked to considering the level of reserves the Authority holds in the medium term. However it should also be noted that these reserves can only be used once and cannot fill an on-going budget gap.

### **1.3 The Economy**

- 1.3.1 This strategy assumes that the economy will continue to grow in the medium term, with inflation in line with the Bank of England target. However as seen over the past 12 months, significant external factors have impacted inflation in the United Kingdom and across the world. It is anticipated that this volatility will continue throughout 2024. This will put significant pressure on the Authority's budget, particularly if council tax levels remain capped at a rate significantly below inflation.

### **1.4 External Factors**

- 1.4.1 The county population continues to grow and the strategy must recognise and allow for pressures and potential opportunities that are created by an increased taxbase.

## **2. Financial Forecast**

- 2.1 The five-year financial forecast, included at Appendix 1. The figures contained within the forecast are subject to significant external factors with earlier years being more certain based upon current known net expenditure and timing of specific events. Estimates beyond the current five-year period are highly speculative and will need to be further refined as we move forward.



- 2.2 The tax base assumes an increase of approximately 1.6% for the next financial year based upon the latest data received from collecting authorities. It is then forecast to grow by 1% per annum thereafter.
- 2.3 The Government continues to be committed to the localism agenda but also continues to provide clear guidance around council tax increases. A council tax referendum will be required for authorities where a 'reasonable' increase is not set. The term 'reasonable' is now defined by the Secretary of State who provides council tax capping limits. Currently the limit is suggested as 2.99%. The long-term strategy will work within these parameters unless the Authority specifically approves a revision.
- 2.4 Inflation continues to be an area of significant risk in the short-term owing to the on-going global economic uncertainty. Inflation is based upon Treasury projections, except for pay inflation which has been set at 4%. It is worth highlighting that pay negotiations between the Fire Brigades Union and the National Joint Council do not commence until after the budget has been set and as we have seen in the current financial year, can bring significant risk where the difference between budgeted pay awards and actual is vastly different. All fuel and general inflation are monitored and updated annually based upon latest information.

### **3. Preparing for the Potential Funding Challenge**

- 3.1 The Service is prepared for the potential challenges that a CSR may present. The Authority's Financial Business Continuity Plan is reviewed annually and this will be the primary document used for making decisions around future service levels.

### **4. The Medium-Term Financial Strategy**

#### **4.1 Revenue Provision**

- 4.1.1 The priorities of the Authority are laid out in the CRMP and Business Development Programme. Whilst the Authority will seek to accommodate additional requirements, these will be considered against the backdrop of the CSR and funding challenges. A project will only progress where there is a tangible benefit and funding exists.
- 4.1.2 The Authority's revenue expenditure plans will be published each year in the Authority's budget book, which will be prepared in association with the IRMP and Business Development Programme and will seek to ensure resources are allocated appropriately. Where there is competition for resources, those areas of the Service directly contributing to the purpose of the Authority will take priority, unless there are any overriding factors such as a legal imperative.
- 4.1.3 Significant planning has started on potential revenue savings, should the Service be impacted in the short to medium term by funding pressures and restrictions on funding. The major challenge for the Service and Authority will be in financial year 2024/25, when the effect of the cessation of the Combined

Fire Control will need to be funded. At present, this creates a financial pressure in excess of £900k.

## **4.2 Capital Programme**

- 4.2.1 The capital programme will be reviewed annually by the Policy and Resources Committee and published in February alongside projected schemes for a further three years. The detailed programme will be presented to the Policy and Resources Committee in January; a summarised programme is attached at Appendix 2.
- 4.2.2 The Authority will seek to identify capital requirements in sufficient time to ensure that its assets are always adequate to support our needs, can be adequately resourced and fully funded.
- 4.2.3 Prior to approving capital schemes, whole life cost details must be considered and how the scheme fits with the capital programme and Asset Management Plan.
- 4.2.4 The Service has commenced a piece of work looking at sustainability and how it can achieve a position of net zero. This work will impact on how we use our buildings and fleet in the medium term. It is likely that investment will be required to enable us to fulfil the aim of achieving net zero. A detailed strategy and action plan will be presented alongside the final budget in February 2024.

## **4.3 Funding**

- 4.3.1 The Authority's projected net expenditure is funded from government grant and council tax.
- 4.3.2 The government grant is determined by the allocation of a fixed sum across all local authorities.
- 4.3.3 The Authority will continue to monitor the government's approach to the spending review and the impact of any future changes.
- 4.3.4 The level of council tax will be determined each year after considering the short-term financial position and an assessment of the long-term outlook. The Authority will try to ensure that the level of council tax is sufficient to provide an appropriate level of service without causing the local taxpayer any undue hardship.
- 4.3.5 The strategy is to keep council tax at or below deemed acceptable increases. If funding significantly changes as a result of the formula review or unforeseen events cause the general reserve to dip below a perceived prudent level, (currently 6%), then the impact on increasing this fund to local council taxpayers will not be more than 0.5% per annum.

#### **4.4 Financial Contingency Planning**

- 4.4.1 The Authority holds a general reserve to provide contingency against unforeseen events such as a higher than usual level of operational activity or period of industrial action. This reserve may also be used to fund short term delays in realising on-going budget cuts.
- 4.4.2 Earmarked reserves are created to provide a contingency against foreseeable events that have a reasonable degree of likelihood but where timing is uncertain. The major reserves held by the Authority relate to operational firefighter recruitment to manage establishment levels within budget, financial business continuity reserve and ill health pension payments.
- 4.4.3 The level of working balances will be maintained at a level that provides the Authority's Treasurer with an adequate safeguard against the risk of cash flow interruptions.
- 4.4.4 The medium-term reserve will be included within the budget book for 2024/25.



# MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2024/25 TO 2027/28

2024/25 Description	Prior Year Budget £000's	Inflation £000's	Adjustments £000's	2024/25 Budget £000's
Wholetime Firefighters Pay	15,141	499	742	16,382
Retained Firefighters Pay	3,267	98	6	3,371
Fire Control Pay	1,860	57	113	2,030
Management & Support Staff Pay	7,730	311	308	8,349
Training & Other Staff Related Costs	429	45	112	586
<b>Total Staffing Costs</b>	<b>28,427</b>	<b>1,010</b>	<b>1,281</b>	<b>30,718</b>
		4%		
Premises Running Costs	1,862	91	334	2,287
Insurances, Supplies and Services Costs	5,308	443	(717)	5,034
Transport Costs	724	0	1	725
Service Charges	169	6	8	183
Capital Financing Costs	638	0	(156)	482
<b>Total Supplies, Servicing and Financing costs</b>	<b>8,701</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>(530)</b>	<b>8,711</b>
		6%		
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>37,128</b>	<b>1,550</b>	<b>751</b>	<b>39,429</b>
Shared Services Income	(1,109)	(115)	128	(1,096)
S.33 Grants	(1,863)	(18)	38	(1,843)
Other income	(486)	(17)	(79)	(582)
RSG	(3,191)	(213)	0	(3,404)
National Non-domestic Rates	(4,743)	(318)	42	(5,019)
NNDR top-up Grant	(1,600)	(107)	(610)	(2,317)
Transfers to/from Reserves	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Income before Fire Authority Precepts</b>	<b>(12,992)</b>	<b>(788)</b>	<b>(481)</b>	<b>(14,261)</b>
		6%		
<b>Funded by Fire Authority Precept</b>	<b>24,136</b>	<b>762</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>25,168</b>
Tax Base and growth	302011	1.3%	3945	305956
Band D Tax	£ 79.92	2.9%	£ 2.34	£ 82.26
<b>Total Precept £000's</b>	<b>£ 24,137</b>	<b>4.3%</b>	<b>£ 1,031</b>	<b>£ 25,168</b>

	2024/25			
<b>Future Years +1</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Inflation</b>	<b>Adjustments</b>	<b>2025/26</b>
Wholetime Firefighters Pay	16,382	328	0	16,710
Retained Firefighters Pay	3,371	67	0	3,438
Fire Control Pay	2,030	41	0	2,071
Management & Support Staff Pay	8,349	167	(8)	8,508
Training & Other Staff Related Costs	586	12	(65)	533
<b>Total Staffing Costs</b>	<b>30,718</b>	<b>615</b>	<b>(73)</b>	<b>31,260</b>
		<b>2%</b>		
Premises Running Costs	2,287	46	10	2,343
Insurances, Supplies and Services Costs	5,034	101	(901)	4,234
Transport Costs	725	15	0	740
Service Charges	183	4	0	187
Capital Financing Costs	482	0	70	552
<b>Total Supplies, Servicing and Financing costs</b>	<b>8,711</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>(821)</b>	<b>8,056</b>
		<b>2%</b>		
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>39,429</b>	<b>781</b>	<b>(894)</b>	<b>39,316</b>
		<b>2%</b>		
Shared Services Income	(1,096)	(22)	1,118	0
S.33 Grants	(1,843)	0	266	(1,577)
Other income	(582)	(12)	51	(543)
RSG	(3,404)	(68)	0	(3,472)
National Non-domestic Rates	(5,019)	(100)	0	(5,119)
NNDR top-up Grant	(2,317)	(46)	(1)	(2,364)
Transfers to/from Reserves	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Income before Fire Authority Precepts</b>	<b>(14,261)</b>	<b>(248)</b>	<b>1,434</b>	<b>(13,075)</b>
<b>Funded by Fire Authority Precept</b>	<b>25,168</b>	<b>533</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>26,241</b>
		<b>2%</b>		
Tax Base and growth	305956	1.27%	3886	309,842
Band D Tax £ per house	£ 82.26	2.95%	£ 2.43	£ 84.69
<b>Total Precept £000's</b>	<b>£ 25,168</b>	<b>4.3%</b>	<b>£ 1,073</b>	<b>£ 26,241</b>

<b>Future Years +2</b>	<b>2025/26</b>	<b>Inflation</b>	<b>Adjustments</b>	<b>2026/27</b>
Wholetime Firefighters Pay	16,710	334	0	17,044
Retained Firefighters Pay	3,438	69	1	3,508
Fire Control Pay	2,071	41	1	2,113
Management & Support Staff Pay	8,508	170	(8)	8,670
Training & Other Staff Related Costs	533	11	64	608
<b>Total Staffing Costs</b>	<b>31,260</b>	<b>625</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>31,943</b>
		<b>2%</b>		
Premises Running Costs	2,343	47	27	2,417
Insurances, Supplies and Services Costs	4,234	85	383	4,702
Transport Costs	740	15	1	756
Service Charges	187	4	0	191
Capital Financing Costs	552	11	77	640
<b>Total Supplies, Servicing and Financing costs</b>	<b>8,056</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>8,706</b>
		<b>2%</b>		
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>39,316</b>	<b>787</b>	<b>546</b>	<b>40,649</b>
Shared Services Income	0	0	0	0
S.33 Grants	(1,577)	0	14	(1,563)
Other income	(543)	(11)	0	(554)
RSG	(3,472)	(69)	(1)	(3,542)
National Non-domestic Rates	(5,119)	(102)	(1)	(5,222)
NNDR top-up Grant	(2,364)	(47)	0	(2,411)
Transfers to/from Reserves	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Income before Fire Authority Precepts</b>	<b>(13,075)</b>	<b>(229)</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>(13,292)</b>
<b>Funded by Fire Authority Precept</b>	<b>26,241</b>	<b>558</b>	<b>558</b>	<b>27,357</b>
Tax Base and growth	309842	1.24%	3850	313,692
Band D Tax £ per house	£ 84.69	2.98%	£ 2.52	£ 87.21
<b>Total Precept £000's</b>	<b>£ 26,241</b>	<b>4.3%</b>	<b>£ 1,116</b>	<b>£ 27,357</b>

<b>Future Years +3</b>	<b>2026/27</b>	<b>Inflation</b>	<b>Adjustments</b>	<b>2027/28</b>
Wholetime Firefighters Pay	17,044	341	0	17,385
Retained Firefighters Pay	3,508	70	0	3,578
Fire Control Pay	2,113	42	0	2,155
Management & Support Staff Pay	8,670	173	(8)	8,835
Training & Other Staff Related Costs	608	12	(56)	564
<b>Total Staffing Costs</b>	<b>31,943</b>	<b>638</b>	<b>(64)</b>	<b>32,517</b>
		<b>2%</b>		
Premises Running Costs	2,417	48	(30)	2,435
Insurances, Supplies and Services Costs	4,702	94	481	5,277
Transport Costs	756	15	(1)	770
Service Charges	191	4	(1)	194
Capital Financing Costs	640	13	194	847
<b>Total Supplies, Servicing and Financing costs</b>	<b>8,706</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>643</b>	<b>9,523</b>
		<b>2%</b>		
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>40,649</b>	<b>812</b>	<b>579</b>	<b>42,040</b>
Shared Services Income	0	0	0	0
S.33 Grants	(1,563)	0	12	(1,551)
Other income	(554)	(11)	0	(565)
RSG	(3,542)	(71)	0	(3,613)
National Non-domestic Rates	(5,222)	(104)	0	(5,326)
NNDR top-up Grant	(2,411)	(48)	0	(2,459)
Transfers to/from Reserves	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Income before Fire Authority Precepts</b>	<b>(13,292)</b>	<b>(234)</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>(13,514)</b>
<b>Funded by Fire Authority Precept</b>	<b>27,357</b>	<b>578</b>	<b>591</b>	<b>28,526</b>
Tax Base and growth	313692	1.24%	3898	317,591
Band D Tax £ per house	£ 87.21	2.99%	£ 2.61	£ 89.82
<b>Total Precept £000's</b>	<b>£ 27,357</b>	<b>4.3%</b>	<b>£ 1,169</b>	<b>£ 28,526</b>



# **MEDIUM TERM CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 TO 2027/28**

	Forecast £ 2024/25	Forecast £ 2025/26	Forecast £ 2026/27	Forecast £ 2027/28
<b>Vehicle Replacement Programme</b>				
Emergency Fleet	963,520	881,490	899,120	917,100
Silver Fleet	895,430	439,040	785,150	1,171,290
Other	-	14,670	-	-
<b>Vehicles capital expenditure</b>	<b>1,858,950</b>	<b>1,335,200</b>	<b>1,684,270</b>	<b>2,088,390</b>
<b>Capital Equipment Programme</b>	<b>189,000</b>	<b>203,750</b>	<b>224,430</b>	<b>179,950</b>
<b>Land and Buildings Capital Programme</b>				
Property Refurbishments and Upgrades	1,968,600	1,940,350	583,660	595,340
New Land and Buildings				
<b>Land and Buildings capital expenditure</b>	<b>1,968,600</b>	<b>1,940,350</b>	<b>583,660</b>	<b>595,340</b>
<b>IT and Communications Capital Programme</b>				
Tangible Assets	374,340	358,940	371,420	216,490
Intangible Assets	-	-	159,180	-
<b>ICT capital expenditure</b>	<b>374,340</b>	<b>358,940</b>	<b>530,600</b>	<b>216,490</b>
<b>Total Capital Expenditure</b>	<b>4,390,890</b>	<b>3,838,240</b>	<b>3,022,960</b>	<b>3,080,170</b>
<b>Financed By:-</b>				
Loan	1,104,890	1,629,240	1,820,960	2,609,170
Capital Receipts	1,886,000	2,209,000	1,202,000	471,000
Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO)				
Transfers (to)/from Capital Reserves	1,400,000			
Capital Grants	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Resources</b>	<b>4,390,890</b>	<b>3,838,240</b>	<b>3,022,960</b>	<b>3,080,170</b>



To: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority  
From: Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
Presenting officer(s): Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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Date: 20 December 2023

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## Draft Annual Governance Statement 2022-23

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Fire Authority with a draft Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2022/23 for approval.

### 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Authority is asked to approve the draft AGS, attached at Appendix 1, for external publication.

### 3. Risk Assessment

- 3.1 **Legal** – the Authority has a responsibility to comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (as amended), as well as having regard to the requirements of the Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework 2016 (CIPFA/SOLACE). The AGS sets out how we comply with the legislation and framework and identifies any areas for improvement in the coming year.

### 4. Background

- 4.1 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (as amended) set out requirements relating to the Authority's systems of internal control and the annual review and reporting of those systems.
- 4.2 The regulation requires all local authorities to have a sound system of internal control, which includes how risks are managed. Additionally, all local authorities must conduct a review of their internal control effectiveness at least annually. Following this review, the Authority must approve an AGS that accompanies the Statement of Accounts.

### 5. Governance

- 5.1 Governance is about doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people, in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner. Good governance

underpins good performance, stewardship of public money and public engagement; ultimately, good governance enables good outcomes for citizens and service users.

- 5.2 The CIPFA/SOLACE framework provides a structure on how local authorities approach governance and guidance on the structure and layout of an AGS which we have incorporated where appropriate in the production of Appendix 1.
- 5.3 The framework sets out the following governance requirements that an authority must ensure are in place;
- its policies are implemented in practice,
  - its values and ethical standards are met,
  - laws and regulations are complied with,
  - required processes are adhered to,
  - financial statements and other published information are accurate and reliable,
  - human, financial and other resources are managed effectively and efficiently,
  - high quality services are delivered efficiently and effectively.
- 5.4 In order to meet the framework, local authorities are expected to do the following;
- review the existing arrangements against the framework,
  - maintain a local code of governance including arrangements for ensuring its on-going application and effectiveness,
  - prepare an AGS in order to report publicly on the extent to which they comply with their own code on an annual basis, including how they have monitored the effectiveness of their governance arrangements in the year and on any planned changes in the next period.
- 5.5 As previously reported, the Department for Levelling-up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) laid a Statutory Instrument (2022 No. 708) that detailed the date by which accounts should be closed and published; this date is not later than 30 September for financial years 2022 to 2027 inclusive. Whilst the Authority will work with its external auditor to achieve this date, the current position from our external auditor is that they are unable to meet this timetable.
- 5.6 In accordance with the current Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority Terms of Reference the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting on 4 October 2023, scrutinised the AGS and noted the issues that may affect governance of the Authority (Paragraph 5 of Appendix 1). The Members present then agreed to recommend external publication of the AGS to the Authority (Minute 70 of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 4 October 2023 refers).

## Source Documents

Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework 2016 (CIPFA/SOLACE)

Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (as amended)

CIPFA Financial Management Code 2019

CIPFA Bulletin 10

## Location

Hinchingbrooke Cottage  
Brampton Road  
Huntingdon

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## ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2022/23

### 1. Scope of Responsibility

The Authority is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Authority also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having due regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

In discharging this overall responsibility, the Authority is also responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs and facilitating the effective exercise of its functions that includes ensuring a sound system of internal controls is maintained throughout the year and that arrangements are in place for the management of risk. In exercising this responsibility the Authority also relies on the Chief Fire Officer to support the governance and risk management processes.

The Authority has approved and adopted a code of corporate governance, which is consistent with the principles of the Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework 2016 (CIPFA/SOLACE). A copy of the code is on our website at:

<http://www.cambsfire.gov.uk/documents/FA - Code of Governance.pdf>

This statement explains how the Authority has complied with the code and also meets the requirements of Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 (as amended) in relation to the publication of a statement of internal control.

### 2. The Purpose of the Governance Framework

The governance framework comprises the systems and processes and culture and values by which the Authority is directed and controlled and its activities through which it accounts to, engages with and leads the community. It enables the Authority to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost-effective services.

The system of internal controls is a significant part of that framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable and foreseeable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal controls is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Authority's policies, aims and objectives, evaluate the likelihood of those risks being

realised and the impact should they be realised and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The governance framework has been in place at the Authority for the 12 months ending 31 March 2023 and the Head of Internal Audit opinion was:

- The organisation has an adequate and effective framework for risk management, governance and internal control;
- However, our work has identified further enhancements to the framework of risk management, governance and internal control to ensure that it remains adequate and effective.

### **3. The Governance Framework**

The key elements of the systems and processes that comprise the Authority's governance arrangements include:

- A vision that clearly sets out our purpose and to which the Authority's objectives and priorities are directly related.
- The Authority's core objectives and priorities are set out in its Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). The IRMP is focused over a period of four years and details an action plan after consideration of our vision, excellence statements and risks and opportunities. The actions within the plan are monitored and managed by the Programme Board, the Chief Officers Advisory Group and the IRMP leads.
- The Authority's core objectives cascade through departmental and group plans to individual performance management plans. In addition, they set out the key activities and related targets for each group and the measure of success that will evidence achievement of these. For each activity target start and finish dates and lead Officer are identified. This document becomes, in effect, the action plan for the work of that group. These plans are then further refined into station and team plans.
- Arrangements for establishing clear channels of communication with all sections of the community and other stakeholders, ensuring accountability and encouraging open consultation.
- Programme and project management embedded throughout the Service to ensure effective implementation of strategic projects and efficiency gains are realised and recorded.
- Strategy Boards for property and ICT which oversee both areas owing to the significant on-going expenditure in both areas.
- An Annual Report/Statement of Assurance which looks back at the previous year to see how we performed and details priorities for the current year.
- A continuous performance cycle that focuses on objectives and the introduction of new business critical projects, whilst managing business as usual. The system seeks



to manage conflicts of resources, whilst updating objectives to reflect the revised priorities.

- Having embedded arrangements for whistle blowing and for receiving and investigating complaints from the public.
- Ensuring the Authority's financial management arrangements conform to the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (2016).
- A partnership strategy designed to ensure all partnership activities are appropriate and will contribute to the Authority's key objectives.
- Performance management reviews undertaken quarterly highlighting performance against the agreed targets.
- A system of internal control which comprises a network of policies, procedures, reports and processes. These arrangements clarify the Authority's vision, objectives, priorities, risk management arrangements, performance management processes and financial controls and aim to ensure compliance with relevant laws and regulations, internal policies and procedures and that expenditure is lawful.
- An integrated risk management strategy and framework that ensure effective management of strategic, programme and project risks.
- Identification of the Authority's business continuity function and responsibilities with regard to the Civil Contingencies Act and preparation of business continuity plans.
- Clear scheme of delegation that sets out the roles and responsibilities of the executive, non-executive, scrutiny and Officer functions together with protocols for effective communication.
- Arrangements for developing, communicating and embedding codes of conduct, defining standards of behaviour for Members and staff.
- The financial management of the Authority and the reporting of financial management to the Policy and Resources Committee.
- The performance management framework of the Authority and the reporting of performance management to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This receives regular performance indicator reports and undertakes the core functions of an audit committee, as identified in CIPFA's Audit Committees: Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police (2018).
- An internal quality assurance function that targets areas of risk and recommends improvement measures. This function also considers legislation compliance annually.
- Accreditation by the British Standards Institute for Business Continuity, Information Security, Health and Safety and Environmental Management.

More specifically, the Authority's internal financial control is exercised through:

- A written scheme of delegation from the Authority to Officers.
- A scheme of financial management which includes financial regulations governing how Officers conduct financial affairs and contract regulations which detail fully the responsibilities of Officers in ensuring that contract procedures comply with legal requirements, achieve value for money, promote public accountability and deter corruption.
- A comprehensive budgeting system.
- An Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which has responsibility for performing scrutiny reviews on key projects and issues.
- The submission of quarterly budgetary control reports to the Policy and Resources Committee.
- The production of annual local performance indicators which are reviewed by Heads of Group and the Chief Officer Group.

#### **4. Review of Effectiveness**

The Authority has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of the internal auditors and the managers within the Authority who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment and also by comments made by the external auditors in their annual audit letter and other reports, other review agencies and inspectorates.

In this regard the Authority retains, contractually, the internal audit services of RSM Risk Assurance Services LLP to provide an independent appraisal function to review and report on the effectiveness of the systems of internal controls within the Authority. The internal audit team works to defined professional standards, particularly those promulgated by CIPFA in its Code of Practice for Internal Audit in Local Government. The Internal Audit Plan is prepared on the basis of a formal risk assessment and the internal auditor reports directly to the Authority via the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on both the proposed plan and the main outcomes of audit work.

The external auditor reports and delivers plans and an annual letter to the Authority via the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

A full review of the Authority's strategic risk strategy, process and register has been undertaken. The reviewed strategy and policy have been approved by the Policy and Resources Committee.

Our internal auditors have carried out sufficient audit work to draw a reasonable conclusion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Authority's governance arrangements.

We have been advised on the implications of the result of the reviews of the effectiveness of the governance framework and a plan to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

### **Progress made against Governance Issues identified in 2021/22**

RSM, the internal auditor, issued a follow up report (Final 8.22/23) dated 14 July 2023 which stated that, in their opinion the Service had demonstrated reasonable progress in implementing agreed management actions relating to the Governance issues identified in 2021/22.

- **Asset and Fleet Management System** – the auditors found that processes could be improved in relation to utilising the asset management system for example, fully and consistently populating data fields. There was no Asset Management Policy in place to define the roles and responsibilities within asset management and no central guidance on how the Authority purchased, tested and maintained its assets.

A significant amount of manual data entry work is required to bring the asset management system up to date; allocation of the necessary resource and therefore progress against the implementation of the associated management actions will be balanced against other priority areas. The remaining two management actions relating to plans, policies, roles and responsibilities are scheduled for completion by June 2024.

- **Sickness Absence Management** – although a number of good practices were found the auditor felt that further improvements could be made to strengthen the control environment. These included monitoring of compliance with sickness absence procedures (without exception) and consideration of refresher training in absence management. The latter has not been delivered since 2019, due in part, to the impact of the pandemic.

All management actions relating to sickness absence management were found to have been implemented.

### **Significant Governance Issues for 2022/23**

In their Annual Internal Audit Report 2022/23, dated 22 September 2023, RSM did not identify any significant issues which should be considered by the Authority for inclusion in this statement.

## 5. Other Considerations

The Authority will continue to take action to deal with governance issues relating to:

- **Combined Fire Control** – following the decision by Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service (12 September 2023) to introduce their own standalone fire control centre, we will continue to uphold the existing level of response service to our communities whilst also maintaining momentum to deliver the new mobilising system in 2024.
- **Assets** – we will ensure the timely disposal of assets that are no longer required for example, the former Huntingdon fire station site and continue to look for wider property portfolio collaboration opportunities.
- **Culture** – the Authority is proud of the positive working culture within the Service which was recognised in our 2023 inspection report by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services who scored us 'Good'. However cognisant of adverse publicity about culture elsewhere in the sector we will continue to work hard to promote the right values, ensuring fairness and promoting diversity.
- **Financial Climate** – although the public sector pay award has been agreed for this and the next financial year, we will continue to monitor the national landscape and update our Financial Business Continuity Plan accordingly. The Authority will also continue to lobby government with regard to fairer funding formulas.
- **Sector Developments** – we will monitor the progress of central government consultations into fire sector reform and public inquiry's into events that affect the emergency services for example, Grenfell Tower and be prepared to act on the outcome(s) once known.

## 6. Post Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Arrangements

The pandemic had a significant impact on the organisation, how it operated, its risk profile and associated activities. We captured learning and experiences from it through a 'ways of working' project; the outcomes of this project continue to inform our working practices and use of resources.

In a changing local and national climate, the Authority remains flexible in its approach to operational resilience and arrangements to deal with service demand; the wellbeing of all staff remains of paramount importance.

## **7. Conclusion**

Based on the opinion of the Head of Internal Audit and our own ongoing work, we are satisfied that our arrangements for governance, risk management and control are adequate and effective.

We propose over the coming year to take steps to address the above matters to further enhance these arrangements and will monitor the implementation and operation of improvements.

Chris Strickland  
Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive  
Date: 20 December 2023

Councillor E Murphy  
Chair Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority  
Date: 20 December 2023



To: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

From: Christine Doody – Head of People

Presenting officer(s): Assistant Chief Fire Officer - Jon Anderson

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Date: 20 December 2023

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## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Compliance Report 2022/23 (including Gender Pay Gap)

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Fire Authority about equality, diversity and inclusion progress in the year 2022/23 and the gender pay gap as of March 2023. The annual Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Compliance Report ensures the Authority meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2011 and 2017.

### 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Authority is asked to agree the content of the report (Appendix 1) or request any changes as deemed necessary. Once content is approved, the final design work and incorporation of appropriate images will be undertaken before publication.

### 3. Risk Assessment

- 3.1 **Legal** - the public sector equality duty requires the Authority to have due regard to the need to;
- eliminate discrimination including harassment and victimisation,
  - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not,
  - foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who don't.

The specific regulations (2011) require the publication of information, at least annually, that demonstrates compliance with the public sector equality duty including information relating to employees and others affected by policy and

procedures such as service users. The 2017 regulations additionally require public sector employers with more than 150 employees to publish information about any gender pay gap that exists. We achieve the publishing requirement by communicating this report to relevant partners and agencies and placing it on the Service website. In addition, the gender pay gap report will be published on the Gov.UK gender pay gap service pages.

- 3.2 **Political** - by reporting equality, diversity and inclusion trends and outcomes relevant to workforce and service delivery, the Authority is able to carry out its scrutiny role, ensuring positive outcomes for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable communities.
- 3.3 **Social** - by communicating our progress towards improved equality, diversity and inclusion outcomes for communities, we aim to improve our engagement with disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. This in turn allows us to learn more about what they need from our services and how we can bring about positive outcomes for them.

## Source Documents

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2020 - 2024

## Location

Equality Act 2010  
Hinchingsbrooke Cottage  
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**CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**

# **Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Compliance Report**

**Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011  
April 2022 – March 2023  
(Including Gender Pay Gap as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023)**

## **1. Glossary of Terms**

## **2. Introduction**

## **3. Progress on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion related objectives in IRMP 2020-2024**

### **People Excellence**

1. Culture and Leadership
2. Mental Health
3. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
4. Development
5. PDRs (Performance and Development Reviews)
6. Succession Planning
7. Recruitment

### **Community Safety Excellence**

8. Reducing Community Risk
9. Firebreak programme
10. Children and Young People
11. Business Seminars
12. Safe and Well Visits

### **Equality Impact Assessments**

## **4. Workforce Data**

## **5. Recruitment Data**

## **6. Gender Pay Gap**

### **Appendices:**

1. Demography of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough - Census 2021
2. Cambridge City Level – Census 2021 District Breakdown
3. Peterborough Level – Census 2021 District Breakdown

## 1. Glossary of Terms

AFSA	Asian Fire Services Association
C&P	Cambridge and Peterborough
COAG	Chief Officers Advisory Group
CFRS	Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service
CPD	Continuous professional development
CYP	Children & Young People
ED&I	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
ENEI	Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion
EQIA	Equality Impact Assessment
FRS	Fire and Rescue Service
HMICFRS	His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services
HR	Human Resources
HFSV	Home Fire Safety Visit
IRMP	Integrated Risk Management Plan (strategy)
LABC	Local Authority Building Control
LGA	Local Government Association
LGBT+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
L&OD	Learning and Organisational Development
NFCC	National Fire Chiefs Council
PDR	Performance and Development Reviews
TRiM	Trauma Risk Management
UFS	Unwanted Fire Signals

## 2.Introduction

This report aims to provide members of the public, service users, employees, Fire Authority, regulators, and other interested parties with information relating to how Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS) complied with the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) between April 2022 and March 2023 as required by the Equality Act 2010. The equality duty requires the Authority to:

<b>Eliminate</b> discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010.	<b>Advance</b> equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.	<b>Foster</b> good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
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There are **nine protected characteristics** defined by the Equality Act 2010:

1. age
2. disability
3. race (including ethnicity, national origin, nationality, and colour)
4. gender reassignment
5. marriage or civil partnership
6. pregnancy or maternity and pregnancy
7. religion or belief
8. sex
9. sexual orientation

Under the specific duties of the Public Sector Equality Duty, we are required to prepare and publish at least one equality objective which aims to meet the above general duty and to publish information that shows the diversity of our workforce. Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) objectives are set within our IRMP (Integrated Risk Management Plan) 2020-2024.

Our ED&I objectives for 2020-2024 and progress against them are given below. It should be noted for context that during the reporting period (April 2022-March 2023) we were coming out of the pandemic and in a process of starting-activities up again during the cost of living and 'great resignation' challenges.

### 3. Progress on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion related objectives in IRMP 2020-2024

#### People Excellence

##### 1. Continue work to develop our organisational culture and to enhance employee engagement.

*1a. Continued work to develop our organisational culture and to enhance employee engagement, including ensuring mechanisms are in place to properly feedback to colleagues, and facilitating opportunities for colleagues from across different areas of the Service to engage and work with each other more.* We completed the gap analysis of the London Fire Brigade report on culture and conducted an employee engagement survey. We reviewed the engagement survey results, shared outcomes across the Service, and built the insights into our people and culture plan. We met our aim to maintain or improve our overall employee engagement score, with improvements in targeted areas as identified in the 2019 survey.

*1b. We scoped the work to review our One Team behaviours in the following year, in line with our CRMP review timescales.* This work was identified from the gap analysis of various documents against the NFCC Core Code of Ethics introduced in 2021. We recognised through this work that our One Team behaviours have been in place for a number of years and many colleagues now in the Service were not in place when they were created and launched. There is, therefore, the opportunity as part of the CRMP review to ensure that all colleagues understand the background and context of the One Team Behaviours and have an opportunity to take part in refreshing and updating them.

*1c. We put a plan in place to best utilise Office365 to support great internal communications.* We migrated to O365 during the pandemic to better facilitate hybrid working and recognised that coming out of restrictions there is more work to do to make the most of O365. We migrated our intranet to Our Hub on SharePoint and compiled a business case to agree dedicated resource to help us get the most from O365. We are now recruiting into this position and the work will continue in the next reporting period.

*1d. We ensured the impacts of the pandemic on ways of working, our culture and employee wellbeing which were then factored into plans and activities.* Support colleagues have the technology to work in a hybrid way and each department has days that their teams work together at SHQ or at stations. Hybrid working has enabled support colleagues to do their work from stations as effectively as SHQ, and combined with some working from home this has given support colleagues improved work-life balance coming out of the pandemic. We began a re-focus on working relationships across teams once restrictions were lifted. O365 is being rolled out to stations to ensure greater ease for operational colleagues contacting support colleagues. Hybrid working remains here to stay and is key to retention and recruitment in support roles. We will review our approach to hybrid working in the next reporting period in our planned SHQ Ways of Working project.

## **2. Develop and improve the ways in which we support the mental health and wellbeing of our employees.**

*2a. We revised the post responsible for mental health support and are recruiting a psychological wellbeing practitioner.* We anticipate this will further enhance our provision of mental health support by offering low level interventions within the Service. External specialist mental health support continues to be provided where required.

*2b. We started a Service project to review the current Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) provision.* Feedback from employees has been sought, and alternative support arrangements are being considered as part of the project for implementation within the Service.

*2c. Continued to deliver against the Mental Health and Wellbeing Action plan.* Resilience and wellbeing sessions are being delivered to all support groups (previously the focus had been engaging with Operational colleagues). Wellbeing Action Plans were trialled at several stations. We will review how we can roll-these out more widely as part of a review of PDR/121s.

*2d. Progress of action plan to develop our work to support women's health (and in particular menopause) in the workplace.* Menopause working group sessions continued, attended by male and female colleagues. We surveyed all women in the Service about menopause and menstruation and we are now trialling portable welfare facilities on appliances for longer incidents. We held a Menopause event on World Menopause Day, with colleagues from across the Service attending, male and female. We have created menopause risk assessments and guidance. The sector has now set up a national menopause working group for Fire and Rescue Services, and we are leading on this, as well as working with the NFCC to look at national initiatives.

## **3. Improve the diversity of our workforce. We continue to deliver and evaluate the agreed Inclusion Plan. The plan has four sections a) Culture b) Compliance c) Community Inclusion d) Development.**

*3a. Culture.* The format of the Inclusion Network has now been reviewed again and continues to be a valued discussion forum to inform the subject matter owners who table discussion topics or bring EQIAs. We completed an external benchmark survey and evidence gathering exercise with The Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion (ENEI) and achieved a Bronze Award, which is benchmarked against public and private sector organisations. We surveyed our female firefighters about the gloves that they wear and the feedback was addressed in the short term and in the longer term will be part of the contract tender for workwear and PPE. We have a new team of Women in the Fire Service (WFS) representatives.

*3b. Compliance.* We have submitted our gender pay gap information and the gap has reduced again to 7.99%, with an increase to 24.3% of our managers being women. We reviewed our neurodiversity process, the People Partners have been trained to hold passport conversations and we put new external suppliers in place to support neurodiversity diagnosis assessments and specialist coaching. We continue to partner with Access to Work for workplace needs assessments and funding. We completed a project to review our Equality Impact Assessments. The outcomes of this project are an improved on-

line EQIA completion process, improved governance, a central database that all colleagues have access to, and training for over 100 managers from an external national specialist supplier. We achieved 100% completion by colleagues of our Equality Act e-learning module in 2022 and have updated the specific additional module for managers, and relaunched it in January 2023.

*3c. Community Inclusion.* We updated our Community Engagement Framework to support operational colleagues to engage with the community. We attended Pride events in Peterborough and Cambridge and flew the Pride progress flags at our sites with flagpoles during June. We held a competition for colleagues to design the pattern for a Pride firefighter helmet, which was then spray-painted and has been very popular at events. We have an Inclusion Ambassador for LGBTQIA+ who supports employees and regularly promotes resources and campaigns, for example LGBT+ History Month. We worked with Cambridgeshire Constabulary to promote national Hate Crime awareness week. We promoted International Men's Day and International Women's Day. Our external communications about International Women's Day on social media was our most popular post to date, with the most likes, shares and comments. We attended engagement events with the Iqra school and the Refugee recruitment team in Peterborough. We reviewed the Census 2021 demographic data when it became available and will use this to create dashboards for stations to support them to ensure that their engagement activity includes all the diverse groups of our community. We created and promoted British Sign Language videos on our website for the main safety topics. We continued to work on our website to improve accessibility.

*3d. Development.* We held Introduction to Inclusion sessions with all of our operational watches, exploring a range of topics. We updated our Inclusion SharePoint page regularly with videos, webinars and guides and topical blogs from inclusion ambassadors. EQIA training is now open to all colleagues to attend, and is facilitated by an external specialist training provider. Women in the Fire Service (WFS) development opportunities (weekend and online courses) were promoted to colleagues and all interested colleagues were able to be offered places. We attended the Asian Fire Service Association events and one of our operational managers was nominated for an Inclusion Award.

#### **4. Expand our programme of development activities to prepare employees for future roles and opportunities.**

*4a. Continued to embed an agreed defined coaching culture (incorporating both formal and informal coaching) appropriate to L&OD needs and capacity.* We launched our Coaching Culture Platform in June 2022. This is available to all colleagues and includes mindset modules and coaching lessons accessible at any time. We have embedded the NFCC Coaching and Mentoring Portal which is available to all and have Coaching Workshops available to all colleagues within our suite of Skills Workshops.

*4b. We reviewed the use of FACET personality profiles for all colleagues, including the education and promotion of them to gain maximum benefit.* We have embedded Facet5 Personality Profiles and Teamscales with managers to support the aim of continuing to evolve our positive organisational culture through open, inclusive conversations. We will

roll-out these products to more colleagues and review the FACET senior leadership 360 degree feedback tool for future use.

*4c. We reviewed the use of technology to offer a range of blended learning, e-learning and in-person learning interventions for personal, leadership and management development.*

This included in-person training for managers in Difficult Conversations and Managing Sickness training in addition to the many other skills topics we have in-person training for with internal and external facilitators. Next year we plan to add in sessions on Inclusive Leadership and Values and Behaviours. We also reviewed and planned the dates of our Skills Workshops for 2023 around the rotation of watch calendars to ensure more operational colleagues can attend the workshops they would like to for their development.

*4d. We ensured all colleagues are clear on what is mandatory training, and that the content of mandatory training is regularly reviewed.* We sent regular communications and targeted reminders for specific modules including ED&I, with a SharePoint page of information and links to mandatory learning. We updated the TRaCS Learning Management system to more clearly show what is mandatory, and auto enrolled new starters. We also launched a new safeguarding module for all colleagues.

*4e. We identified the barriers to our colleagues engaging in development activities.* We surveyed all colleagues to find out the barriers they may face in attending Skills Workshops and the majority of feedback was around location and dates. We consulted with the watch calendars when we reviewed and planned our 2023 Skills Workshops, to ensure that watches could attend at least one session of each topic if they wished to do so. We will continue to gather feedback following each workshop to continuously improve our approach moving forward.

## **5. Embed an understanding of the value of quality conversations to enhance personal performance and development.**

*5a. We worked with appropriate stakeholders to identify areas for improvement within our recording system for performance conversations.* We sent out regular communications with updated guidance on a new SharePoint page about good practice and supporting development for PDR/121s. We will monitor this and review our approach again in the next reporting period.

*5b. We explored options for a quality assurance process, to provide insight and assurance that good quality conversations are happening and being captured.* Managers monitor PDR/121s to ensure that quality conversations are taking place and we created completion reports for PDR/121s, which are now reviewed quarterly.

*5c. We relaunched performance and development conversations, outlining their purpose and meaning to ensure everyone understands what we mean when we talk about them.* We communicated our approach across the Service, discussed performance conversations at managers seminars and Head of Group meetings. We created a toolkit, available on the L&OD SharePoint page to support managers with performance conversations. This



includes guides, a conversation toolkit, and mindset modules. We also have Skills Workshops available to support managers with having a great one to one conversation.

## **6. Strengthen our understanding of succession planning needs.**

*6a. We started a review of our approach to talent and succession.* Following a previous pilot using the talent grids, we have been reviewing the feedback and exploring the options of how to further improve this work, including the online systems we could use to support the organisation to manage this most effectively going forward. This work will continue into the next reporting period.

*6b. We launched and embedded refreshed development portfolios for Wholetime and Combined Fire Control.* Following a pilot, development portfolios were launched for Wholetime and Combined Fire Control colleagues. These enable colleagues to develop in preparedness for progression. The next phase will be designing portfolios for On-Call and exploring the options of career paths or portfolios for Support colleagues.

## **7. Continual review of our recruitment and promotion processes to provide equality of opportunity and remove any unnecessary barriers to people joining or progressing their careers within the Service.**

*7a. We evaluated the previous Wholetime Firefighter recruitment process to plan for 2023.* We worked with key stakeholders to review the feedback from the previous process both in terms of candidate experience and ED&I data and outcomes. A refreshed process has been developed ready, for launch in summer 2023.

*7b. We continue to consider and implement appropriate changes to recruitment processes resulting from the pandemic and subsequent great resignation, in particular considering i) how we best market ourselves as an employer of choice and showcase our positive organisational culture ii) how we broaden our candidate reach and more proactively search for candidates iii) how we deliver best value for money iv) clearly evidencing recruitment and selection processes aligned to role-specific needs.* We made changes to the recruitment process to align more effectively with the post-COVID candidate market. By making the change to accept CVs, this opened more opportunities in advertising to reach a broader audience. It also gives the candidate an improved user experience. A project group has been formed to look at how we market ourselves as an employer of choice. A workshop was held to gather information from colleagues as to why they enjoy working at the Service and what they see as the benefits, and we have updated our website from this feedback.

## **Community Safety Excellence**

### **8. Reduce Community Risk - identify and reach those most at risk of fire.**

Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service has a vision of “a safe community where there are no preventable deaths or injuries in fires or other emergencies.” Fire incident and risk information is analysed regularly to identify those who are at highest risk of being injured or

killed in a fire or other emergency incident so the Service can plan and make appropriate interventions. We work with a range of partners to identify and share relevant data so we can target our services appropriately.

In November 2022, The Home Office published an in-depth review of fire-related fatalities and severe casualties in England 2010/11-2018/19. It makes the following points:

- A) From an age point of view, those aged 80 or older were four times more likely to die in a fire than the average general population.
- B) Males are more likely to be a severe casualty compared with females.
- C) The highest proportion of fatal fires were in households where a single person over pensionable age lived.
- D) Most victims had some level of overall impairment – physical impairments were the most prevalent (age related physical impairment, bed ridden, eyesight, hearing, wheelchair/mobility chair user and oxygen dependency).

From a local and national point of view the analysis compels us to target those aged 80-years and over and living alone. We don't specifically target just males, but we are aware of the associated risk. We continue to collect data to evaluate and understand trends, alongside connecting with our partner agencies through referral pathways and data sharing agreements to identify high-risk areas. We have a suite of reports available to us through the Prevention dashboard. This allows us to focus our resources appropriately.

#### **Impact of Accidental Primary Fires: April 2022 – March 2023**

The number of accidental primary fires resulting in a fire casualty decreased in 2022/23 with 36 accidental primary fires resulting in 44 fire casualties (including 1 fatality) compared to 40 accidental primary fires in the previous year. Of the 36 accidental primary fires, 64% occurred in a home. Within the home, 61% of those injured were male and 29% were over 65. 57% of all casualties identified as White British, 7% White Other and 18% as Black or other minority ethnic and 18% ethnicity not known.

#### **a) Develop our Firebreak programme to support the safety, health and personal development of identified young people (CYP).**

*8a. Firebreak continues to support vulnerable young people.* We have fully adopted the NFCC Early Intervention Implementation Framework. Our Firebreak scheme continues to focus on children most at risk, including additional courses with children and young people who Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (C&P) Safeguarding partnership identified as high-risk of exclusion and also for those who are supported by the foster care programme. We are maximising our reach by promoting Firebreak through external contacts and ongoing meetings, such as visiting schools to encourage engagement and connecting with Healthy Schools to promote Firebreak across Cambridgeshire. Using the theory of behavioural change, we effectively evaluate the impact of our Firebreak scheme through the Impactasaurus evaluation platform.

*8b. We have engaged with the Firebreak brand to reduce risk and promote.* We have a dedicated Firebreak pump which is also used to support community engagement as it uses visually appealing and inclusive designs.

## **9. Offer early intervention and positively influence children and younger people.**

*9a. Our support for young people has been developed to suit the various key stages (1,2 & 3). We have fully adopted the national StayWise platform and actively encourage partners to sign up to access to educational content. Our work with secondary schools focuses on road safety, water safety and arson reduction. We have successfully delivered two Safety Zone pilots. One hosted on fire service premises, the other hosted by a school, allowing other nearby schools to attend. This scheme is directed towards Year 6 pupils and provides safety information across a broad range of subjects including, road, water and fire safety, first aid, and product related safety.*

## **10.Support businesses to comply with regulation, and ultimately create safer places to live, work and visit.**

*10a. The Protection department supports businesses to comply using business seminars. These are held on-line and face to face. Bespoke seminars are provided to councillors and planning departments to provide understanding of the Fire Safety Order and its requirements. Fire Safety checks by watches provide assurance of compliance to the Service whilst providing information to the business and passing on areas of concern to the Protection team.*

*10b. We regularly conducted Business webinars, including additional sessions, to reach a wider audience. We will be developing and improving these sessions by including pre- and post-webinar evaluations and feedback forms to help increase the number of attendees following improvements. The evaluation dashboard will include data from other reports and will be improved by Business Intelligence to ensure the data collection is accurate. Data will be collected to monitor engagement and trends, to ensure we can reach as many people as possible.*

*10c. We are undertaking training with external partners to improve the understanding of fire regulation and identifying risks. We have been conducting joint training sessions with Local Authority Building Council (LABC) which cover approved documents, fire regulation and risk. We have begun conducting training into building safety bill regulations and information cards, which will help individuals with effective risk assessments. We have provided selected individuals from the LABC with Level 3 Fire Protection qualifications to ensure a high knowledge and understanding of fire regulation and risk.*

## **11.Effectively keep the community safe and well.**

*11a. We have worked to ensure our services are accessible. Collaborating with Cambridge Deaf Association to produce multiple videos on our website to ensure that our services are more accessible. We continue to train managers, and other employees, in EQIAs to highlight accessibility.*

*11b. We have scoped a new sprinkler campaign and assessed our strategy to reach a wide audience. We have collaborated with the LABC to promote the use of sprinklers in the home. We are continuing to identify and analyse data sets from utility companies to improve our strategy and reach. Meetings are being held regularly in preparation for the launch of the campaign.*

*11c. We conduct safe and well visits, engage with customer conversation and online tools.* We continue to conduct safe and well visits, in line with the NFCC Person Centred Framework, which is reviewed periodically. We have fully embedded the online tool to evaluate the risk of living in a home; the NFCC safelincs online Home Fire Safety Checker (HFSC). We have developed this with the Home Fire Safety Visit (HFSV) software designers to ensure that this is accessible and compatible with our website. We have influenced change at a national level to the online tool, specifically emerging trends such as ebike/escooter fires.

*11d. We have expanded our community safety visits to target those most at risk of flooding.* We have broadened our resourcing and risk scoring for community safety visits to include flooding, which has been successfully implemented with the help of the Environmental Agency and the Cambridgeshire County Council Flood Risk Team. Our collaboration with Anglian Water has enabled CFRS to support over 1,000 vulnerable community members. Anglian Water are now broadening their collaboration with Cadent Gas, and UK power networks to improve this initiative and our reach. We have also submitted a paper to the digital advisory group proposing to automate the processes of transferring key data to improve partnerships.

*11e. We have established a regional Resilience group to share best practices.* We have established the Eastern Region Resilience Working Group, which aims to promote best practice and consistency across Fire and Rescue Services in the region.

*11f. Safe and Well Visits.* As most accidental fires occur in the home, free safe and well visits are offered to those most at risk and involve a full assessment of the resident's home and fitting of a smoke alarm where necessary, as well as advice on other well-being and safety issues e.g. falls, prevention; staying well and warm; alcohol use; crime reduction. The Service and its partners delivered **6,320** safe and well visits in the year. The table below shows the distribution of these by sex, age, ethnicity, religion and disability and compares the data with the percentage of population group in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

Characteristic		% Population <sup>1</sup>	2020-21	2021-22	5-year average
Sex	Male	49.4%	37%	39.3%	37%
	Female	50.6%	63%	60.5%	63%
Age groups	Under 24	29.5%	1.8%	1.5%	1.6%
	25-39	21.2%	6.1%	6.4%	5.9%
	40-59	26.3%	10.2%	10.1%	9%
	60-74	14.8%	29.3%	29.6%	28.5%
	75 +	8.2%	52.4%	52.4%	55.1%
Ethnic Group	White	85.4%	95.9%	94.9%	96%
	Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic	14.6%	4.1%	5.1%	4%
Religion	No religion, belief	40.6%	14.9%	28.1%	17.9%
	Christian	45.4%	80.8%	67%	78.3%
	Muslim	4.5%	1.4%	2.2%	1.5%
	Other religions <sup>2</sup>	2.2%	0.9%	1%	0.7%
Disability	Day to day activities limited	16.2%			
	Disability		54.2%	55.2%	54.6%

1 2021 Census

<sup>1</sup> 2011 Census

<sup>2</sup> Each makes up less than 1% of population and includes Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish and Sikh faiths

## Equality Impact Assessments

**We continued to complete Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA).** Equality Impact Assessments are a way of systematically assessing the effects that a policy, project or decision is likely to have on different people within the Service and the community.

The process helps identify potential discrimination by analysing policies, projects, practices, processes, procedures, services, and decisions, to make sure they do not discriminate or disadvantage people and helps towards improving or promoting equality.

Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments helps us meet our legal duties as well as bringing a number of benefits. It helps us ensure that our decisions impact in a fair way, to make decisions based on evidence, to make decision-making more transparent and provides a platform for collaboration with the community and partners.

In this period Equality Impact Assessments were part of our usual ways of working while we delivered the project to improve the format and training.

Here are some examples of the EQIAs that were completed in this reporting period:

- Proposal for roll-out of electric vehicle chargers
- Review of training centre shift system
- Potential building extension to a station
- Review of safe and well visits
- Review of Mobile Data Terminal accessibility
- Review of On-Call crewing policy
- Financial business continuity planning
- Review of sickness attendance policy
- Review of expenses and allowances policy
- Remote working for On-Call firefighters
- Review of annual leave policy
- Review of Firebreak
- Proposal for development portfolios
- Proposal for replacement finance system
- Proposal for refurbishment of a station
- Upcoming legislative change for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks
- Proposed Wholetime recruitment process
- Review of HSE documentation
- Risk resource methodology
- Review of turntable ladders
- Review of HSM1 / HSM1a & HSM30
- Proposed estates strategy.

## 4. Workforce Data

One of the Service's priority areas is to improve diversity of the workforce so that it better reflects the communities we serve and encourages diversity of thought in its culture.

To measure progress in this area we monitor employees' protected characteristics from the start of the recruitment process and provide employees with the facility to input or update their equality details in the HR database on a self-service basis. Our aspiration is to see ongoing improvement in relation to applications from women and candidates from diverse backgrounds in general. These are areas where outcomes in Fire and Rescue Service nationally and historically have been poor. Additionally, we would like to see more progression to managerial roles for women and ethnic minority employees.

Employee profile by role, protected characteristic and changes over the last 5 years are given below:

Head Count by Main Job						
Snapshot at Month Ending	Wholetime	OnCall	Ops Total	Control	Support	Total
Mar-19	247	168	415	43	149	607
Mar-20	241	176	417	42	143	602
Mar-21	260	172	432	44	156	632
Mar-22	241	176	417	44	149	610
Mar-23	248	194	442	42	147	631

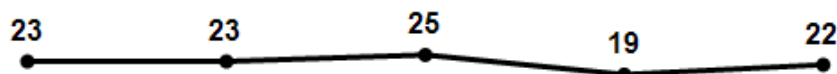
**Guidance notes:** The number of employees is calculated from the HR database and counts employees with a start date within a 12-month period over five consecutive years and records them in any of the four employee groups based on when the role started.

### Commentary:

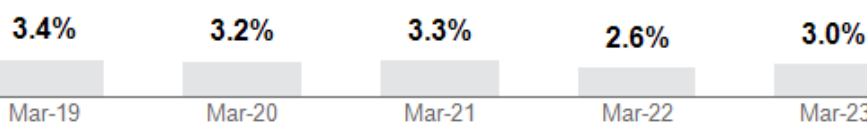
- As of 31st March 2023, we have 631 employees, an increase from 610 overall in employment from the previous year. This increase has been in operations, both Wholetime and On-Call.

## Black and Minority Ethnic Employees

Total Number



% of Total



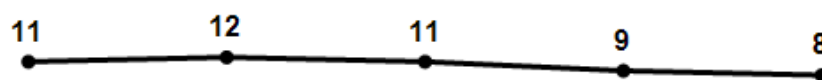
Snapshot at	Wholetime		OnCall		Operational		Control		Support		Non-Operational		Total	
Month Ending	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Mar-19	6	2.4%	4	1.8%	10	2.1%	0	0.0%	13	7.6%	13	6.1%	23	3.4%
Mar-20	7	2.9%	5	2.0%	12	2.4%	1	2.4%	10	5.3%	11	4.8%	23	3.2%
Mar-21	6	2.3%	7	2.8%	13	2.5%	1	2.3%	11	5.5%	12	4.9%	25	3.3%
Mar-22	3	1.2%	5	2.0%	8	1.6%	1	2.3%	10	5.2%	11	4.6%	19	2.6%
Mar-23	4	1.6%	8	3.1%	12	2.4%	1	2.4%	9	4.6%	10	4.2%	22	3.0%

### Commentary:

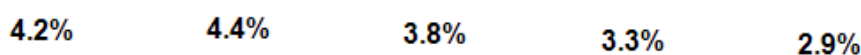
- Overall, there is an increase in black and minority ethnic employees since last year, The overall decrease last year was due to the pandemic and great resignation, however now we have started recruiting again it is encouraging to see the increase in representation in Wholetime and On-Call. We will monitor our ED&I data at each stage of the 2023 Wholetime 2023 recruitment process and review the other areas data each quarter to identify any process improvements we can make and plan community engagement activities e.g. targeted information sessions and have a go days. We also have an Inclusion Ambassador for ethnicity, race and nationality as well as an ethnicity working group who we will engage with to support and shape our activities. We support Black History Month every year by promoting national and local events and resources.
- Based on Census 2021 data, 14.6% of Cambridgeshire & Peterborough identify as black and minority ethnic. This has increased from 9.7% based on the previous 2011 Census.

## Black and Minority Ethnic Managers

Total Number



% of Total



Snapshot at	Wholetime		OnCall		Operational		Control		Support		Non-Operational		Total	
Month Ending	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Mar-19	4	3.7%	1	1.4%	5	2.8%	0	0.0%	6	9.4%	6	7.2%	11	4.2%
Mar-20	4	3.8%	2	2.5%	6	3.2%	0	0.0%	6	9.4%	6	7.0%	12	4.4%
Mar-21	3	2.7%	1	1.2%	4	2.1%	0	0.0%	7	10.1%	7	7.6%	11	3.8%
Mar-22	1	0.9%	1	1.3%	2	1.1%	0	0.0%	7	10.6%	7	8.0%	9	3.3%
Mar-23	1	1.0%	2	2.4%	3	1.6%	0	0.0%	5	7.9%	5	6.0%	8	2.9%

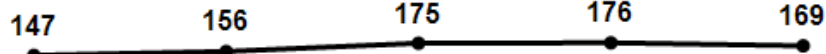
### Commentary:

- Overall, there has been a decrease in representation of black and minority ethnic managers because of the great resignation, however it is good to see that we have increased representation at manager level in On-Call.
- There has been a decrease overall since 2020, now we are out of the pandemic our work on talent, development and succession will be reviewed and relaunched with a focus on ED&I and progression.

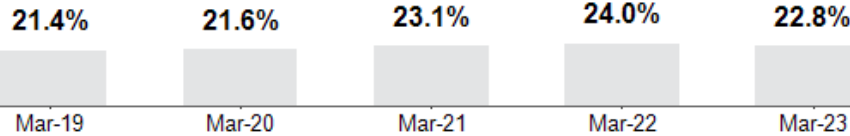


## Female Employees

Total Number



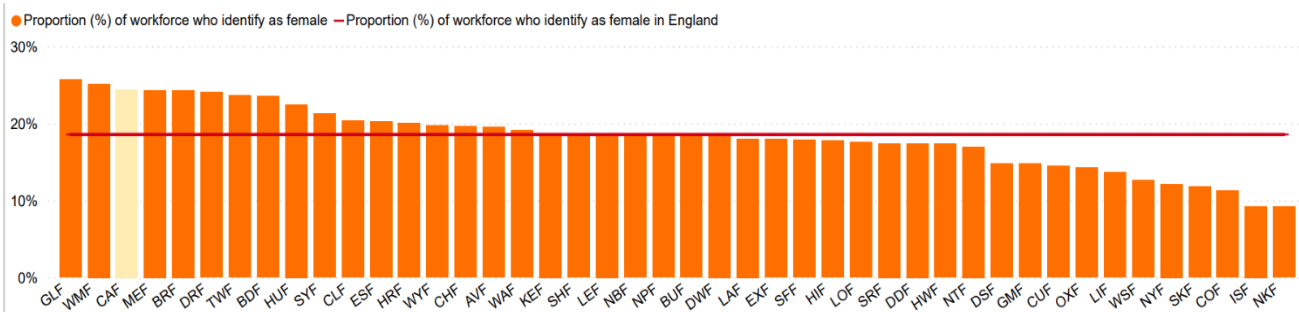
% of Total



Snapshot at	Wholetime		OnCall		Operational		Control		Support		Non-Operational		Total	
Month Ending	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Mar-19	18	7.3%	15	6.7%	33	7.0%	36	83.7%	78	45.6%	114	53.3%	147	21.4%
Mar-20	17	7.0%	17	6.8%	34	6.9%	35	83.3%	87	46.5%	122	53.3%	156	21.6%
Mar-21	22	8.3%	18	7.3%	40	7.8%	36	81.8%	99	49.3%	135	55.1%	175	23.1%
Mar-22	19	7.8%	24	9.6%	43	8.7%	37	84.1%	96	49.7%	133	56.1%	176	24.0%
Mar-23	22	8.8%	19	7.5%	41	8.1%	35	83.3%	93	47.9%	128	54.2%	169	22.8%

### Commentary:

- Overall, there has been a decrease in the number of female employees since last year, however it is good to see that we have increased representation in Wholetime. On-Call, Control and Support were affected by the great resignation.
- The Census 2021 data for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is 50.58%, the representation in non-operational roles consistently exceeds this.
- In the sector nationally, the proportion of female operation firefighters is 8.2%. We are aligned against the national figure and aim to continuously improve this as we recruit.
- We are the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest fire and rescue service for the overall number of female employees. See graph below, in yellow CAF = Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue.



Our Female Operational working group is chaired by a female Wholetime Crew Commander. The group meets on a regular basis to ensure the views of all our operational female firefighters are heard and that issues are listened to by the relevant areas. This includes but is not limited to the following topics:

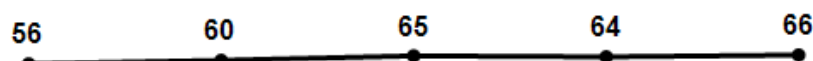
- Uniform/PPE
- Fitness (in particular following pregnancy)
- Menopause
- Sanitary and welfare provision
- Fertility treatment support
- Development and progression, including Women in the Fire Service opportunities.

We also have a Menopause working group, chaired by the Inclusion Ambassador for Menopause. The working group has male and female members in operational and non-operational roles and provides peer support as well as working on actions from the group. They have developed a menopause risk assessment, raised awareness through a video and ongoing communication and have a Yammer group. There are regular sessions and external speakers are invited. We ran a survey for all females across all areas of the Service about the menopause and menstruation to help identify any areas where we could do more work to support women in our employment. We are now trialling portable welfare facilities on appliances for longer incidents. We held a Menopause event on World Menopause Day, with colleagues from across the Service attending, male and female. The sector has now set up a national menopause working group for Fire & Rescue Services, and we are leading on this, also working with NFCC.

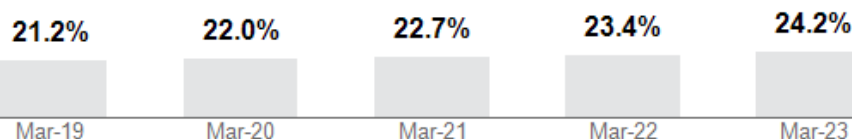
The chair of these groups attend the Inclusion Network and the Inclusion Steering Group to ensure there is a platform for them to raise the views and input to senior leaders and members of the Fire Authority on a regular basis.

## Female Managers

Total Number



% of Total



Snapshot at	Wholetime		OnCall		Operational		Control		Support		Non-Operational		Total	
Month Ending	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Mar-19	3	2.8%	2	2.8%	5	2.8%	15	79%	36	56.3%	51	61.4%	56	21.2%
Mar-20	3	2.8%	2	2.5%	5	2.7%	18	82%	37	57.8%	55	64.0%	60	22.0%
Mar-21	6	5.5%	2	2.4%	8	4.1%	18	78%	39	56.5%	57	62.0%	65	22.7%
Mar-22	5	4.7%	4	5.0%	9	4.8%	17	81%	38	57.6%	55	63.2%	64	23.4%
Mar-23	7	6.7%	4	4.8%	11	5.8%	17	81%	38	60.3%	55	65.5%	66	24.2%

## Commentary:

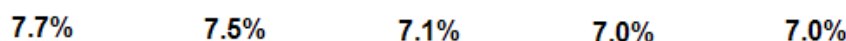
- Overall, we have 66 female managers, an increase of 10 in 5 years.
- It is good to see the increase this year is in Wholetime through internal progression.
- Now we are out of the pandemic our work on talent, development and succession will be reviewed and relaunched with a focus on ED&I and progression.

## Employees declaring a Disability

Total Number



% of Total



Snapshot at	Wholetime		OnCall		Operational		Control		Support		Non-Operational		Total	
Month Ending	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Mar-19	27	10.9%	5	2.2%	32	6.8%	4	9%	17	9.9%	21	9.8%	53	7.7%
Mar-20	25	10.3%	4	1.6%	29	5.9%	4	10%	21	11.2%	25	10.9%	54	7.5%
Mar-21	25	9.5%	4	1.6%	29	5.7%	3	7%	22	10.9%	25	10.2%	54	7.1%
Mar-22	22	9.0%	5	2.0%	27	5.5%	3	7%	21	10.9%	24	10.1%	51	7.0%
Mar-23	23	9.2%	6	2.4%	29	5.7%	3	7%	20	10.3%	23	9.7%	52	7.0%

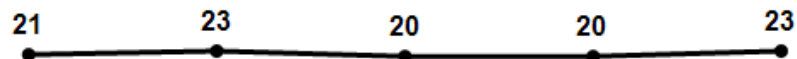
## Commentary:

- Overall, the percentage of employees declaring a disability remains 7%.
- Efforts to improve recruitment are focused on meeting the commitment of the “Disability Confident” scheme. This is a government scheme to encourage and keep disabled people in work and we have level 2 accreditation.
- Disability includes mental health and neurodiversity. We have put a process in place for operational and non-operational recruitment, where candidates are encouraged to share any neurodiversity with the recruitment team to explore reasonable adjustments during the recruitment process.
- Our neurodiversity support process continues for employees, through the People and Occupational Health teams, with external suppliers in place for neurodiversity diagnosis assessments and specialist coaching. We continue to partner with Access to Work for workplace needs assessments and funding.
- We have a Neurodiversity working group that meets monthly and an Inclusion Ambassador for Neurodiversity that brings the views and input from this group to the Inclusion Steering Group which includes members of the senior leadership team and Fire Authority.

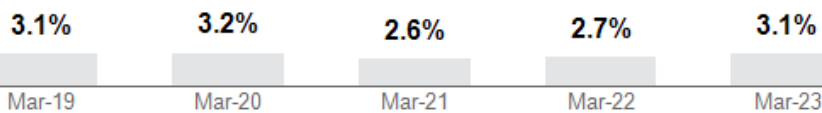
- We have a wellbeing and mental health action plan and we regularly promote all of the wellbeing support on offer, through our EAP, mindset modules, counselling provider and the firefighters charity.

## Employees declaring an Other Religion or Belief

Total Number



% of Total



### Other Religion or Belief Breakdown of the 23 Employees

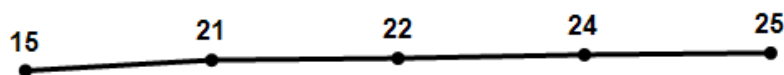
Other Religion	56.52%
Muslim	26.09%
Buddhist	13.04%
Sikh	4.35%

### Commentary:

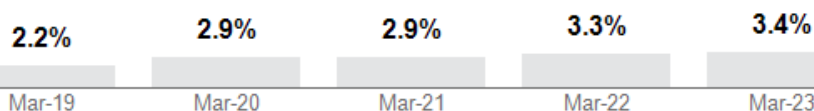
- Overall, there is an increase in employees declaring another Religion or Belief since last year. It had decreased during 2021-2022 due to the great resignation.

## Employees who identify as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual

Total Number



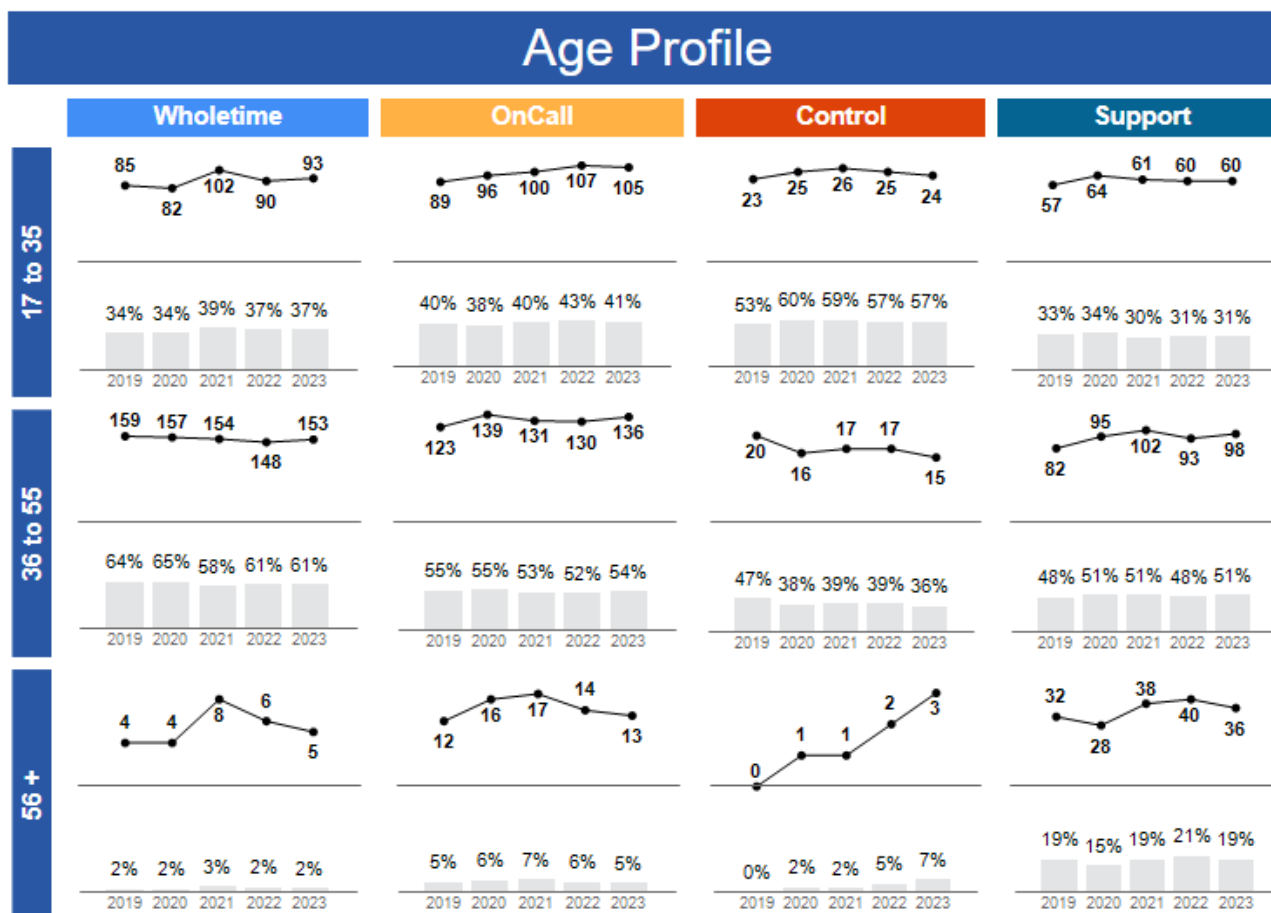
% of Total



### Commentary:

- Overall, there has been a steady increase in the declarations of employees who identify as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual.

- We attended Pride events in Peterborough and Cambridge and flew the Pride progress flags at our sites with flagpoles during June. We held a competition for colleagues to design the pattern for a Pride firefighter helmet, which was then spray-painted and has been very popular at events stand.
- We have an Inclusion Ambassador for LGBTQIA+ who supports employees and regularly promotes resources and campaigns, for example LGBT+ History Month.

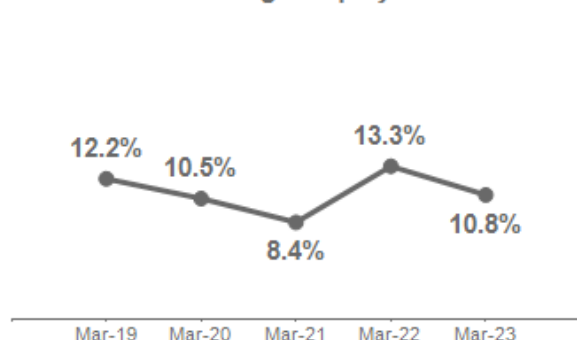


### Commentary:

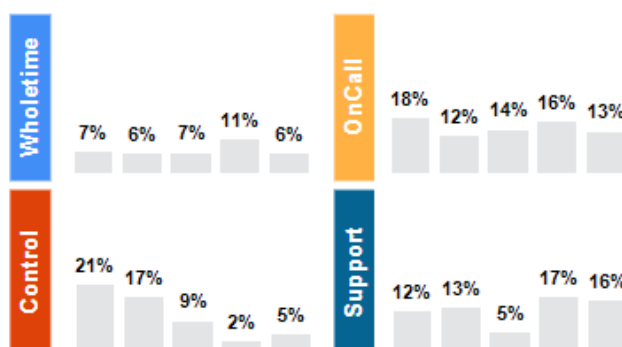
- Overall, the percentage age group has stayed relatively consistent over time.
- With the exception on Control, the Age Profile of the workforce is most populated in the 36-55 age bracket.
- 57% of the workforce in Control is in the 17-35 age bracket.

# Employee Turnover

Overall Percentage Employee Turnover



Percentage Employee Turnover by Main Group



Head Count by Main Job

Snapshot at	Wholetime	OnCall	Control	Support	Total
Mar-19	247	168	43	149	607
Mar-20	241	176	42	143	602
Mar-21	260	172	44	156	632
Mar-22	241	176	44	149	610
Mar-23	248	194	42	147	631

based on the number of people by employee group  
-- a person is allocated to one employee group only --

Number of Leavers by Main Job

Year Ending	Wholetime	OnCall	Control	Support	Total
Mar-19	17	30	9	18	74
Mar-20	15	21	7	19	63
Mar-21	17	24	4	8	53
Mar-22	26	29	1	25	81
Mar-23	16	26	2	23	68

based on the number of people by employee group  
-- a person is allocated to one employee group only --

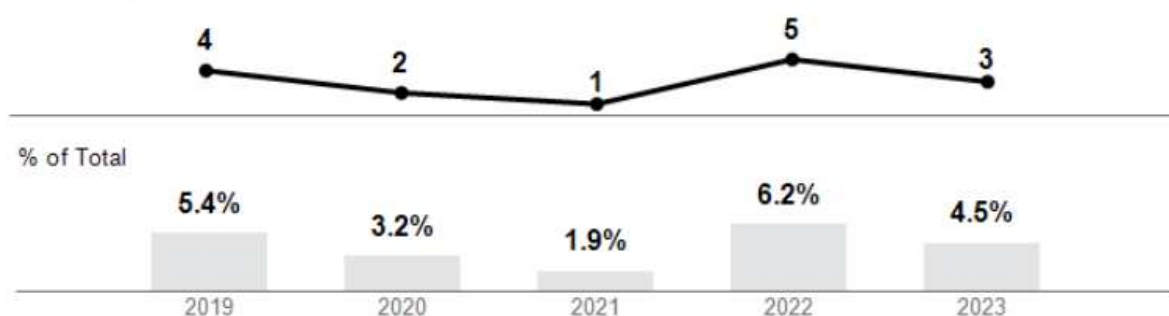
## Commentary:

- In 2020-21 there was a significant retention of the workforce. This was due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions that were enforced during this period.
- In 2021-22 the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions were lifted resulting in a global great resignation where the natural turnover that was held during the pandemic then happened. This is particularly relevant for professional support with the highest turnover last year. Overall, the great resignation, as tracked by the Office for National Statistics, is now declining and in 2022-23 our support turnover and recruitment is more stable.

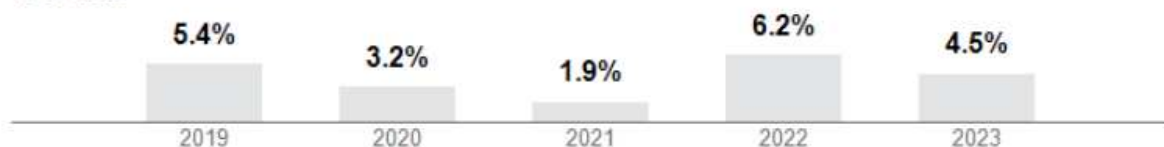


## Black and Minority Ethnic Leavers

Total Number



% of Total



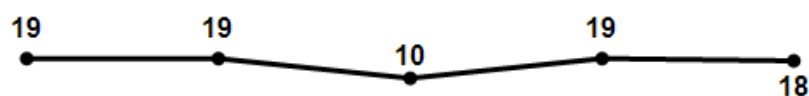
Rolling 12 months	Wholetime		OnCall		Operational		Control		Support		Non-Operational		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Mar-19	1	5.9%	1	3.3%	2	4.3%	1	11.1%	1	5.6%	2	7.4%	4	5.4%
Mar-20	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	10.5%	2	7.7%	2	3.2%
Mar-21	1	5.9%	0	0.0%	1	2.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	1.9%
Mar-22	3	11.5%	0	0.0%	3	5.5%	0	0.0%	2	8.0%	2	7.7%	5	6.2%
Mar-23	1	6.3%	0	0.0%	1	2.4%	0	0.0%	2	8.7%	2	8.0%	3	4.5%

### Commentary:

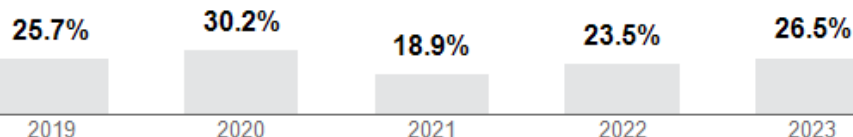
- Overall, there were three black and minority ethnic leavers in the last year, two from support and one from Wholetime. This is less than the previous year.
- We have an ethnicity working group led by the Inclusion Ambassador for Ethnicity, Race and Nationality, who also attends the Inclusion Steering Group to ensure there is a platform for them to raise the views and input to senior leaders and members of the Fire Authority on a regular basis.
- Exit data is sought from all leavers through a questionnaire and / or an exit conversation, and this is closely monitored to identify any trends or patterns. This includes close monitoring of the exit data for those with different protected characteristics, the review for this period did not raise any concerning topics.

## Female Leavers

Total Number



% of Total



Rolling 12 months	Wholetime		OnCall		Operational		Control		Support		Non-Operational		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Mar-19	2	11.8%	0	0.0%	2	4.3%	6	66.7%	11	61.1%	17	63.0%	19	25.7%
Mar-20	1	6.7%	5	23.8%	6	16.7%	6	85.7%	7	36.8%	13	50.0%	19	30.2%
Mar-21	0	0.0%	2	8.3%	2	4.9%	2	50.0%	6	75.0%	8	66.7%	10	18.9%
Mar-22	3	11.5%	0	0.0%	3	5.5%	0	0.0%	16	64.0%	16	61.5%	19	23.5%
Mar-23	0	0.0%	6	23.1%	6	14.3%	2	100.0%	10	43.5%	12	48.0%	18	26.5%

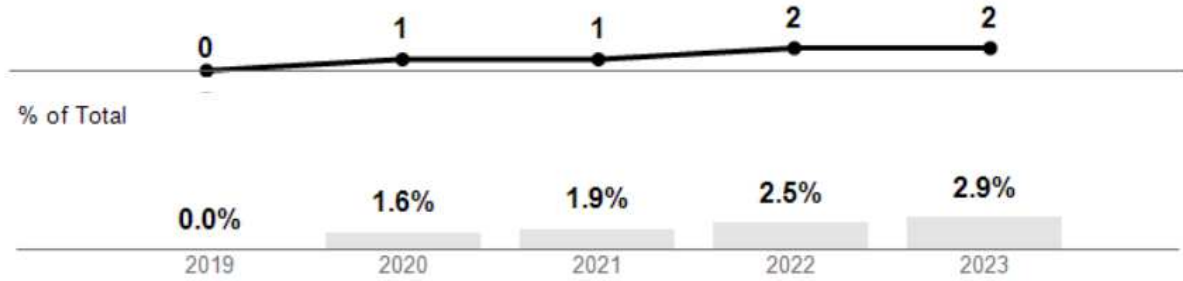
### Commentary:

- Overall, there were 18 female leavers in the last year, slightly less than the previous year.
- The great resignation led to the increase in turnover from Support and On-Call.
- Exit data is sought from all leavers through a questionnaire and / or an exit conversation, and this is closely monitored to identify any trends or patterns. This includes close monitoring of the exit data for those with different protected characteristics, the review for this period did not raise any concerning topics.



## Leavers who identify as Gay, Lesbian or Bisexual

Total Number



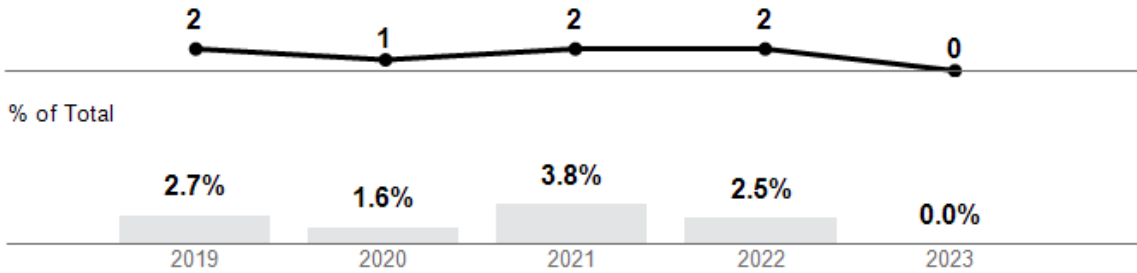
Rolling 12 months	Wholetime		OnCall		Operational		Control		Support		Non-Operational		Total	
Ending	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Mar-19	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Mar-20	1	6.7%	0	0.0%	1	2.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	1.6%
Mar-21	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	25.0%	0	0.0%	1	8.3%	1	1.9%
Mar-22	0	0.0%	1	3.4%	1	1.8%	0	0.0%	1	4.0%	1	3.8%	2	2.5%
Mar-23	0	0.0%	1	3.8%	1	2.4%	0	0.0%	1	4.3%	1	4.0%	2	2.9%

### Commentary:

- Overall, there were two leavers who identify as Gay, Lesbian or Bisexual.
- Exit data is sought from all leavers through a questionnaire and / or an exit conversation, and this is closely monitored to identify any trends or patterns. This includes close monitoring of the exit data for those with different protected characteristics, the review for this period did not raise any concerning topics.

## Leavers declaring an Other Religion or Belief

Total Number

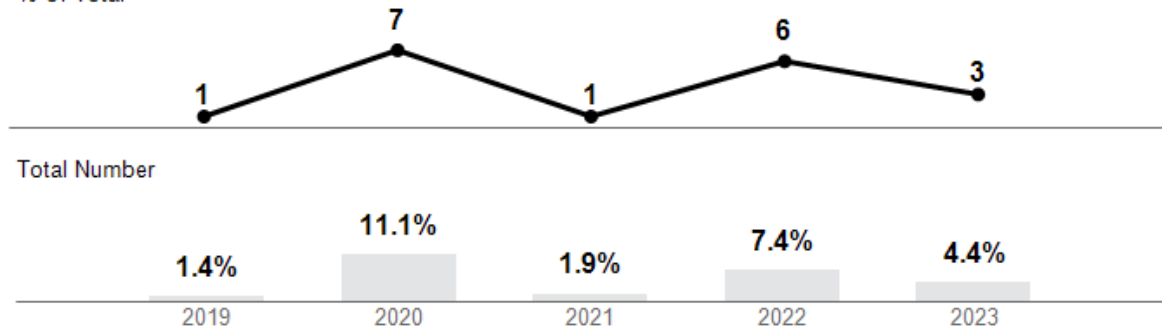


### Commentary:

- Overall, there were no leavers declaring an other Religion or Belief.

## Leavers sharing a Disability

% of Total



### Commentary:

- Overall, three leavers had declared a disability, this is less than the previous year.
- Exit data is sought from all leavers through a questionnaire and / or an exit conversation, and this is closely monitored to identify any trends or patterns. This includes close monitoring of the exit data for those with different protected characteristics, the review for this period did not raise any concerning topics.

## Return to work after maternity leave

We had 6 employees on maternity leave during the period, and all these employees returned to work.

## Discipline and capability cases

Cases	Informal Outcome				First Formal Warning				Final Formal Warning				Dismissal			
Year	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Total Numbers	11	4	6	13	3	2	1	4	0	0	0	1	3	1	0	2
Availability & attendance	4	1	1	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Failure to comply with policy	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dishonesty	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
Inappropriate Behaviour	0	3	3	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Driving	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Capability	5	0	1	3	2	1	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Probation	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	1

We have analysed the protected characteristics of the employees involved in the disciplinary and grievance cases and are satisfied that there is no disproportionate impact.

Grievance Cases								
	19/20		20/21		21/22		22/23	
Total Numbers	8	Outcomes	12	Outcomes	2	Outcomes	9	Outcomes
Process	6	0 upheld 1 partially upheld 0 not upheld 5 informally resolved	3	0 upheld 0 partially upheld 1 not upheld 2 informally resolved	1	0 upheld 0 partially upheld 1 not upheld 0 informally resolved	3	0 upheld 0 partially upheld 0 not upheld 3 informally resolved
Bullying	0	0 upheld 0 partially upheld 0 not upheld 0 informally resolved	1	0 upheld 0 partially upheld 1 not upheld 0 informally resolved	0	0 upheld 0 partially upheld 0 not upheld 0 informally resolved	2	0 upheld 0 partially upheld 1 not upheld 1 informally resolved
Health & Safety	0	0 upheld 0 partially upheld 0 not upheld 0 informally resolved	7	0 upheld 2 partially upheld 4 not upheld 1 informally resolved	0	0 upheld 0 partially upheld 0 not upheld 0 informally resolved	0	0 upheld 0 partially upheld 0 not upheld 0 informally resolved
Unfair Treatment	2	0 upheld 1 partially upheld 1 not upheld 0 informally resolved	1	0 upheld 1 partially upheld 0 not upheld 0 informally resolved	1	0 upheld 0 partially upheld 0 not upheld 1 informally resolved	4	0 upheld 0 partially upheld 0 not upheld 4 informally resolved

## 5. Recruitment Data

The following tables and graphs show the number of applicants and successful recruits for all employee groups.

### Selection Standards

Panels of short listers and assessors must undergo assessor training before being allowed to interview or assess. Application forms are shortlisted anonymously with personal details and diversity information removed before assessors receive them.

Total number of Applicants and Recruits



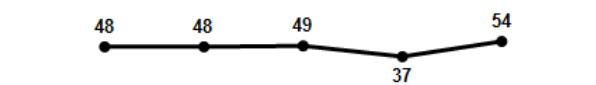
Applicants						
Rolling 12 months	Wholetime	OnCall	Operational	Control	Support	Total
Ending	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
Mar-19	175	269	444	96	171	711
Mar-20	259	185	444	115	179	738
Mar-21	124	209	333	1	343	677
Mar-22	0	145	145	0	195	340
Mar-23	0	224	224	0	134	358

Recruits						
Rolling 12 months	Wholetime	OnCall	Operational	Control	Support	Total
Ending	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
Mar-19	11	32	43	12	23	78
Mar-20	7	33	40	5	17	62
Mar-21	24	22	46	7	21	74
Mar-22	0	34	34	0	18	52
Mar-23	11	40	51	0	17	68

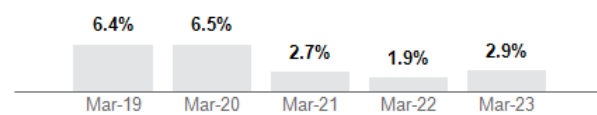
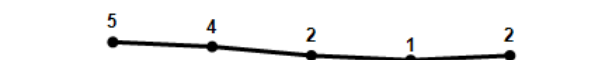
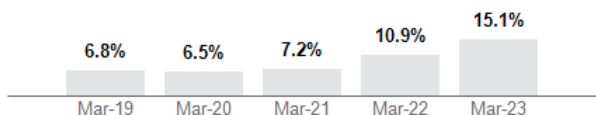
In this reporting period we did not run a new Wholetime recruitment campaign or have any vacancies in Fire Control, which accounts for the overall number of applicants and recruits being lower than the previous years. On-Call and Professional Support recruitment continued.

## People with a Black and Minority Ethnic Background

Total Number



% of Total



Applicants										
Rolling 12 months	Wholetime		On-Call		Operational		Control		Support	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Mar-19	6	3.4%	21	7.8%	27	6.1%	1	1.0%	20	11.7%
Mar-20	6	2.3%	15	8.1%	21	4.7%	15	13.0%	12	6.7%
Mar-21	10	8.1%	12	5.7%	22	6.6%	0	0.0%	27	7.9%
Mar-22	0	0.0%	12	8.3%	12	8.3%	0	0.0%	25	12.8%
Mar-23	0	0.0%	18	8.0%	18	8.0%	0	0.0%	36	26.9%

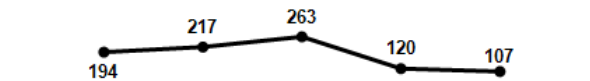
Recruits										
Rolling 12 months	Wholetime		On-Call		Operational		Control		Support	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Mar-19	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	5	21.7%
Mar-20	1	14.3%	1	3.0%	2	5.0%	1	20.0%	1	5.9%
Mar-21	0	0.0%	1	4.5%	1	2.2%	0	0.0%	1	4.8%
Mar-22	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	5.6%
Mar-23	0	0.0%	1	2.5%	1	2.0%	0	0.0%	1	5.9%

The percentage of applications from black and minority ethnic candidates has improved since last year, in Support and On-Call where we have been recruiting.

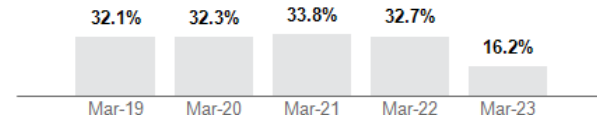
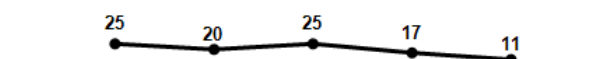
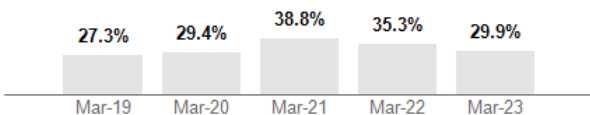
However, the number of black and minority ethnic recruits into On-Call and Professional Support is unfortunately low. We now have an ethnicity working group and we plan to reconnect with diverse groups in our community, with the aim to increase positive action work and become more visible and accessible to black and minority ethnic candidates.

## Female Applicants and Recruits

Total Number



% of Total



Applicants										
Rolling 12 months	Wholetime		On-Call		Operational		Control		Support	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Mar-19	29	17%	36	13%	65	15%	54	56%	75	44%
Mar-20	31	12%	28	15%	59	13%	68	59%	90	50%
Mar-21	22	18%	29	14%	51	15%	1	100%	211	62%
Mar-22	0	0%	22	15%	22	15%	0	0%	98	50%
Mar-23	0	0%	29	13%	29	13%	0	0%	78	58%

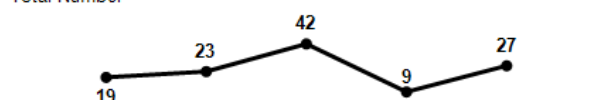
Recruits										
Rolling 12 months	Wholetime		On-Call		Operational		Control		Support	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Mar-19	2	18%	2	6%	4	9%	11	92%	10	43%
Mar-20	0	0%	6	18%	6	15%	5	100%	9	53%
Mar-21	2	8%	3	14%	5	11%	4	57%	16	76%
Mar-22	0	0%	5	15%	5	15%	0	100%	12	67%
Mar-23	2	18%	1	3%	3	6%	0	100%	8	47%

In this reporting period we did not run a new Wholetime recruitment campaign or have any vacancies in Fire Control, which accounts for the overall number of applicants and recruits being lower than the previous years.

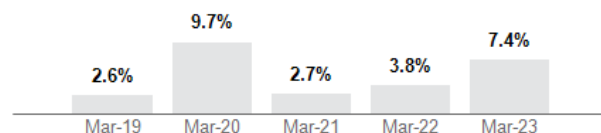
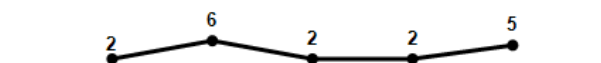
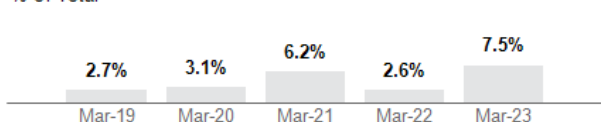
We have noted that the percentage of female applicants is lower than the previous two years. We plan to continue to deliver women's only sessions as part of our engagement plans as well as refreshed community engagement and positive action plans. We will continue to analyse the ED&I data quarterly.

## People sharing a Disability

Total Number



% of Total



Applicants										
Rolling 12 months	Wholetime		On-Call		Operational		Control		Support	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Ending Mar-19	4	2.3%	4	1.5%	8	1.8%	6	6.3%	5	2.9%
Mar-20	8	3.1%	2	1.1%	10	2.3%	10	8.7%	3	1.7%
Mar-21	7	5.6%	6	2.9%	13	3.9%	0	0.0%	29	8.5%
Mar-22	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	9	4.6%
Mar-23	0	0.0%	15	6.7%	15	6.7%	0	0.0%	12	9.0%

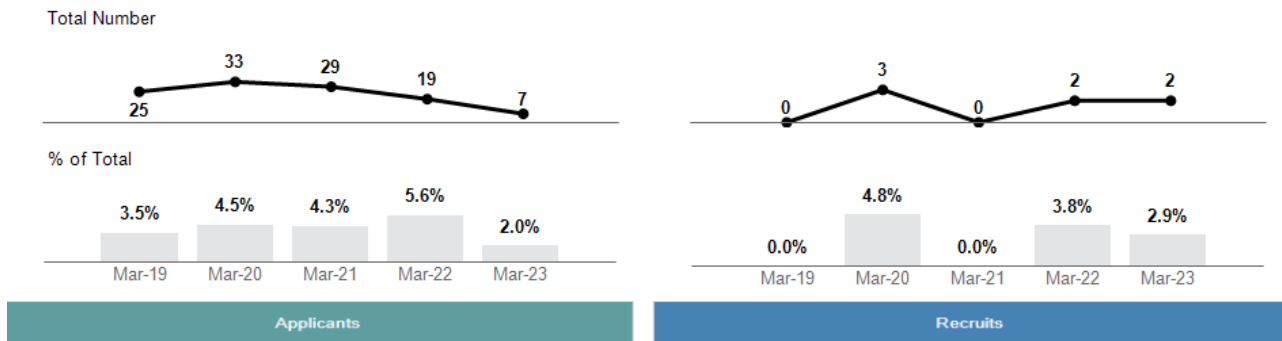
Recruits										
Rolling 12 months	Wholetime		On-Call		Operational		Control		Support	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Ending Mar-19	0	0.0%	1	3.1%	1	2.3%	1	8.3%	0	0.0%
Mar-20	1	14.3%	1	3.0%	2	5.0%	0	0.0%	4	23.5%
Mar-21	1	4.2%	0	0.0%	1	2.2%	0	0.0%	1	4.8%
Mar-22	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	11.1%
Mar-23	0	0.0%	2	5.0%	2	3.9%	0	0.0%	3	17.6%

In this reporting period we did not run a new Wholetime recruitment campaign or have any vacancies in Fire Control, which accounts for the overall number of applicants and recruits being lower than the previous years.

We have seen an increase overall in both applicants and recruits sharing a disability, indicating that our recruitment process and assessors are inclusive.

Efforts to improve recruitment are focused on meeting the commitment of the "Disability Confident" scheme. This is a government scheme to encourage and keep disabled people in work and we have level 2 accreditation.

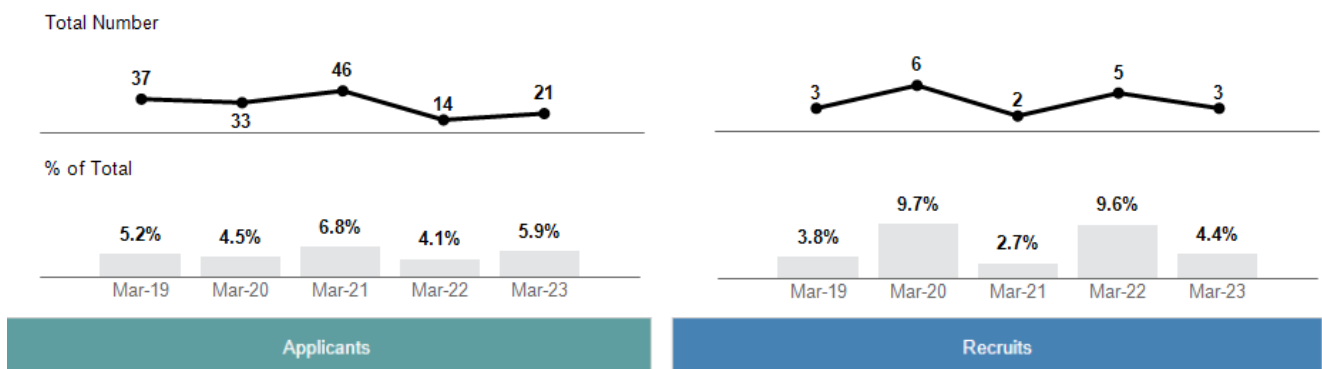
## People declaring an Other Religion of Belief



In this reporting period we did not run a new Wholetime recruitment campaign or have any vacancies in Fire Control, which accounts for the overall number of applicants and recruits being lower than the previous years.

However, the percentage of applicants declaring other Religion or Belief has reduced whereas the number of recruits has maintained since last year.

## People who identify as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual

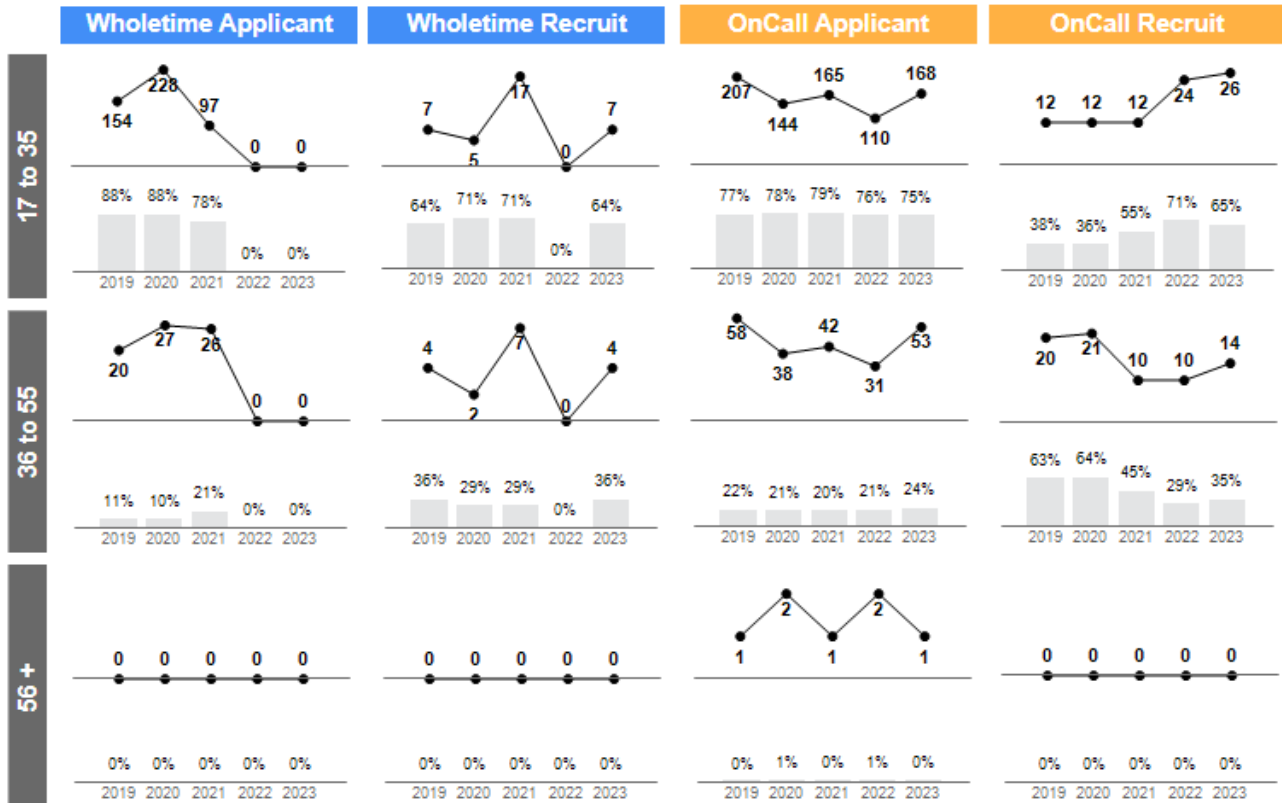


In this reporting period we did not run a new Wholetime recruitment campaign or have any vacancies in Fire Control, which accounts for the overall number of applicants and recruits being lower than the previous years.

We have seen an increase in applications from people who identify as LGBT+, compared to last year.

We attended Pride events, as we did pre-pandemic, to display our support and reach the LGBTQIA+ community. We also hosted an LGBT+ History Month online event for all colleagues and representatives from the Pride groups within Cambridgeshire.

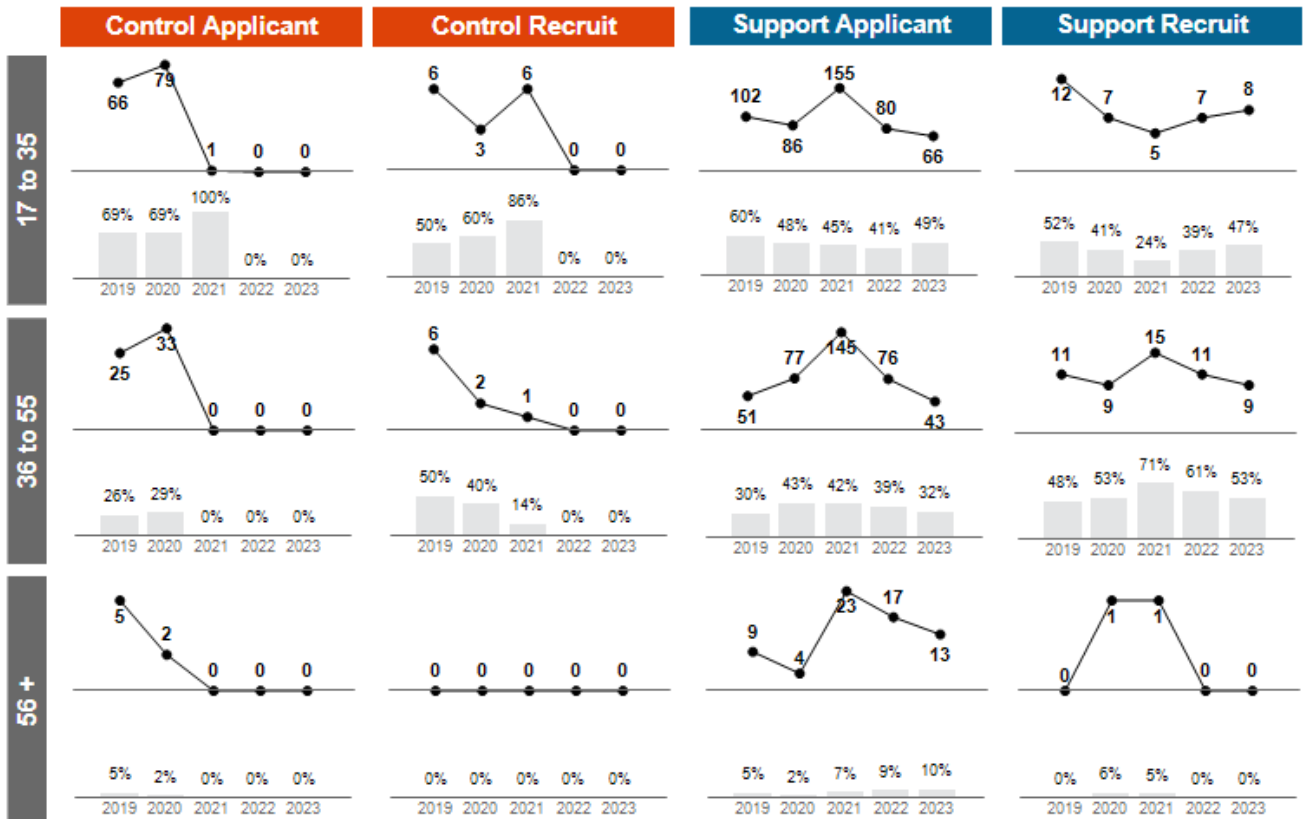
## Age Profiles



In this reporting period we did not run a new Wholetime recruitment campaign. In On-Call the percentage age profile of applicants and recruits continues to be similar each year.



## Age Profiles



In this reporting period we did not have any vacancies in Fire Control, which accounts for the overall number of applicants and recruits being lower than the previous years.

Professional support has seen a decrease in numbers overall in applicants, but an increase in recruits ages between 17-35.

## 6. Gender Pay Gap

Employers of more than 250 employees are required to calculate and publish information about the gender pay gap in their organisation (Equality Act 2010).

The gender pay gap shows the difference between the average earnings of men and women. As a concept it is different from “equal pay” which deals with any pay differences between men and women who carry out the same or similar jobs or jobs of equal value.

Calculating, analysing and reporting on the gender pay gap can provide a valuable measure of equality in the workplace. It is a long-standing phenomenon globally and varies by occupation, age group and working patterns. It highlights any difference in men’s and women’s participation in work of different types and levels and how effectively talent is being maximised.

The gender pay gap regulations require us to calculate a number of gender pay gap measures with reference to all employees. However, where it has been helpful to explain or further explore this pay gap, reference has been made to the pay (and gaps) between different groups of employees. The following calculations are required by the regulations and explained below. They are all expressed in percentages.

### Mean gender pay gap

The difference between the mean hourly rate of pay of male full-pay relevant employees and that of female full-pay relevant employees (regulation 8).

A **mean** average involves adding up all the numbers and dividing the result by how many numbers were listed.

### Median gender pay gap

The difference between the median hourly rate of pay of male full-pay relevant employees and that of female full-pay relevant employees (regulation 9).

A median average involves listing all numbers in numerical order. The median average is the middle number when there is an odd number of results.

### Mean bonus gender pay gap

The difference between the mean bonus pay paid to male relevant employees and that paid to female relevant employees (regulation 10b). For Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service, “bonus” as defined in regulation 10b includes payment related to “*productivity, performance or incentive*”.

- **Productivity:**
  - resilience payments paid to operational employees for providing additional operational cover under certain conditions.
- **Performance:**
  - performance related supplements paid to Area Commanders, Group Commanders and Management Band roles in Support.
  - honorariums potentially payable to any employee group member as a one-off payment in recognition of particularly good work or effort.
- **Incentive:**

- Continuous professional development (CPD) payments to operational employees. This is not an automatic payment but dependent on evidence of CPD – hence interpreted as an incentive in accordance with LGA advisory bulletin 644 (January 17).

### Median bonus gender pay gap

The difference between the median bonus pay paid to male relevant employees and that paid to female relevant employees (regulation 11).

### Proportion of males and females receiving a bonus payment

The proportions of male and female relevant employees who were paid bonus pay (regulation 12).

### Proportion of males and females in each quartile pay band

The proportions of male and female full-pay relevant employees in the lower, lower middle, upper middle and upper quartile pay bands (regulation 13).

### Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service Gender Pay Gap

Difference in mean hourly rate of pay	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Mean hourly rate of pay for all male full-pay relevant employees	£18.25	£18.01	£18.11	£18.52	£19.06	£18.70	£19.77
Mean hourly rate of pay for all female full-pay relevant employees	£14.86	£15.24	£15.26	£15.76	£16.28	£16.49	£18.19
% Difference in mean hourly rate of pay	18.58%	15.38%	15.74%	14.90%	14.59%	11.82%	7.99%

Difference in median hourly rate of pay	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Median hourly rate of pay for all male full-pay relevant employees	£16.04	£15.75	£15.99	£16.39	£16.75	£16.65	£17.88
Median hourly rate of pay for all female full-pay relevant employees	£13.81	£13.97	£14.04	£14.77	£14.82	£15.06	£16.64
% Difference in median hourly rate of pay	13.90%	11.30%	12.20%	9.88%	11.54%	9.55%	6.94%

### Commentary:

- The mean gender pay gap has continued to decrease to 7.99% and the median to 6.94%, which is the lowest gap since reporting started in 2017.
- The decrease in our Gender Pay Gap is due to the continued recruitment, development and progression of our female employees across the Service. We have more female managers, more female drivers, more returners from maternity leave and more females receiving CPD payments.
- We will continue to seek to improve our gender pay gap and support the actions from our Female Operational working group, other working groups and the Inclusion Network and Steering Group.

## Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service Bonus Gender Pay Gap

Difference in mean bonus pay	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Mean bonus pay paid during the relevant period to male relevant employees who were paid bonus pay during that period	£54.19	£56.52	£55.62	£59.89	£65.27	£59.04	£64.83
Mean bonus pay paid during the relevant period to female relevant employees who were paid bonus pay during that period	£53.88	£58.24	£50.09	£59.00	£69.71	£72.63	£78.79
% Difference in mean bonus pay	0.57%	-3.04%	9.94%	1.49%	-6.80%	-23.02%	-21.53%
Difference in median bonus pay	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Median bonus pay paid during the relevant period to male relevant employees who were paid bonus pay during that period	£47.08	£47.58	£48.50	£49.50	£50.50	£51.25	£54.83
Median bonus pay paid during the relevant period to female relevant employees who were paid bonus pay during that period	£47.08	£47.58	£48.50	£49.50	£51.98	£55.15	£57.90
% Difference in median bonus pay	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	-2.93%	-7.61%	-5.60%

### Commentary:

- The mean and median bonus gender pay gap remains in the negative for the third year.

Proportion of male and female employees who received bonus pay	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
The number of male relevant employees who were paid bonus pay during the relevant period	317	291	290	303	336	332	345
The number of male relevant employees	516	506	525	519	526	509	509
The proportion of <b>male</b> employees who received bonus pay	61.43%	57.51%	55.24%	58.38%	63.88%	65.23%	67.78%
The number of female relevant employees who were paid bonus pay during the relevant period	34	25	36	31	56	69	84
The number of female relevant employees	131	131	135	140	157	161	153
The proportion of <b>female</b> employees who received bonus pay	25.95%	19.08%	26.67%	22.14%	35.67%	42.86%	54.90%

### Commentary:

- The percentage of female employees who receive bonus pay continues to increase and has now doubled since reporting started in 2017.

Proportion of male and female employees according to quartile pay bands	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
The number of male full-pay relevant employees in the lower quartile pay bands	110	106	109	108	113	104	136
The number of full-pay relevant employees in that quartile pay band	163	159	162	163	178	169	202
Proportion of <b>male</b> employees in the <b>lower quartile</b> pay band	67.48%	66.67%	67.28%	66.26%	63.48%	61.54%	67.33%
The number of female full-pay relevant employees in the lower quartile pay bands	53	53	53	55	65	65	66
The number of full-pay relevant employees in that quartile pay band	163	159	162	163	178	169	202
Proportion of <b>female</b> employees in the <b>lower quartile</b> pay band	32.52%	33.33%	32.72%	33.74%	36.52%	38.46%	32.67%
The number of male full-pay relevant employees in the lower middle quartile pay bands	124	117	125	133	129	131	110
The number of full-pay relevant employees in that quartile pay band	163	158	166	172	164	166	129
Proportion of <b>male</b> employees in the <b>lower middle quartile</b> pay band	76.07%	74.05%	75.30%	77.33%	78.66%	78.92%	85.27%
The number of female full-pay relevant employees in the lower middle quartile pay bands	39	41	41	39	35	35	19
The number of full-pay relevant employees in that quartile pay band	163	158	166	172	164	166	129
Proportion of <b>female</b> employees in the <b>lower middle quartile</b> pay band	23.93%	25.95%	24.70%	22.67%	21.34%	21.08%	14.73%
The number of male full-pay relevant employees in the upper middle quartile pay bands	134	145	149	138	143	134	124
The number of full-pay relevant employees in that quartile pay band	160	161	168	159	171	168	165
Proportion of <b>male</b> employees in the <b>upper middle quartile</b> pay band	83.75%	90.06%	88.69%	86.79%	83.63%	79.76%	75.15%
The number of female full-pay relevant employees in the upper middle quartile pay bands	26	16	19	21	28	34	41
The number of full-pay relevant employees in that quartile pay band	160	161	168	159	171	168	165
Proportion of <b>female</b> employees in the <b>upper middle quartile</b> pay band	16.25%	9.94%	11.31%	13.21%	16.37%	20.24%	24.85%
The number of male full-pay relevant employees in the upper quartile pay bands	148	138	142	140	141	140	139
The number of full-pay relevant employees in that quartile pay band	161	159	164	165	170	167	166
Proportion of <b>male</b> employees in the <b>upper quartile</b> pay band	91.93%	86.79%	86.59%	84.85%	82.94%	83.83%	83.73%
The number of female full-pay relevant employees in the upper quartile pay bands	13	21	22	25	29	27	27
The number of full-pay relevant employees in that quartile pay band	161	159	164	165	170	167	166
Proportion of <b>female</b> employees in the <b>upper quartile</b> pay band	8.07%	13.21%	13.41%	15.15%	17.06%	16.17%	16.27%

**Commentary:**

- It is positive to see a continued increase in the proportion of females in the upper middle of the pay bands, demonstrating that we are recruiting, developing and progressing females through the Service.
  - We have more than doubled the percentage of females in the upper quartile pay band since reporting started in 2017.
  - Recommendations from the equal pay audit carried out in 2018-19 were implemented and a full EQIA was undertaken as part of the work to design a new management band pay scale.
-

# Appendix 1: Demography of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough – Census 2021

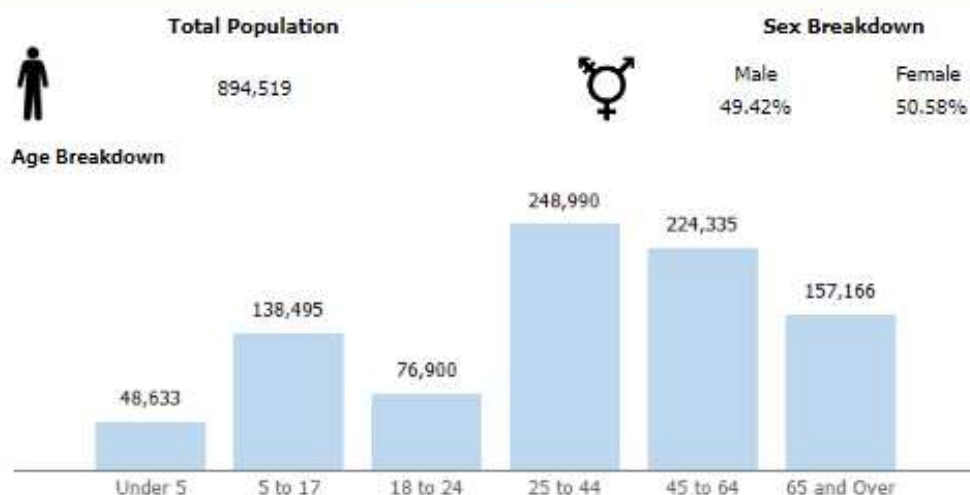


## Census 2021 District Breakdown

\*Census 2021 figures downloaded from NOMIS

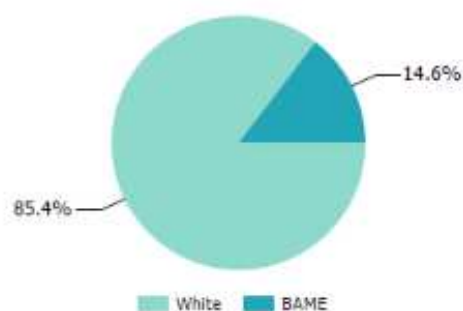


### Population

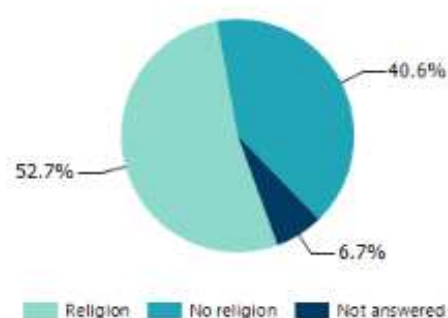


### Population by Characteristics

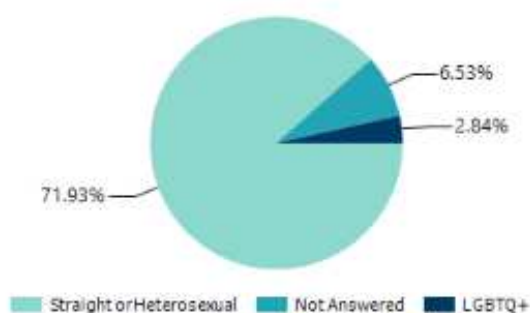
#### Ethnicity



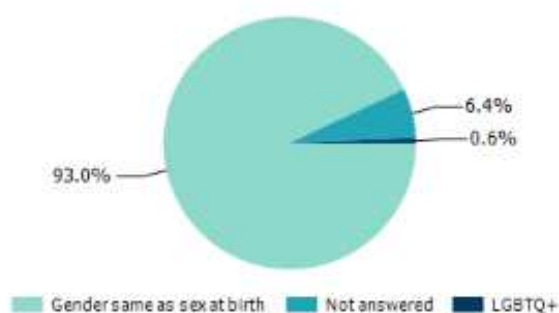
#### Religion



#### Sexual Orientation Profile



#### Gender Identity Profile





## Disability Breakdown

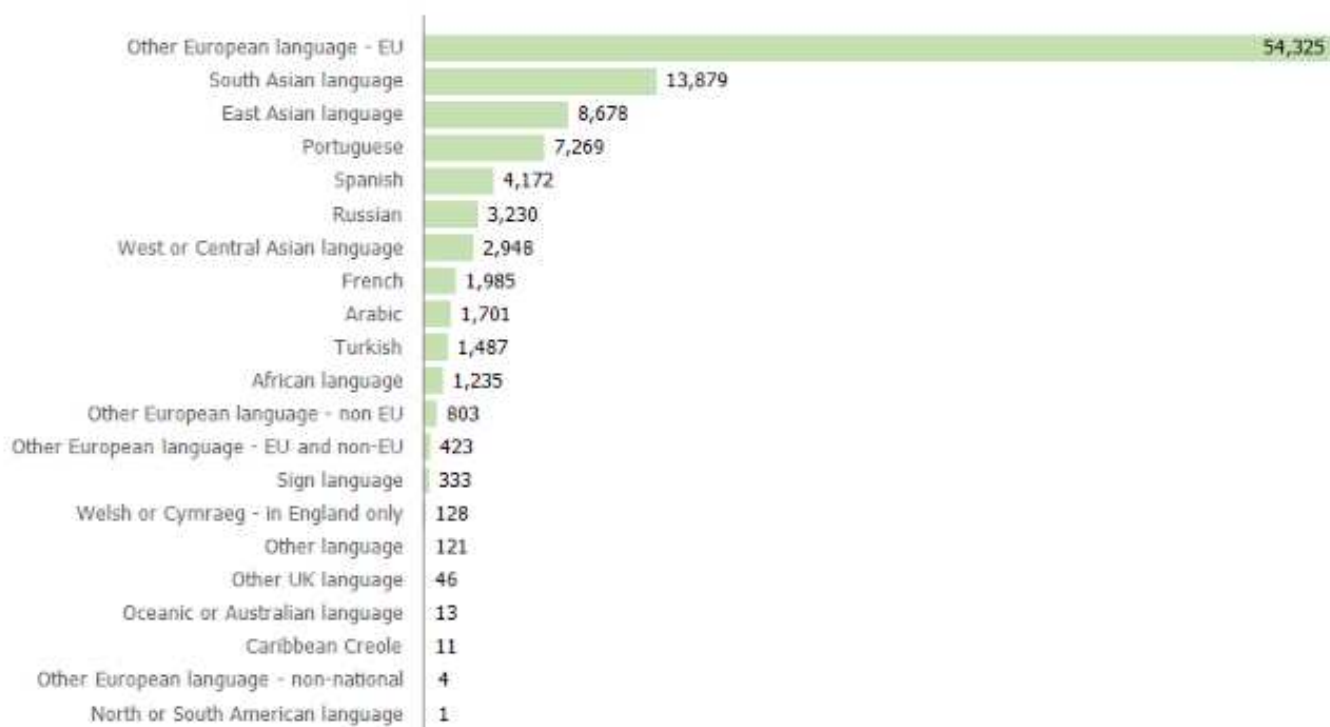


## First Spoken Languages

### English vs Other Languages Comparison



### All Other Languages Breakdown



## Appendix 2: Cambridge City Level

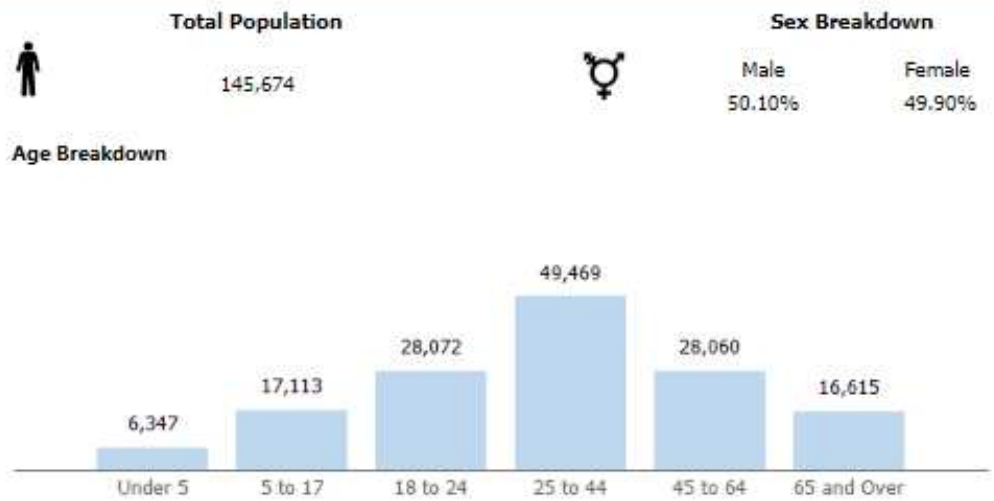


### Census 2021 District Breakdown

\*Census 2021 figures downloaded from NOMIS

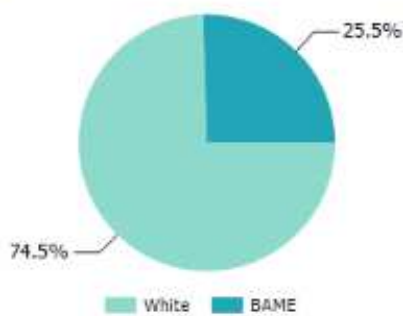


#### Population

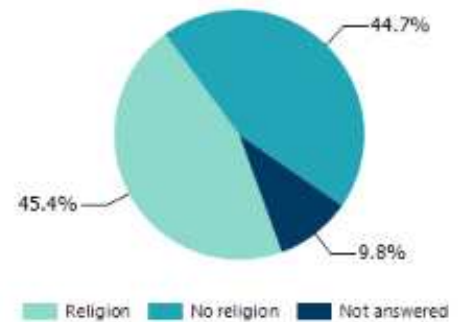


#### Population by Characteristics

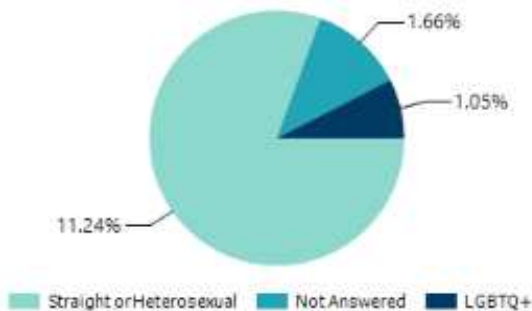
##### Ethnicity



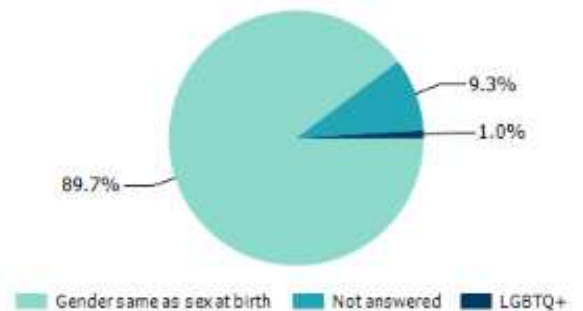
##### Religion



##### Sexual Orientation Profile



##### Gender Identity Profile



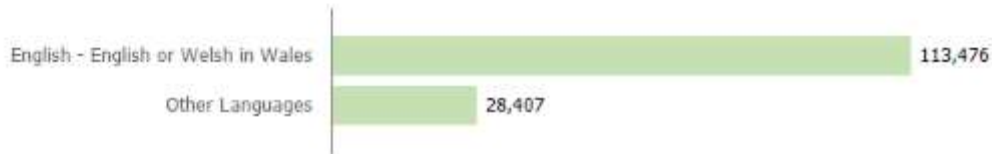


## Disability Breakdown

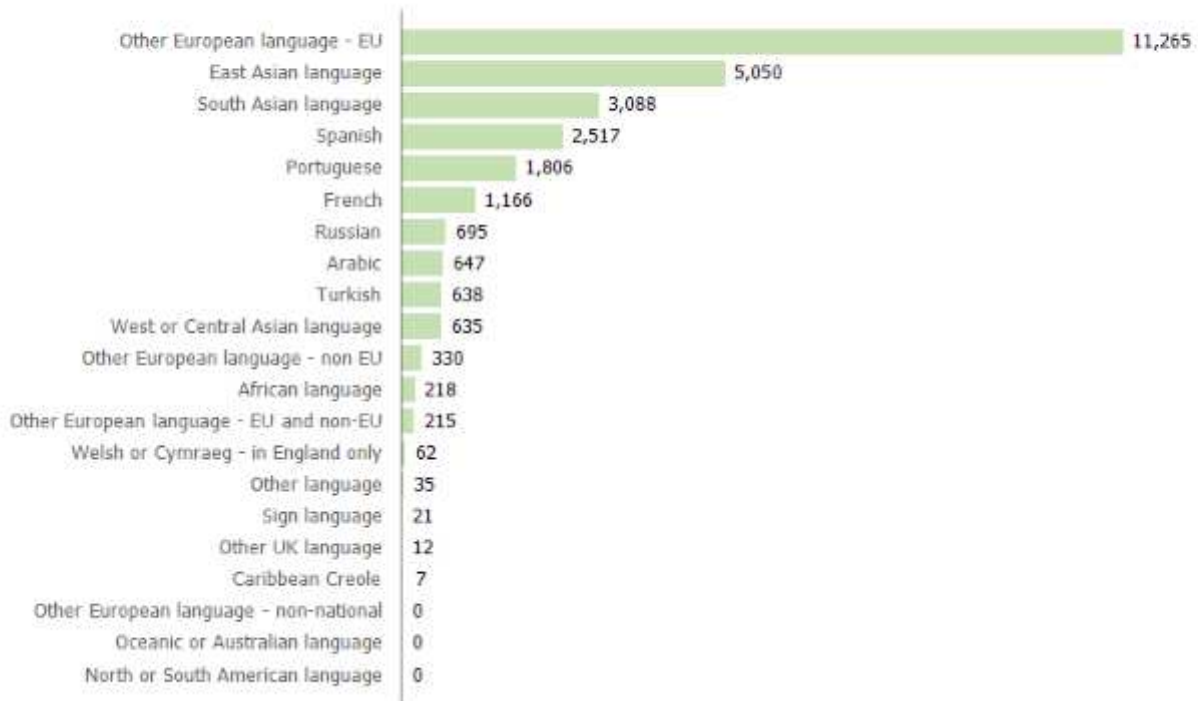


## First Spoken Languages

### English vs Other Languages Comparison



### All Other Languages Breakdown



## Appendix 3: Peterborough Level

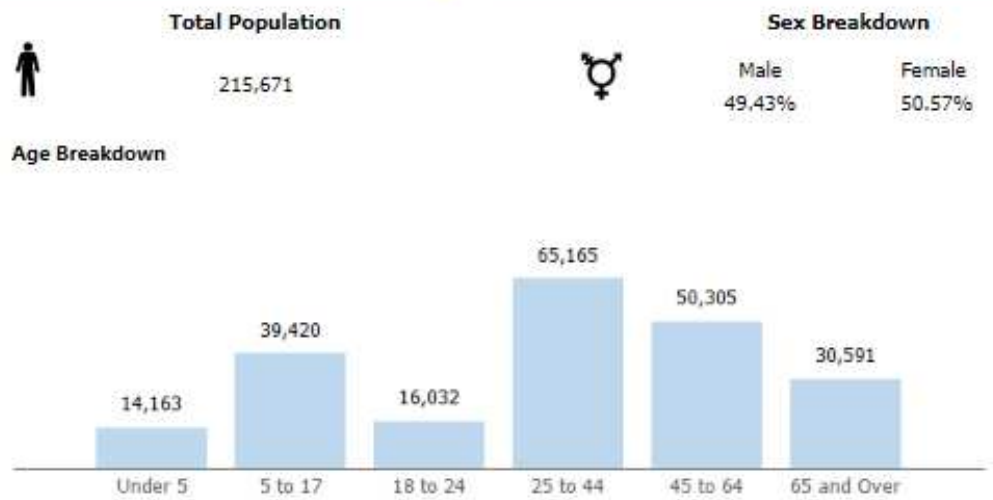


### Census 2021 District Breakdown

\*Census 2021 figures downloaded from NOMIS

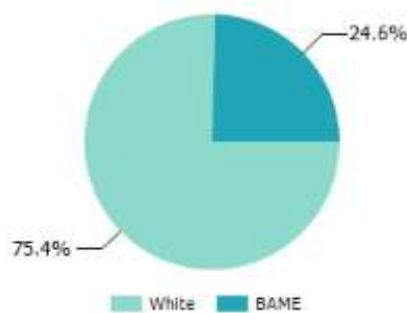


#### Population

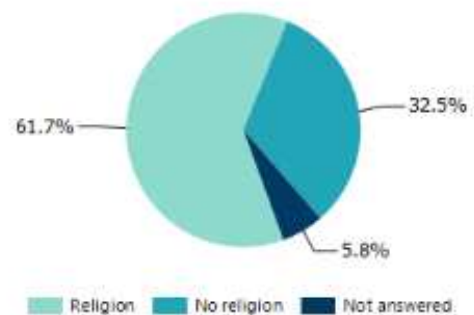


#### Population by Characteristics

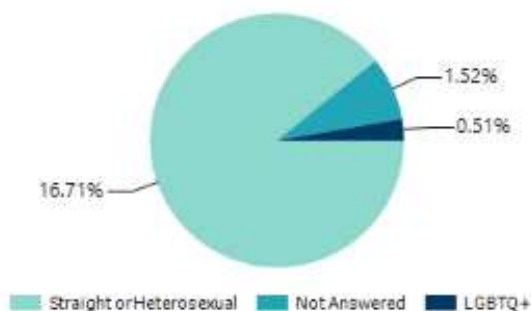
##### Ethnicity



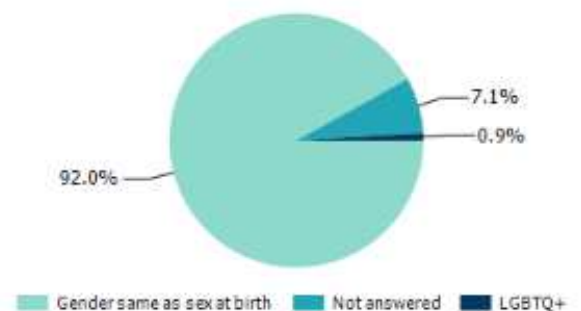
##### Religion



##### Sexual Orientation Profile



##### Gender Identity Profile

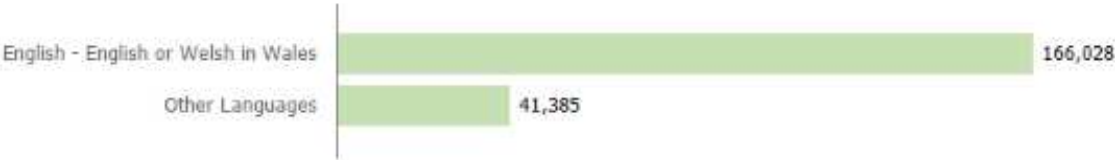


Disability Breakdown

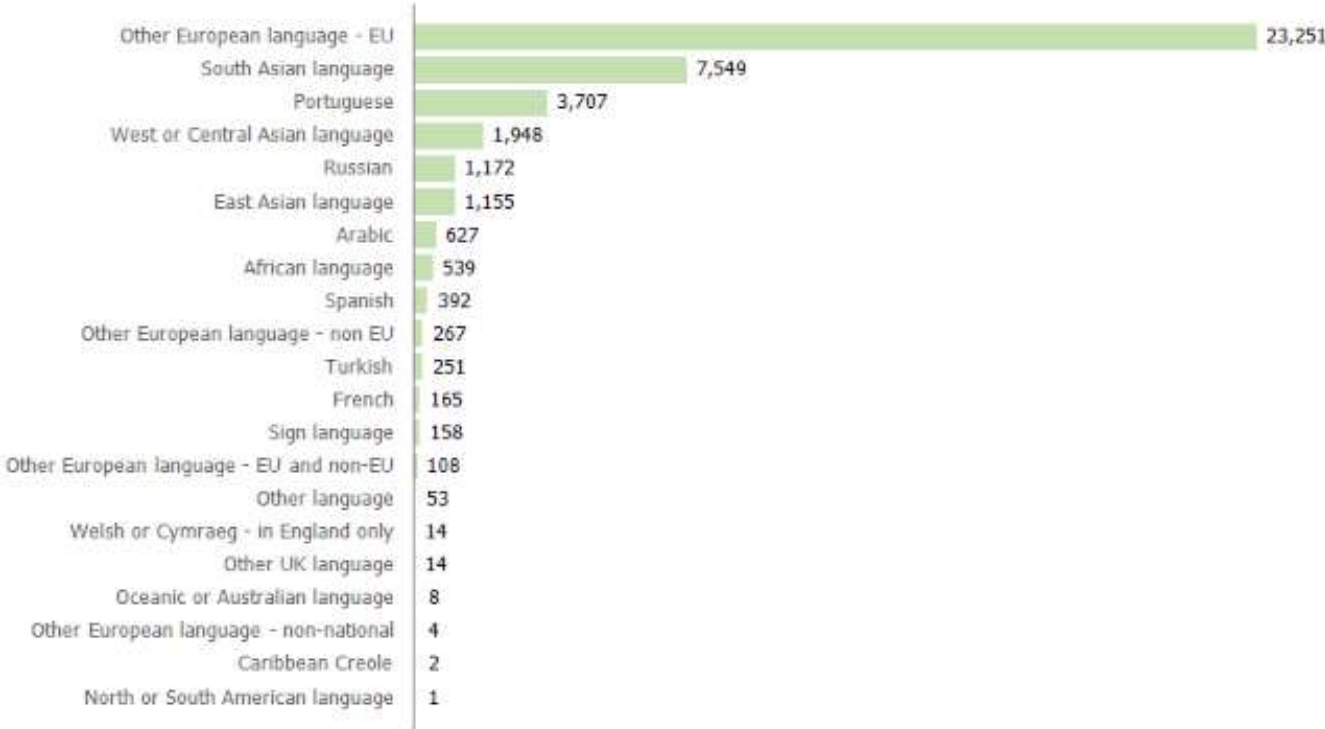


First Spoken Languages

English vs Other Languages Comparison



All Other Languages Breakdown





To: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

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

Presenting officer(s): Deputy Chief Executive Officer (DCEO) - Matthew  
Warren

Telephone 01480 444575  
[matthew.warren@cambsfire.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.warren@cambsfire.gov.uk)

Date: 20 December 2023

---

## Fire Authority Annual Report and Statement of Assurance 2022/23

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the Fire Authority with the draft Annual Report and Statement of Assurance 2022/23 for approval.

### 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Fire Authority is asked to agree the draft Annual Report and Statement of Assurance 2022/23, attached at Appendix 1, subject to the additions highlighted in Paragraph 4.4 below.

### 3. Risk Assessment

- 3.1 **Political** – the Fire and Rescue National Framework requires fire authorities to provide annual assurance on financial, governance and operational matters and show how they have had due regard to the expectations set out in their Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) and the requirements included in said framework. To evidence this assurance, the Authority must publish an annual statement of assurance.

### 4. Background

- 4.1 As stated above, the purpose of the publication of an Annual Report and Statement of Assurance is to meet the requirements of the Fire and Rescue National Framework and to ensure the Service continues to provide information on its activities to the communities it serves and key stakeholders.

- 4.2 Appendix 1 is the draft text version of the report for 2022/23. This version will be published on the Service's website, subject to Authority approval, as it meets the required accessibility regulations. A designed version, containing photos and infographics, will also be published on the website at a later date.
- 4.3 The report reflects our performance against our IRMP. The content is broken down into the same sections and headings as previous reports but follows the heading structure recommended by accessibility guidance for online documents. The final designed version will have the same look and feel as the previously published 2021/22 document.
- 4.4 Some of the audit information in Section 10 (from Page 33) will be updated once we have received the relevant audit reports. There is a backlog with the auditor, meaning we are still awaiting sign off for last year's report. Once the reports are signed off, they will be published on the website but in the meantime the draft reports will be published.
- 4.5 In addition to being published on our website, the documents will be promoted via social media channels and the wider media community and a link sent to our key partners. It will not be printed however if individuals request a hard copy this will be colour printed internally and sent to them.

## Source Documents

### Fire Authority Planning Documents

#### Location:

Hinchingbrooke Cottage  
Brampton Road Huntingdon

#### Contact Officer:

Matthew Warren  
01480 444575  
[matthew.warren@cambsfire.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.warren@cambsfire.gov.uk)

# Annual Report and Statement of Assurance for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority 2022-2023

Welcome to the Statement of Assurance and Annual Report for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority.

The report covers the financial year 2022/2023 and summarises our performance over the 12 months, including how we spent your money in delivering priority services. It features highlights of the year, case studies and information about how we are working in collaboration with partners to improve our service to you.

The report also incorporates the Fire Authority's Statement of Assurance. Under the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, fire and rescue authorities must provide annual assurance on financial, governance and operational matters.

This document is designed to be read electronically and as such has been checked to ensure it is accessible for as many readers as possible. The links to other documents and website should be clearly identifiable. Any links to other documents or websites will be lost if the report is printed.

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## 1. The year at a glance

Here are some highlights from the year 2022/2023.

### April

Two significant fires tested crews north of the county. More than 30 firefighters were needed to tackle a fire on a building site involving part-built houses in Gunthorpe, Peterborough. A few days later, crews from Fenland were joined by firefighters from Norfolk and Lincolnshire at a fire involving a casino business in Wisbech. This was a three-storey terraced building, making access very challenging for crews to extinguish the fire.

Her Majesty's High Sheriff for Cambridgeshire, Mrs Caroline Bewes visited the Service's headquarters to present a special award to the Service for keeping communities safe during the pandemic.

The crew at Papworth said an emotional farewell to the local station as it closed and firefighters relocated to nearby Cambourne. The move, which was a long-planned transition, took place following the relocation of Papworth Hospital and the increased population in Cambourne. Residents were invited to a farewell tour of the station before it finally closed.

### May

A group of young people from a local secondary school were welcomed to the Service's youth intervention programme, Firebreak, and were taught a variety of firefighting skills to build confidence and teamworking. Courses are delivered over a week at one of the Service's fire stations, culminating in a pass-out parade where participants show off their new skills in front of their family and teachers.

A Huntingdon based firefighter took on an ultra-marathon to raise money for The Fire Fighters Charity. Starting at Cambridge Fire Station, Jordan Cadogan completed the 50-mile run on Firefighters Memorial Day, ending at Dogsthorpe Fire Station. He raised more than £1,500 for the charity.

### June

Colleagues from our Community Fire Safety team and on-call firefighters from Ramsey paired up to give fire safety advice to the farming community at an event hosted by the National Farmers Union. As well as advice aimed at reducing the risk of arson, crews discussed the various ways they could access water if needed when responding to an emergency.

Crews around the county hosted charity car washes to raise much needed funds for The Fire Fighters Charity. Around £5,000 was raised as residents came out to support the events and gave generously.

The Service joined Nextdoor, a new online neighbourhood hub for sharing helpful information, built around an individual's address. Information is targeted to specific locations and has been used to share recruitment information, safety advice, promote local events and seek feedback from local communities.

### July

Colleagues from Cambridge White Watch and different support groups joined the Cambridge Pride celebrations, promoting careers within the Service and important fire safety advice.

Littleport and Soham firefighters joined March and Ramsey crews to become corresponding stations, attending medical incidents of cardiac arrest to begin life-saving treatment until an ambulance arrives.

## August

Dogsthorpe Fire Station hosted its first open day in three years and welcomed thousands of people through the doors. Fun activities at the station included dunk-a-firefighter, a hose reel challenge and tours of the smoke house. There was also a drill yard exercise where firefighters demonstrated how they rescue casualties from a road traffic collision. The event raised more than £4,000 for The Fire Fighters Charity and the Peterborough Foodbank.

A local journalist was invited to spend time at Sawston Fire Station to profile the role of an on-call firefighter and promote it to residents. The crew demonstrated their skills by simulating a road traffic collision, with the journalist as a live casualty.

## September

Officers from the Fire Protection team visited Burghley House ahead of the horse trials event. The team, part of the Safety Advisory Group, provided fire safety advice, guidance and instruction to the event organisers to ensure those visiting were kept safe.

Sawston Fire Station hosted the Service's first FireFit bootcamp, seeing people interested in joining the station as an on-call firefighter take part in an eight-week fitness programme. The weekly sessions involved general fitness activities along with fire related drill work outs to help the participants get ready to join an induction course.

## October

To mark World Menopause Day, an awareness session was hosted for colleagues, highlighting the Service's journey to becoming a menopause friendly employer.

## November

The Service launched a new online forum for local residents and business owners to get involved, provide feedback and share their views and opinions about various different subjects. More than 200 people joined the Community Engagement Forum and have been providing valuable feedback on various areas of the Service's work.

Firefighters at Stanground unearthed a historic link to the Battle of Dunkirk after a collection of fire service items was given to the station. A National Fire Service flag, flown during the Dunkirk rescue operation by the Massey Shaw Fireboat, was found amongst a host of memorabilia from decades of firefighting. One of only two ever made, the original flag was used to assist wounded soldiers from the battle. Representatives from the Massey Shaw Education Trust and the Fire Heritage Fund were invited to the station to be reunited with the flag.

## December

Firefighters from around the county were kept busy while residents enjoyed Christmas Day. Wholetime firefighters and on-call firefighters, who were called away from spending time with their families, attended emergencies including a house fire, a rescue from water, a man in cardiac arrest, a flooded house and assisting ambulance colleagues.

## January

Excellence and long service were celebrated at the Service's annual Awards Evening, which took place at the Delta Hotel, Marriott in Huntingdon. Around 120 people attended and celebrated the achievements of employees from across different areas of the Service, highlighting outstanding accomplishments throughout the year.

A BBC radio presenter was put through her paces by taking on the firefighter fitness test. Hosted at one of the Service's on-call stations, Radio Cambridgeshire breakfast show presenter Dotty McLeod took on the Chester Treadmill test, one of the first stages of the recruitment process, to demonstrate what it takes to become an on-call firefighter.

## February

New fire engines were delivered to wholetime stations around the county. The new Scania 280 engines feature increased water capacity and new battery powered cutting equipment. In total, the Service invested in seven new vehicles, with the older fire engines being cascaded to other stations.

## March

Chatteris Fire Station scooped first prize in the national Bag It and Bank It competition, run by The Fire Fighters Charity. Local residents donated more than four tonnes of clothing into the yellow bins outside the station, generating more than £1,000. Representatives from the charity visited the crew to present them with their award.

Working smoke alarms alerted occupants of a Peterborough house to a fire in their kitchen, allowing them to safely evacuate. Crews from Stanground and Dogsthorpe attended the incident in the Orton Goldhay area, where on arrival they were faced with thick smoke coming through the front door. The smoke alarms alerted the occupants, who were upstairs at the time the fire started, so they could safely evacuate the house without being injured.

## 2. Forward

Welcome to our annual report and statement of assurance for 2022/2023.

This report looks back over the last financial year, highlighting how we have performed and some of our achievements over those 12 months. Reflecting on and highlighting the great work of our employees, from across all areas of the Service, is always something we look forward to. We have a high-performing and committed workforce, who work hard day in, day out, to deliver the best service we can to everyone. It is the people we have working at CFRS that we are most proud of and without them we would not be the Service that we are for the residents of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

There is only one place to start when looking back at last year, and that is the summer heatwave in July and August, which saw record numbers of calls coming into our Combined Fire Control, to the point we had to declare a major incident. With temperatures reaching 40 degrees on some days, the hot and dry ground combined to see multiple fires across the county daily. Many required several crews to attend in very challenging physical conditions, due to poor water supplies in their rural locations and the fires spreading quickly across large areas. Some days, crews were responding to double the number of incidents they would usually during this part of the year. At some points, nearly every fire engine was committed to an incident, and there was no help available from bordering services as they were also facing similar pressures. At its peak, we were also taking 999 calls from other fire service areas across the country as their own control rooms were flooded with calls. It was a real team effort and again our colleagues rose to the challenge. You can read more about our response during these spate conditions on page 23.

Following the unprecedented summer, work began to learn from the experience to identify what went well and where we could improve for a similar situation in future years. This included looking at equipment and vehicles, as well as working with the local farming community and looking at how we use our crews.

As the year progressed, we faced more challenges as the cost of living crisis meant many people were struggling with the price of necessities like food, gas and electric. People faced uncertain times as they saw costs going up, and the price rises hit us too in terms of energy costs, fuel and supplies. Preparing a future budget taking this into account meant we had to plan for potential cuts to our service to fund the increasing costs. Managers faced the difficult prospect of reducing their budgets significantly in order to find savings. With around £8 million having been taken from our budget over the last decade, we were already a lean service and finding any further efficiencies was hard. A significant factor in this was not knowing what our funding settlement from government would be, nor what the national pay negotiations would result in.

In tandem with the financial planning, we also had to face the real possibility of industrial action as the national pay negotiations continued. This presented some significant challenges to ensure we could meet our response demand while also maintaining good working relationships between staff groups. Fortunately, we did not need to put our plans in place as an agreement was reached but the planning had been vital to ensure we could still be there for people when they needed us.

We made the tough decision to ask our residents for an increase in their council tax to help ensure we could maintain our current levels of service. Asking for more is not something we wanted to do, especially when we knew everyone was feeling the financial pressures, but asking for an additional amount of around £5 a year, together with the savings we found internally, helped ensure we could continue to provide our current level of service.

Despite it being a challenging year, we also had some moments of celebration. We completed a very significant development as our new multi-million pound fire station and training centre in Huntingdon opened. Crews began responding from the new station in February, with the Training Centre having already opened for courses and the Occupational Health team moving in at the turn of the year. This was a very exciting milestone, which you can read more about on page 25.

As the financial year drew to a close, we welcomed our next inspection from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS). This involved gathering documents, an employee survey and then a visit by the inspectorate team who spoke to colleagues across different areas of the Service to gather their views on what it's like to work here and different aspects of their role.

At the time of publishing this annual report in December 2023, we had received our inspection outcome and we're pleased to see so much of the good work going on in the Service recognised. We were awarded one Outstanding, six Goods, three Adequates and one Requires Improvement. A plan to focus attention on the areas that were identified as needing further improvement has already been started with some already implemented. We look forward to reporting more on this report in the annual report for 2023/24.

We are always looking to celebrate what we do and keep people informed of the great work going on around our Service. Our social media channels are updated regularly with stories, as well as important safety advice and information. We're across Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram, as well as growing our presence on TikTok and Nextdoor.

Thank you to everyone that has supported us over the last year. Whether you've engaged with or shared a post on Facebook, passed us information about a vulnerable resident for us to visit, sent us a thank you message or made a cup of tea for a hard-working crew at an incident, we are extremely grateful and we really value that support.

After the last few years of a global pandemic, financial crisis and heatwave, who knows what 2023/24 will throw our way, but we are confident that with the support of our incredible workforce we will be able to navigate our way through whatever challenges we face and continue to be there for our communities when they need us.

Councillor Edna Murphy - Chair of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

Chris Strickland - Chief Fire Officer

### 3. Statement of assurance

#### Context

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England sets out a requirement for fire and rescue authorities to publish a statement of assurance. It says the statement should:

“...outline the way in which the authority and its fire and rescue service has had regard – in the period covered by the document – to this National framework, the Integrated Risk Management Plan and to any strategic plan...prepared by the Authority for that period. The authority must also provide assurance to their community and to government on financial, governance and operational matters.”

One of the principal aims of the statement of assurance is to provide an accessible way in which communities, government, local authorities and other partners may make a valid assessment of their local fire and rescue authority's performance.

#### Purpose

The purpose of this statement of assurance is for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority to formally confirm the adequacy of arrangements for the effective management of financial, governance and operational matters in Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service. The statement has been prepared and published in accordance with the guidance published by the Home Office.

#### Statement of Assurance

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority is satisfied that its business during the financial year 2022/23 was conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money was properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Authority is further satisfied that the requirements of the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England have been met.

Evidence to support this judgement can be found within this report, specifically:

Integrated Risk Management Plan - page 17

Financial and governance matters - page 33

#### 4. Governance arrangements

##### Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

The Fire Authority is the governing body responsible for delivering a fire and rescue service to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

The main responsibilities of the Authority are set out in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. The Authority makes decisions about how the local fire and rescue service operates and how it reviews performance and policies. It also sets the budget each year and agrees the strategic direction set out in the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) and the corporate priorities within the IRMP action plan.

In some counties, delivery of the fire and rescue service is the responsibility of the county council, however in counties such as Cambridgeshire, where unitary authorities exist, a separate Authority is set up to run the Service and this is made up of councillors from both the county and unitary council.

As well as the Fire Authority there are a number of committees made up of smaller groups of Authority members, which look at certain aspects of the Service.

The political make-up of the Fire Authority reflects the number of members from the political parties on each of the appointing county and unitary authorities.

The Fire Authority records its appreciation for the contribution of councillors Michael Atkins, John Gowing and Andrew Bond during the past year.

More information about the Fire Authority, including details of Authority and committee meetings, together with the dates, agendas and minutes for these meetings, [can be found on our website](#).

### Current members of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Council</b>	<b>Party</b>	<b>District</b>
Edna Murphy (Chair)	Cambridgeshire County Council	Liberal Democrat	South Cambs
Simon Bywater	Cambridgeshire County Council	Conservative	Huntingdonshire
Douglas Dew	Cambridgeshire County Council	Liberal Democrat	Huntingdonshire
Ian Gardener	Cambridgeshire County Council	Conservative	Huntingdonshire
Bryony Goodliffe	Cambridgeshire County Council	Labour	Cambridge
Ros Hathorn	Cambridgeshire County Council	Liberal Democrat	South Cambs
John Howard	Peterborough City Council	Peterborough First	Peterborough
Mohammed Jamil (Vice Chair)	Peterborough City Council	Labour	Peterborough
Sebastian Kindersley	Cambridgeshire County Council	Liberal Democrat	South Cambs
Mac McGuire	Cambridgeshire County Council	Conservative	Huntingdonshire
David Over	Peterborough City Council	Conservative	Peterborough
Catherine Rae	Cambridgeshire County Council	Labour	Cambridge
Kevin Reynolds	Cambridgeshire County Council	Conservative	Huntingdonshire
Philippa Slatter	Cambridgeshire County Council	Liberal Democrat	Cambridge
Mandy Smith	Cambridgeshire County Council	Conservative	South Cambs
Simone Taylor	Cambridgeshire County Council	Independent	Huntingdonshire
Scott Warren	Peterborough City Council	Conservative	Peterborough



## Our structure

Our chief officer team:

Name	Role	Responsibilities
Chris Strickland	Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive	Ensuring the Service performs all of its statutory duties, along with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Transparency, Media and Communication</li> <li>- Democratic and Legal Services</li> </ul>
Jon Anderson	Assistant Chief Fire Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Operational Response (wholetime and on-call) including Combined Fire Control</li> <li>- Community Fire Safety (prevention and protection) and Resilience</li> <li>- Resource Management</li> <li>- Occupational Health</li> <li>- Operational Support, Equipment, Policies and Procedures, Training and Fleet</li> <li>- Safeguarding</li> <li>- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</li> </ul>
Matthew Warren	Deputy Chief Executive	Treasurer to the Fire Authority and responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HR, Learning and Development, Recruitment</li> <li>- Programme Management and Planning, Business Intelligence and Performance and STEP transformation</li> <li>- Finance, Property and estate management and Payroll</li> <li>- Procurement and contract management</li> <li>- Business Support</li> <li>- ICT</li> </ul>

### Our legal responsibilities

Our responsibilities as an emergency service are set out in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. As a public service provider, we also have responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

#### *Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004*

The Act replaced the Fire Services Act 1948 with a new legislative framework to ensure fire and rescue services were better able to meet the particular challenges of the 21st century.

The Act clarifies the duties and powers of fire authorities to:

- Promote fire safety
- Fight fires
- Protect people and property from fires
- Rescue people from road traffic incidents
- Deal with other specific emergencies, such as flooding and terrorist attacks
- Do other things to respond to the particular needs of their communities and the risks they face.

#### *Civil Contingencies Act 2004*

Under Part One of the Act, emergency services and local authorities (defined as Category One responders) have a legal obligation to assess risk, plan and exercise for emergencies and undertake business continuity management.

We are involved in ongoing partnerships to plan multi-agency responses to major incidents. This work involves carrying out risk assessments for all eventualities and producing emergency plans that are tested and continually updated.

More information about our emergency planning [can be found on our website](#).

We have a Business Continuity and Information Security Forum (BCIS) to provide direction and to oversee all aspects of business continuity management within the organisation to ensure that the Service continues to deliver its core services to communities and partners at all times and is resilient in adverse conditions.

#### *Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005*

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 replaces most fire safety legislation with one simple order. It means that any person who has some level of control within a premises must take reasonable steps to reduce the risk from fire and make sure people can safely escape if there is a fire. The Order applies to virtually all buildings, places and structures other than individual private dwellings, for example a family home or individual flats in a block.

#### *Fire and Rescue Services (Emergencies) (England) Order 2007*

The Emergencies (England) Order 2007 outlines the additional statutory duties of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 for fire authorities. The duty requires authorities, where provision of resources has been made by central government, to respond to incidents both within and outside the authority area involving Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear hazards (CBRN) and Urban Search and Rescue (USAR).

#### *Localism Act 2011*

The aim of the Act was to devolve more decision-making powers from central government back into the hands of individuals, communities and councils. The Act covers a wide range of issues related to

local public services, with a particular focus on the general power of competence, community rights, neighbourhood planning and housing. The key measures of the Act were grouped under four main headings:

- New freedoms and flexibilities for local government
- New rights and powers for communities and individuals
- Reform to make the planning system more democratic and more effective
- Reform to ensure decisions about housing are taken locally.

A plain English guide to the Localism Act, can be found [on the government's website](#).

#### *Fire and Rescue National Framework for England*

The Fire and Rescue Service National Framework sets out the Government's priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in England. It was updated in May 2018.

The priorities within the framework are for fire and rescue authorities to:

- Make appropriate provision for fire prevention and protection activities and response to fire and rescue related incidents
- Identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue risks their areas face
- Collaborate with emergency services and other local and national partners to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the service they provide
- Be accountable to communities for the services they provide
- Develop and maintain a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse.

Full details of the Fire and Rescue National Framework can be [found on the government's website](#).

#### *Equality Act 2010*

Under the Public Sector Equality Duty, the Service must have due regard to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people of different protected characteristic groups.

Our progression in this area during 2022/23 will be published in our equalities compliance report, which [can be found on our website](#).

Our IRMP and IRMP action plan sets out objectives to ensure we continually improve in this area.

#### *Policing and Crime Act 2017*

This act has placed a statutory duty on all three emergency services to consider collaboration when entering into new agreements, in the interest of efficiency and effectiveness.

Within CFRS, these opportunities are monitored and assessed by the Blue Light Strategic Interoperability Board.

## 5. The communities we serve

### Our community

The population estimate of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is approximately 894,500 according to the Office for National Statistics Census 2021 figures. This represents an increase of around 11 per cent from the previous census in 2011. The population is 49 per cent male and 51 per cent female, living in around 362,100 households.

The population of Cambridgeshire is ageing with the number of people aged 65 and over accounting for 18 per cent of the population (around 160,000 people), based on Office for National Statistics Census 2021 data. Those most at risk from a fatal fire in the home are vulnerable people aged 65 and over.

The social demography of Cambridgeshire varies considerably, with the cities of Peterborough and Cambridge being particularly multi-cultural and multi-racial compared with other areas of the county. For example around 20 per cent of those living in the cities identify as non-white (Census 2021 data), with most of that population identifying as Asian. In the rest of the districts, the population is around 90 per cent white. Across the county, 16 per cent of residents are disabled under the Equality Act. More than 35 per cent of the population work predominantly from home.

Further information on our communities can be found in our IRMP 2020-2024, [which is on our website](#) (although this is based on the 2001 census data – our IRMP for 2024-2029 will be based on 2021 data).

### Our built environment

Cambridgeshire has a diverse and resilient economy. Situated in the heart of the East of England, Cambridge is less than one hour from London, just 20 minutes from London Stansted airport, which has excellent links to most major European cities and Cambridge also hosts its own private airport.

Cambridgeshire has good access to the national motorway network with the A1, A14 and M11 roads, which provide superb connections to the Midlands, the North, London and the east coast ports of Felixstowe, Lowestoft, Ipswich, Great Yarmouth and Harwich.

To accommodate the expected increase in population, a number of new sustainable developments have emerged in recent years and continue to grow. These include the country's first eco-town Northstowe, being built just five kilometres from the city of Cambridge and Alconbury Weald just north of Huntingdon.

Peterborough grew and developed rapidly in the seventies and eighties, following its designation as a 'new town' in 1968. Three new residential townships were developed with a full range of social and economic facilities and the fourth, Hampton, will continue this growth with over 5,000 homes and supporting infrastructure.

There is predicted to be over 21,000 new homes built across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough in the next five years in major developments alone.

### Our heritage

Cambridgeshire is a county of contrasts in the East of England. The county's towns and cities are steeped in history and have evolved over centuries. Cambridge is a university city of old streets, ancient colleges and bridges spanning the River Cam. Ely has a magnificent Norman cathedral and Huntingdon was the birthplace of Oliver Cromwell. Wisbech in the Fens has fine examples of Georgian street architecture whilst the Fens themselves are renowned for their impressive

agricultural landscapes. The city of Peterborough is a mixture of the ancient and modern. The renowned 11th century cathedral dominates the city centre landscape, with new townships sited around the existing urban centre.

#### Our natural environment

Cambridgeshire has a diverse natural environment, from gently undulating hills in the south of the county to the man-made landscape of the Fens in the northeast.

Covering an area of some 3,200 square kilometres, extending almost to the Wash in the north, Cambridgeshire is the most westerly county of East Anglia. It is a largely low lying area and the landscape is notably flat, with clay islands to the west and south east over soft chalk. Reclaimed fenland with rich peat beds, criss-crossed with man-made dykes, makes up the northern part of the county.

There are three principal rivers, the Nene in the north, the Cam to the south and the Great Ouse in the northwest.

## 6. How we serve our community

### Our Service

The Service is run by a management team headed by the Chief Fire Officer (see page 11 for structure) and is currently governed by a Fire Authority, made up of 17 councillors from Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Members of the Fire Authority can be found on page 10. Further details of the Fire Authority including committee structure and meeting dates [can be found on our website](#).

We currently operate from 27 fire stations across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Management, professional support departments and our Combined Fire Control are all based at our Service Headquarters in Huntingdon. Our training centre is part of the new Huntingdon Fire Station site, which relocated to Percy Road from Hartford Road earlier this year.

A map showing our fire stations [can be found on our website](#).

We employ 240 wholtime firefighters, including up to principal officers (establishment is 240) and 247 on-call firefighters. A total of 36 staff (establishment/full time equivalent is 36) operate our Combined Fire Control, taking emergency calls from Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Suffolk residents. We have 213 staff (including more than 100 part-time) working in support roles across the Service in essential operational and business support functions, including Learning and organisational Development, Health and Safety, Recruitment, Property, Fleet and Equipment, Finance and Human Resources.

We have a fleet of 41 fire engines, two rescue vehicles, two turntable ladder aerial appliances and a number of other specialist vehicles. More information about our vehicles and the equipment we use can [be found on our website](#).

### Our values

Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service works to a set of key values that everyone is expected to incorporate into every aspect of their work.

These key values are:

- **Welcome** – we welcome people into the workplace and create a working environment that is open and inclusive, which offers help and support.
- **Respect** – we respect the differences in groups of personnel and the public and take into account the right for people to be different, valuing diversity rather than demeaning it.
- **Dignity** - our treatment of people should conform to a standard of behaviour that is socially acceptable to all members of the community we serve.

## 7. Achievements towards our strategic aims

### Our vision and strategic aims

Our ultimate vision for the future is to create a safe community where there are no preventable deaths or injuries from fire or other emergencies.

Put simply, this means we want to reduce risk and save lives.

We will work towards our vision by putting the community and our staff at the heart of everything we do, striving for excellence both operationally and in how we approach community safety, and seeking to provide value for money in all areas.

These are therefore our strategic aims, which [can also be found on our website](#).

### Integrated risk management plan (IRMP)

Our IRMP is our corporate plan and it focuses on how we plan to achieve our strategic aims. It is a public facing document covering a set period. This annual report looks at our achievements against the third year of our current 2020-2024 IRMP.

Our IRMP identifies the key risks that may get in the way of us achieving our strategic aims, and it looks at the opportunities that may help us get there quicker. It then explains what action we will take to mitigate the risks and what we need to do to explore the opportunities that will help to further improve our service.

From this, our corporate priorities emerge, which we list under the strategic aim they most relate to (many also impact on one or more other areas). We deliver these through a detailed action plan which sits alongside the IRMP and updates are discussed every three months by chief officers and the strategic leadership team. Progress against the plan is presented to the Fire Authority on a regular basis.

Risk modelling is used to assess the likelihood of fire and rescue related incidents using performance data from the last six years. The information enables us to compare performance year on year and assess the impact of change and events such as weather, legislation changes and situations such as Covid-19. The more we can understand about these impacts on our demand, the more we can improve our Service.

The current 2020-2024 IRMP, [can be found on our website](#).

One of our key areas for the next year is to plan, consult on and publish our next plan, which will go live from April 1, 2024, under a slight change to the name to mirror a national change – Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).

### Achievements against our IRMP 2020-2024

The next few pages outline what we delivered in 2022/23 against the priorities in the IRMP, set out under each of the four strategic aims:

- People
- Community safety excellence
- Operational excellence
- Value for money

Each section starts by explaining what we are aiming to achieve for that strategic aim heading and then explains what we have done during the past year, how we have performed in key areas and includes a case study to evidence this.

## People

Working with our managers and staff to ensure our people are safe and the Service is accessible to everyone, meeting their needs and expectations, we:

- Continued work to develop our organisational culture and to enhance staff engagement, including ensuring mechanisms are in place to properly feedback to staff and facilitating opportunities for colleagues from across different areas of the Service to engage and work with each other more
- Developed and improve ways we support the mental health and wellbeing of staff
- Continued our ongoing work to improve the diversity of our workforce
- Expanded our programme of development activities to prepare staff for future roles and opportunities
- Strengthened how we understand our succession planning needs, including identifying and matching an individual's potential to those needs
- Continued to embed an understanding of the value of quality conversations to enhance personal performance and development
- Continued to review of our recruitment and promotion processes to provide equality of opportunity and remove any unnecessary barriers to people joining or progressing their careers within the Service.

To achieve this in 2022/23 we have:

- Carried out an employee engagement survey in October 2022, presenting the outcomes to all colleagues in January 2023. The results showed an improvement in overall employee engagement of 9 per cent compared to 2019 and an overall engagement score of 79 per cent. In many areas we scored above the fire service sector benchmark used by the external provider and this was a significant difference in some areas. Since January we have been working to further analyse the results and identify the areas where different employee groups feel less satisfied.
- Completed a gap analysis of the London Fire Brigade culture review report and the actions have been built into our IRMP action plan for 2023/24 (this was done as part of an annual review of our actions to continue to develop our culture).
- Reviewed our mental health provision.
- Re-started community engagement following the pandemic and attended many events including Pride in Cambridge and Peterborough as well as a Black History Month event in Peterborough. We attended the Asian Fire Services Association inclusion conferences to learn from other services and external speakers. We started an Employer of Choice project to ensure our inclusive culture is represented in our recruitment branding.
- Revised the content of and re-launched our mandatory equality, diversity and inclusion (ED&I) e-learning module and reached 100 per cent completion, as well as training over 100 managers in equality impact assessments (EQIA) and all watches had 'Introduction to Inclusion' sessions delivered by the ED&I team. We updated our internal inclusion page with webinars, videos and local events throughout the year that colleagues could watch or attend.
- Reviewed the content and scheduling of our Inclusion Network meetings to reach more colleagues and put terms of reference in place for our working groups. We appointed new Women in the Fire Service (WFS) representatives and have supported our female operational working group to take forward initiatives and listen to feedback.



- Launched Coaching Culture's development and mindset learning modules and promoted the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) new coaching and mentoring platform. We expanded our range of professional skills workshops that are open to all colleagues, based on feedback. We collaborated with Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire services to review the content and deliver a leadership development programme for crew and watch commanders who are looking to progress their careers.
- Gathered and listened to feedback from colleagues around any barriers to having quality conversations about performance and development. From this we re-clarified the purpose of personal development reviews/one to ones and created a supporting toolkit including videos, guides and workshops.
- Created and launched development portfolios for wholetime and Combined Fire Control progression from firefighter through to crew commander, watch commander and station commander, based on national operational guidance, our values and leadership attributes. We will evaluate the portfolios this year and then create development portfolios for support and on-call staff.
- Evaluated and completed an equality impact assessment on our previous wholetime recruitment process and the insights and actions have been built into this year's recruitment process. For example, we have re-introduced community assessors to our wholetime firefighter interview panels. This year we will do the same evaluation and EQIAs for our other recruitment processes.
- We have put a process in place during recruitment, where we positively encourage candidates to declare any neurodiversity with the recruitment team to explore reasonable adjustments. For employees, we improved our neurodiversity passport process and put enhanced external support in place. An Inclusion Ambassador for Neurodiversity and a working group is in place for peer support.
- We have continued our work to improve support and awareness for colleagues going through the menopause, by surveying all women in the Service about periods and menopause and their impact at work, resulting in a number of recommendations to take forward next year, including trialling portable toilets with pop up tents on two fire engines.

#### *Case study - A welcoming place to work*

In October we ran our third full employee engagement survey. The previous full survey had been completed in 2019, just before the pandemic. We ran a pulse check survey in 2021, together with questions more focused on mental health and wellbeing. We were keen to see if the pandemic and subsequent new ways of working – i.e. more working from home for those in office based roles – had changed how people felt about work.

The results were really pleasing. From a 61 per cent response rate, we achieved an engagement score of 79 per cent. What's more, 86 per cent of respondents said they were proud to say they worked for CFRS, 77 per cent were motivated to give their best and 74 per cent said they still wanted to be working for the Service in two years' time.

For this year's survey, we worked with a new company to manage responses to ensure full confidentiality and trust in the anonymity of responses. The benefit to us was that the new company worked with a dozen other fire and rescue services and we would be able to understand how our results compared to others. We were above average in the majority of questions.

More than 80 per cent agreed that everyone is welcome in the Service, regardless of individual difference and this was 20 per cent more than the sector average. Colleagues also felt that everyone worked well together across employee groups, 25 per cent more than the sector average.

When asked what was the best thing about working at CFRS, colleagues, collaboration and team work were the best scoring responses, followed by working patterns and culture.

Head of People, Christine Doody said: "The results were really positive, especially considering the survey was done at a time when we were experiencing the impacts of the cost of living crisis and people were still adapting to life after the pandemic.

"It was interesting to be able to compare our results with other fire and rescue service and we were pleased we were above average in most of the categories.

"The analysis of responses by different employee groups and the comments people left have all been helpful in us identifying where we can concentrate our efforts to continue to improve work life for employees. This is important feedback that helps us understand how we can do things better and shape our plans moving forward."

### Community safety

Working in partnership with agencies such as local authorities, district councils, police and health authorities, we aimed to:

- Collaborate further with health, social care and other partners to refine ways to identify and reach those most at risk of fire
- Develop our Firebreak programme to support the safety, health and personal development of identified young people
- Explore opportunities to offer early intervention and positively influence children and younger people
- Work with partners and local authorities to support businesses to comply with regulation and ultimately create safer places to live, work and visit
- Continue to lobby and work with developers and local authorities to increase public safety through the fitting of sprinklers where relevant
- Continue to work with partners from the road and water safety partnerships to reduce the number of people killed or injured on our roads and waterways
- Develop and embed systems to effectively evaluate our activity to keep the community safe
- Bring together expertise from protection, prevention, and community resilience to reduce risk to people, places and events.

To achieve this in 2022/23 we have:

- Continued to define and develop our use of partner data to ensure we are focusing our efforts on those we define as most vulnerable. Successes in our Anglia Water data sharing agreement, hospital bed data and increased referral rate from partners has allowed us to reach high or very high risk people on 84 per cent of occasions. More intelligent use of data has also increased the times our crews are getting across the doorstep to 70 per cent of occasions. This improved efficiency is not only helping to keep our communities safe but also allowing us to do more. Last year we delivered Safe and Well visits to more than 6,300 vulnerable households, more than we have ever delivered in a year before.

- Continued delivering our youth engagement programme Firebreak, which goes from strength to strength. Last academic year we delivered 10 courses, involving around 120 young people. Firebreak is unfunded and we continue to work across partners to ensure funding is available to deliver these interventions. In the last year we have included an evaluation tool which will allow us to clearly evidence the positive impact of the Firebreak intervention on the young people who attend the course and add further weight to its efficacy when seeking funding.
- Reviewed our children and young people offering and are focusing our efforts on Firebreak and fire setter intervention. We are also promoting the NFCC Stay Wise Programme, which offers nationally agreed learning materials for Key Stage 1 and 2 and can be included in the national curriculum, covering areas such as staying safe in the home, water and road safety. To reach Reception and Key Stage 1 children, we have also developed a character called Jet the Dragon. Jet has been designed specifically to deliver water and fire safety messages to early learners. To date, there have been four stories from Jet, all available [on the Stay Wise virtual resource](#), available nationally.
- Engaged with businesses through seminars and webinars.
- Worked as part of a multi-agency team in the area of Lincoln Road, Peterborough running days of action, ensuring people are safe in their homes as well as offering safety advice to businesses in the area.
- Continued to engage with developers and the local authority to recommend the fitting of sprinklers where legislation does not require it.
- Recruited a dedicated Community Road Safety Officer. This role is hosted by the Service and funded by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). This partnership approach ensures the police and fire service are aligned with the community casualty reduction focus set out by the OPCC, through the Vision Zero Road Safety Partnership.
- Delivered several initiatives, including 20 Biker Down sessions to 200 members of the public and Be Water Aware sessions to around 4,500 students in schools throughout Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.
- Embedded evaluation in all prevention activity. This has led us to ceasing some activities we have done previously and ensure that we focus our resources on best outcomes.
- Launched a post incident review project, 'Customer Conversation,' in partnership with an academic professor at Salford University to further investigate behaviours that lead to a fire occurring in the home, to help shape our approach and messaging to reduce the occurrence of these in the future.
- Continued to visit risk sites across the county.

#### *Case study – Online fire safety tool launches*

The Service launched a new home safety check tool allowing people to carry out their own home fire risk assessment for free. The online tool takes the answers given by the resident and creates an action plan that can be saved and printed, giving basic, simple tips to help keep their home fire safe.

The tool can be used on any internet-enabled device and has a user-friendly interface. Those using the tool are prompted for information about each part of their property, with the answers then generating easy to follow advice that can be kept and referred to at any time.

Station Commander James Ball, one of the Service's community risk managers, said: "This new resource really is a game changer for us and for residents. It allows anyone to get free access to fire safety advice in their own time. They can also use the tool on behalf of a vulnerable member of their

family or friend, particularly if they struggle with using technology. Families can also sit and do it together to help educate their younger family members.”

The online home safety check tool does not replace the in person visits the Service carries out to vulnerable residents around the county.

Station Commander Ball explained: “We currently prioritise visiting those most vulnerable people in our communities, for example those with mobility issues, disabilities and the elderly. Not only will this tool help us give vital fire safety advice to those we can’t give a visit to, but the information provided will highlight any vulnerable people that we might have struggled to reach or not been aware of from our data. It will also give them the initial advice that will help until we can arrange a visit for them.”

Since launching, more than 300 people have completed their own home fire safety check using the online tool. Of those, more than half were referred for an in person safe and well visit.

James concluded: “The online home safety check is such an easy way for people to risk assess their homes at the touch of a button, which will help keep them and their families safe. I would really encourage people to log onto our website and give it a go. Hopefully everyone will find it straightforward and encourage their friends and family to use it too.”

### Operational Excellence

Working with our managers and staff to ensure the highest standards of operational response we continued to:

- Align operational resources to our risk and demand
- Develop the use of our on-call crews to improve our operational service to the public
- Explore and implement improvements to support the working experience for our on-call staff
- Review the structure and resourcing in our Combined Fire Control to ensure the continual provision of a high quality, sustainable control function
- Ensure our emergency vehicles and equipment meet our identified risks
- Align service procedures with national operational guidance to improve firefighter safety and our ability to work with other fire and rescue services
- Develop our central training facility to support the delivery of risk critical operational training
- Review current arrangement for operational training to ensure they meet the needs of operational staff
- Develop further our assurance across all operational areas to ensure a high level of performance and support the continued development of our staff.

To achieve this in 2022/23 we have:

- Launched our Operational Risk Review project, that will help us to better understand our efficiency and effectiveness of resources and the demands placed upon them.
- Worked to allow on-call staff to better utilise their capacity. For instance we have removed the infrequently used 13.5 metre ladders from on-call appliances, which was not only a barrier for some joining the Service, but also removes a significant training burden.
- Introduced responding to incidents with a crew of three firefighters, when five or four cannot be achieved. This has provided approximately 1,000 additional hours of cover per

month and seen an increase in call outs for most on-call stations. We will continue to strive to ensure we have appliances that are mobilised with crews of four or more, but where we can't crews of three will be utilised. This will take time to embed and evaluate, but initial findings would suggest that morale has increased on on-call stations as crews are being used more and hopefully in the long-term retention will increase too.

- Introduced battle boxes containing high-end gym equipment at all on-call stations to help crews to maintain fitness.
- Improved processes to help crews limit the impact of administration on their drill nights.
- Introduced seven new fire appliances into our fleet with the latest technology and specialist rescue equipment on board. We have also, following the summer spate conditions in 2022, procured two vehicles to trial with specific off-road capabilities to support our response to wildland and field fires.
- Continued to fully adopt and align to the National Operational Guidance (NOG). This sees us working collaboratively with all services within the Eastern Region to share both resources and peer review the information being provided to ensure, where appropriate, standardisation in response and share learning.
- Concluded the project to review the current arrangements for operational training and implemented the key identified areas. This has seen a new shift system for our training instructor team, which ensures a seven day and evening provision to meet the needs of our wholetime and on-call firefighters.
- Developed and successfully created a flexible bridging course programme to best recognise the skills and attributes of our on-call firefighters who have been successful in the wholetime recruitment process.
- Put in place a programme to provide external verification and learning of our operational skills. This supports the ongoing assurance of our operational training and development of our staff.

#### *Case study – Heat wave brings busiest summer ever!*

The summer of 2022 was a significant challenge for us and services across the UK. Prolonged periods of hot weather including very high temperatures and no rainfall resulted in lots of fires requiring several crews to attend. These fires would spread very quickly and will often be in areas where water supply would be difficult, so several fire engines would be needed.

As many people enjoyed the sunshine, firefighters were called on to assist with a large increase in fires. Over one weekend in mid-July, more than 100 firefighters were required at three separate incidents involving large field fires, lasting around seven hours. Usually, the Service could request support from neighbouring services to assist, however many counties were experiencing similar issues, so this was not possible.

Our Combined Fire Control was under immense pressure throughout the heatwave, dealing with increased amounts of calls for both Cambridgeshire and Suffolk. Over the two hottest days in July, our emergency call handlers dealt with almost 800 calls, sending fire engines to 92 incidents in Cambridgeshire, the highest amount ever for a single day. At one stage they were also providing support for other fire services across the country due to unprecedented demand elsewhere. In addition to Cambridgeshire and Suffolk, they were also dealing with emergencies from London, Greater Manchester and Yorkshire, among others.

In August, as temperatures climbed again, call handlers and crews were tested to their limits. Control received more than 1,400 calls, which included many significant incidents in Suffolk. This

time of year they would usually expect to deal with around 850 calls. Crews continued to respond to fires in hot, gruelling conditions, often for several hours going from incident to incident.

At some stages, every fire engine was committed to an incident, which led to the chief fire officer declaring this a major incident.

Chief Fire Officer Chris Strickland said: "In times like these I am so proud of the people we have. Everyone demonstrated their passion for serving the community and giving their best, but also being there to help and support each other. We had our officers set up our Major Incident Command Room to coordinate our crews and ensure we could relieve and rotate them around to ensure their wellbeing. They were also checking on the welfare of our control colleagues and providing refreshments, as they literally could not leave their desks at some points of the day. Our communication team was also on hand to ensure we were not only informing the public of the key incidents, but also sending key safety messages to try and reduce the amount of incidents happening. Everyone pitched in together to make sure we were providing the best level of service we could.

"Everyone who worked for our Service at the time could hold their heads high as they all stepped up to the challenges of the extreme heatwave. When things cooled down, we evaluated our response and implemented some improvements to enable us to respond even better next time."

#### Value for money

Working with our managers and staff to ensure we deliver high quality, value for money services, we aimed to:

- Deliver new emergency mobilising technologies into operational service as well as review existing technologies to deliver enhancements to these
- Deliver efficiencies, through the Service Transformation and Efficiency Programme (STEP), by the automation and improvement of business processes
- Ensure technology delivers opportunities for more efficient and effective ways of working, with a particular emphasis on ensuring our software provides value for money
- Review spend across departments and contractual arrangements to inform enhancements and improvements to our procurement processes
- Ensure that financial awareness and greater accountability for budgets are in place to ensure that spend is efficient and effective
- Ensure that the digital drivers across the Service are understood, scoped and prioritised
- Review digital capacity to ensure that they are sufficient to meet need
- Ensure that the Service has sustainability strategies in place and the mechanisms by which to measure and evaluate these.

To achieve this in 2022/23 we have:

- Made positive progress on the project to introduce a new mobilising system. Work will continue throughout this financial year to complete testing and training ready to go live in the new year.
- Improved connectivity of our systems from remote locations.
- Renegotiated contracts resulting in some significant savings.
- Identified some considerable opportunities for savings and amended some processes in readiness of requirements within the New Procurement Act.

- Developed a sustainable procurement strategy and this is now an integral part of our procurement and tendering process, along with modern slavery checks, social value requirements and ethical procurement.
- Delivered a Financial Awareness and Understanding Your Budget training session to the management group during 2022/23 and this is now incorporated in the financial training for new starters who have budget responsibilities.
- Used a zero-based budgeting approach to build the 2023/24 budget, meaning that the budget holders were forced to start from zero and build their budgets from there.
- Created a business case to introduce a two-year secondment opportunity to specifically look at how we utilise Microsoft 365 and to ensure that the organisation moves forward to embrace available toolsets.
- Continued to develop and work towards our sustainability goals with key strands in place to support the strategy.
- Commissioned and received an independent review of the key areas by the Carbon Trust with an action plan in review on areas of good practice and improvements identified. This will support our drive to net zero by 2030.

#### *Case study – New station and training centre opens its doors*

Building work for the Service's new multi-million pound fire station and training centre in Huntingdon finished allowing crews to move in and begin responding from the new location.

The new state-of-the-art fire station is now in Percy Road, just off the A141. It houses two fire engines, one crewed 24/7 by wholtime firefighters and the one crewed by on-call firefighters who are not based at the station, but carry alerters and drop everything to rush to the station if they are needed.

Adjoining the station is the Service's new Training Centre. The new site provides far more opportunity for the Service to provide the necessary training to ensure all firefighters are competent in the variety of skills needed for the role and the many different incidents they could be called to. It includes multi-level buildings and live fire burns to give firefighters a wholly realistic training experience. Previously, crews would need to attend off-site locations, costing more money and travel time. There is also a large road traffic collision compound and facilities to replicate water filled ditches.

The Occupational Health team, Operational Support Group and Health and Safety team are also based at the station.

Deputy Chief Executive, Matthew Warren said: "It was a momentous occasion for the project as firefighters moved into and began responding to 999 calls from the new fire station.

"A huge thanks must go to all those involved in getting the development to where it is today - we now have a first-class fire station and training centre that will provide an excellent facility for our colleagues."

#### *Our performance data*

We collect lots of data to help us understand how we are performing compared to previous years. Factors such as the long spells of hot weather we've experienced over the last year and the impact of covid restrictions for example can greatly impact the number of fires and other emergencies we attend each year, and year on year numbers of incidents in each of the categories can fluctuate.



We monitor our data carefully and report on it quarterly to seek to understand any underlying causes or factors that we are able to influence to reduce numbers or improve our service. Appreciating there will always be different factors that cause fluctuations year on year, we look at trends over a number of years as a better way of assessing our performance, aiming to achieve a downward trend in the number of incidents.

In our IRMP we set out the main performance areas we monitor that help us understand the progress we are making against the IRMP. Behind the scenes, we analyse much more data than this, but these are the headline data sets.

#### *How we performed in 2022/23*

We have three performance measures relating to how long it takes our fire crews to get to an emergency. These are:

- We will respond to the most serious incidents within an average of nine minutes in urban areas and 12 minutes in rural areas, for the first fire engine in attendance
- We will respond to all incidents in our authority area within 18 minutes for the first fire engine in attendance, 95 per cent of the time.

Over this year we have responded to the most critical incidents in urban areas in 7.39 minutes, which is 81 seconds quicker than our measure of 9 minutes.

Rural attendance times have exceeded our measure of 12 minutes by 18 seconds.

We have had a fire engine arrive within 18 minutes on 94.6 per cent of occasions, not quite meeting our measure of 95 per cent. This is down to a number of factors, mainly the summer spate conditions but also incidents in non-addressable locations, such as vehicle and outdoor fire incidents as people do not always know exactly where they are when they call an incident in.

There was a significant increase of 21 per cent in total fires this year, again due to the summer spate conditions, with the highest number of fires seen in the last five years.

There has been a 16 per cent increase of primary fires (most serious) compared with last year, which also represents a 5 per cent increase on the rolling fire year figure.

There was a 25 per cent increase of secondary fires on the previous call year, but this shows a 2 per cent decrease for the rolling 5 year figure.

We have seen 1 fire death this call year. This was as a result of a fire caused by smoking materials.

We have attended 419 road traffic collisions this year, an 8 per cent increase on last year's figure but 15 per cent lower than the rolling 5 year figure. There have been 388 people killed or seriously injured this year. This is down by 5 per cent against the rolling 5 years. (Source: Police dataset, the last 12 months is provisional data).

We have attended 1,528 Special Service incidents this year. This is a 52 per cent increase on the rolling 5 years. Of these 547 incidents were assisting other agencies, including 58 co-responding incidents. We attended 150 flooding incidents, around 30 more than the previous year, along with 162 animal rescues, 10 more than last year.

We have seen 131 accidental non-domestic fires this year. This is a 20 per cent increase on last year and 10 per cent more than the previous 5 years.



There were 719 business engagements carried out through a combination of online and face to face, compared with 406 last year. This shows our function is fully back following the challenges of the pandemic.

#### *Our workforce diversity*

Of those applying for role with Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service, 15.1 per cent of applicants were from black and minority ethnic communities, an increase of 8.3 per cent over five years. However, across our workforce 3 per cent are from these communities, a drop of 0.4 per cent.

From the total, 29.9 per cent of all applicants were female, with 12.9 per cent of operational applicants being female.

Our full-time equivalent workforce is 536.9, compared to 531.4 last year. Headcount is 633 compared to 619 last year, which is mainly on-call staff.

Those identifying as Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic have a total increase from the previous year to 3 per cent, in wholetime and on-call. The NFCC Family Group 2 benchmark is 3 per cent, with all English fire and service's benchmark being 5.3 per cent. Census 2021 is 10.1 per cent for Cambridgeshire.

The number of women is down from 24 per cent to 22.8 per cent in on-call, Control and support, but up by 3 in wholetime. Female managers have increased to 24.2 per cent overall. The NFCC Family Group 2 benchmark and all English fire and rescue service's benchmark being 18 per cent. Census 2021 is 51 per cent for Cambridgeshire.

The percentage of staff declaring they have a disability has largely remained the same, from 6.8 per cent to 6.9 per cent. We have seen an increase to 3 per cent of employees who have declared other religion or belief and those identifying as LGBT+ has increased to 3.4 per cent.

## 8. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We are committed to continuous improvement of equality, diversity and inclusion in both our service delivery and within the workplace.

To do this, and in compliance with our public service equality duty, we set ourselves objectives and have incorporated them into our Integrated Risk Management Plan.

Below are the objectives listed within the strategic aims:

### People

- Continue work to develop our organisational culture and to enhance employee engagement
- Develop and improve the ways in which we support the mental health and wellbeing of our staff
- Improve the diversity of our workforce
- Expand our programme of development activities to prepare employees for future roles and opportunities
- Embed an understanding of the value of quality conversations to enhance personal performance and development
- Strengthen our understanding of succession planning needs
- Continual review of our recruitment and promotion processes to provide equality of opportunity and remove any unnecessary barriers to people joining or progressing their careers within the Service.

### Community Safety

- Reduce community risk by identifying and reaching those most at risk of fire
- Develop our Firebreak programme to support the safety, health and personal development of identified young people (CYP)
- Offer early intervention and positively influence children and younger people
- Support businesses to comply with regulation, and ultimately create safer places to live, work and visit
- Effectively keep the community safe and well.

Highlights of our achievements last year:

### People

- We scoped the work to review our One Team Behaviours in the following year, in line with our review timescales.
- We put a plan in place to best utilise Microsoft Office 365 to support great internal communications.
- We ensured the impacts of the pandemic on ways of working and our culture and employee wellbeing were factored into plans and activities.
- We revised the post responsible for mental health support and are recruiting a psychological wellbeing practitioner.
- We began a project to review the current Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) provision.
- We have created and embedded an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan.
- Continued to embed a defined coaching culture, incorporating both formal and informal coaching.
- We reviewed the benefits versus the cost of FACET for all staff, including the education and promotion to gain maximum benefit.
- We reviewed the use of technology to offer a range of blended learning, e-learning and in-person learning interventions for personal, leadership and management development.

- We ensured all colleagues are clear on what is mandatory training, and that mandatory training content/length is regularly reviewed.
- We identified and defined the barriers to our people engaging in appropriate development activities to support our plans to remove barriers.
- We worked with appropriate stakeholders to identify areas for improvement within our recording system for performance conversations.
- We explored options for a quality assurance process, to provide insight and assurance that good quality conversations are happening and being captured.
- We relaunched performance and development conversations, outlining their purpose and meaning to ensure everyone understands what we mean when we talk about them.
- We refreshed and relaunched the tools need to support managers and employees in quality conversations.
- We completed the first review of talent grids for wholetime, control and on-call colleagues, enabling identification of emerging talent and single points of failure at all levels.
- We began to review talent identification process for professional support staff, key dependency roles and the leadership team.
- We launched and embedded refreshed development portfolios for wholetime and control staff.

#### Community Safety Excellence

- We have successfully continued to deliver Firebreak with positive results
- Supported businesses to comply with regulation
- We regularly conducted business webinars, including additional sessions, to reach a wider audience
- We are delivering training with external partners to improve the understanding of fire regulation and identifying risks.
- We have worked to ensure our services are accessible.
- We have scoped a new sprinkler campaign and assessed our strategy to reach a wide audience.
- We deliver safe and well visits, engage with customer conversation and online tools.
- We have expanded our community safety visits to target those most at risk of flooding.
- We have established a regional Resilience group to share best practices.

We continued to complete Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA). Here are some examples of the more detailed EQIAs that were completed in this reporting period:

- Proposal for roll-out of electric vehicle chargers
- Review of training centre shift system
- Review of safe and well visits
- Review of Mobile Data Terminal accessibility
- Review of on-call crewing policy
- Financial business continuity planning
- Review of sickness attendance policy
- Review of expenses and allowances policy
- Remote working for on-call firefighters
- Review of annual leave policy
- Review of Firebreak
- Proposal for development portfolios
- Proposal for replacement finance system
- Proposal for refurbishment of a station

- Upcoming legislative change for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks
- Proposed wholetime recruitment process
- Review of HSE documentation
- Risk resource methodology
- Review of turntable ladders
- Proposed estates strategy.

## 9. Partnerships and collaborations

We recognise that we are better able to achieve our aims and objectives across all areas of the Service by collaborating and working in partnership with other agencies with similar aims and goals – these include other emergency services and public sector organisations, charities, voluntary groups and other fire and rescue services.

Not only does this improve the service we each deliver, but in tough economic times it makes financial sense to remove duplication and share resources.

Partnership working is embedded across the Service in all departments, from how we investigate fires and drive down arson and road traffic collisions, to planning for big events and dealing with disasters and day to day incidents.

We have many active collaborations ongoing across the Service. Some of them save us money, others help provide resilience or bring additional benefits we wouldn't otherwise have been able to achieve. Other collaborations may cost us more but may have additional benefits to us or to the wider community which makes it a worthwhile investment.

Examples of some of our collaborations are:

### Combined Fire Control with Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service

This year saw the 11th anniversary of our Combined Fire Control. Working in partnership with Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service, we became the first fire and rescue service to prove that the concept of combined control room works. All 999 calls for both Suffolk and Cambridgeshire are answered by control operators based at our headquarters in Huntingdon and operators mobilise fire engines and resources for both fire and rescue services. Through this agreement, each service saves approximately £400,000 each year.

### Mutual Aid Agreements

The Fire Authority has mutual aid agreements with each of the seven neighbouring fire and rescue services whereby:

- In the event of a significant emergency, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority can request additional resources from a neighbouring fire authority.
- Should the location of an emergency be closer to a fire engine from a neighbouring authority, a request will be made for that fire engine to attend the incident.
- Specialist equipment and trained personnel can also be requested from other fire and rescue services to attend significant emergencies in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

In the event of a national emergency elsewhere in the country, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority has a high volume pump, to support a large scale flooding incident, that can be deployed to assist those in need. We also jointly manage a third vehicle, which is the Eastern Region's Detection, Identification and Monitoring (DIM) vehicle which provides a 24/7 response capability for deployment in the early stages of a major incident involving chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear materials. This vehicle is operated by Essex Fire and Rescue Service but the specialist officers who run the equipment come from both Cambridgeshire and Essex fire services.

### Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Resilience Forum (LRF)

Local Resilience Forums aim to plan and prepare for localised incidents and catastrophic emergencies. They work to identify potential risks and produce emergency plans to either prevent or mitigate the impact of any incident on their local communities. Our senior managers are actively

engaged in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Resilience Forum, which is chaired by our chief fire officer. The Service has fully supported and participated in the development of an agreed risk profile for the local area through the community risk register, in partnership with police and ambulance services, local authorities, NHS England, Public Health England, the Environment Agency and the military.

#### Shared ICT Service with Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service

Our ICT Shared Service provides ICT support to both Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire fire and rescue services. The shared service brought together staff from both services' ICT teams, who started working as one team from July 2013, to bring resilience and improved ways of working to both services.

#### Cambridge Water Safety Partnership

Cambridgeshire Water Safety Partnership was established in December 2018, initially funded by CFRS and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). The partnership has been set up with the vision of reducing all preventable water related deaths and injuries through education, training and engagement. Other partners include Peterborough City Council, Cambridge City Council, Conservators of the River Cam, Great Ouse Boating Association, Beds, Cambs and Herts Joint Protective Services, East of England Ambulance Service, MAGPAS Air Ambulance, Environment Agency, the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI), the Royal Life Saving Society (RLSS), and the Samaritans.

#### Safeguarding provision with Essex County Fire and Rescue Service

The Service has an agreement with Essex County Fire and Rescue Service to utilise its provision for safeguarding. This gives extra support to the in-house safeguarding officer, providing the staff infrastructure and experience in place at Essex, meaning the Service has a resilient and robust safeguarding structure.

#### Sharing facilities with ambulance service

Staff can now utilise facilities in Melbourn, South Cambridgeshire thanks to a collaboration with the East of England Ambulance Service Trust. Crews in the area will be able to use the Hazardous Area Response Team base to stop off or be based if needed.

#### Data sharing with Anglian Water

A partnership agreement with Anglian Water allows the Service to access vulnerable residents in the community that are signed up to a Priority Services Register, offering a wide range of practical support from help in the event of an incident to extra protection against bogus callers and scams. The agreement involves sharing data to support residents with fire safety advice, as well as general safety and wellbeing to help reach out to those most vulnerable in the community. Since beginning the partnership last year, the Service has managed to reach more than 250 vulnerable residents through referrals.

## 10. Financial performance and governance

Ensuring we have an efficient service that offers value for money, underpins everything we do. Although the pressures on our budget through a continued reduction in government grant since 2010 have been felt across the Service, with innovative thinking and more collaborative working, as well as the support from our communities and staff, we have managed to find the necessary savings each year to ensure a balanced budget.

It gets tougher each time we need to find savings as we are now a lean organisation and have been recognised as an effective and efficient Service by HMICFRS. Any future budget cuts are likely to be felt hard, especially with the country experiencing high inflation and a cost of living crisis, exacerbated by the war in Ukraine.

### Where our money comes from and how much we spent

The Fire Authority's total net expenditure was £31,743,000. This is made up of £36,337,000 (expenditure) less £4,594,000 (other income). £22,214,100 was collected from council tax payers, which amounted to £74.97 a year for a Band D council tax household. This equates to £1.44 a week – less than the price of a four-pint carton of milk.

The table below shows the breakdown of where our funding comes from and how we spent it.

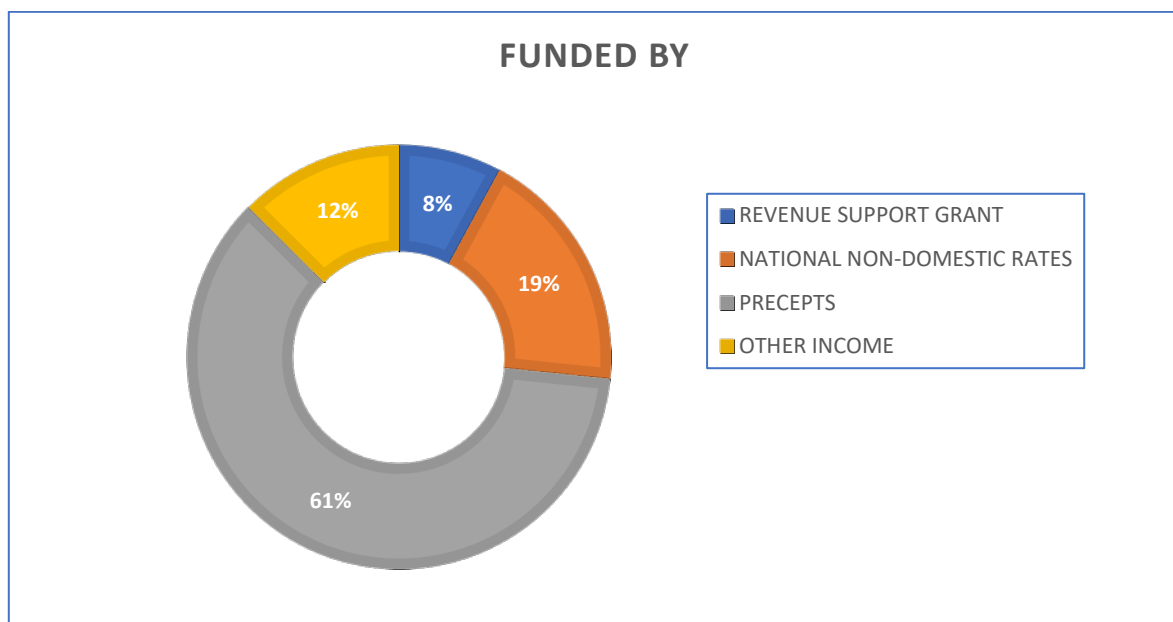
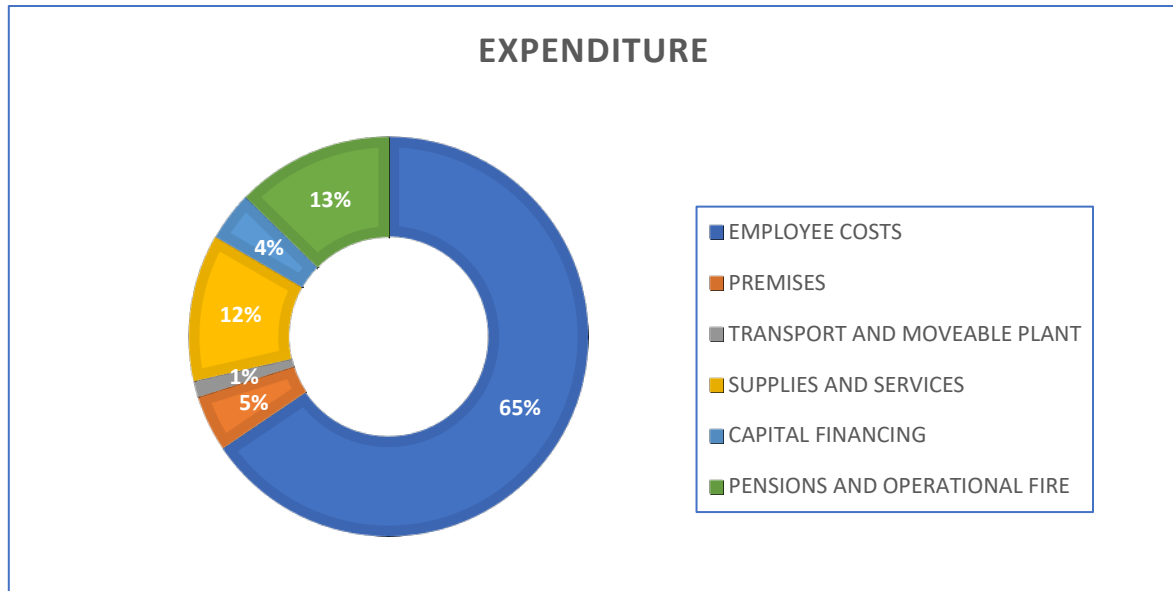
Please note these are DRAFT ACCOUNTS as our independent audit has not taken place yet.

Description	Revised budget £000's	Actual to date £000's	Variance £000's	Variance Per cent (%)
Full time firefighters	13,414	13,766	352	3
Control room staff	1,740	1,823	83	5
Local government employees	3,414	3,212	(202)	-6
Senior management	4,210	3,780	(430)	-10
Recruitment and training	640	530	(110)	-17
Fire allowances	698	724	26	4
<b>EMPLOYEE COSTS</b>	<b>24,116</b>	<b>23,835</b>	<b>(281)</b>	<b>-1</b>
Property maintenance	434	425	(9)	-2
Insurance	63	52	(11)	-17
Energy costs	429	472	43	10
Cleaning	49	37	(12)	-24
Rents and rates	658	670	12	2
<b>PREMISES</b>	<b>1,633</b>	<b>1,656</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>1</b>
Car and cycle allowances	38	37	(1)	-3
Vehicle running expenses	180	247	67	37
Vehicle insurance	158	173	15	9
<b>TRANSPORT AND MOVEABLE PLANT</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>457</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>22</b>
Office expenses	306	222	(84)	-27
IT and communications equipment	2,369	1,956	(413)	-17
Fire equipment	324	375	51	16
Uniforms and clothing	503	357	(146)	-29
Other supplies and services	1,857	1,415	(442)	-24
<b>SUPPLIES AND SERVICES</b>	<b>5,359</b>	<b>4,325</b>	<b>(1,034)</b>	<b>-19</b>
Debt charges	1,378	1,452	74	5
External interest	(90)	(176)	(86)	96
<b>CAPITAL FINANCING</b>	<b>1,288</b>	<b>1,276</b>	<b>(12)</b>	<b>-1</b>
CONTROLLABLE EXPENDITURE	32,772	31,549	(1,223)	-4
Other income	(1,717)	(1,707)	10	-1
Other Government grants	(2,261)	(2,711)	(450)	20
<b>CONTROLLABLE INCOME</b>	<b>(3,978)</b>	<b>(4,418)</b>	<b>(440)</b>	<b>11</b>
NET CONTROLLABLE EXPENDITURE	28,794	27,131	(1,663)	-6
Pensions – lump sums	766	863	97	13
Operational fire budget	3,506	3,749	243	7
<b>SAFETY-NETTED EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>4,272</b>	<b>4,612</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>8</b>
NET EXPENDITURE	33,066	31,743	(1,323)	-4
Grant/precept income	(31,386)	(32,026)	(640)	



Transfers to/from earmarked reserves	(1,680)	276	1,956	
<b>CONTRIBUTIONS</b>	<b>(33,066)</b>	<b>(31,750)</b>	<b>1,316</b>	
CONTRIBUTION TO GENERAL RESERVE	-	7	7	

This information is also shown below in two pie graphs:



#### Key Budget points

Due to inflationary pressures and unbudgeted pay awards, the service used much of its reserves to fund its capital and revenue expenditure but still adequate reserves in place to help support any financial pressures in the short to medium term (the Service has carried forward a Finance Business Continuity Reserve of £1.319 million)

## What we own

Our assets include (as of March 2023):

### *Buildings*

1. Fire headquarters and operational buildings	28
2. Staff houses	5
o Total	33

### *Vehicles and Plant*

1. Fire engines (incl rescue pumps)	41
2. Aerial appliances	2
3. Rescue vehicles	2
4. Other special appliances	5
5. Reserve and training appliances	6
6. Other vehicles	107
o Total	163

\*During 2022/23 the Service sold Papworth Fire Station following the move of Papworth Hospital to Cambridge. In the absence of Papworth, Cambourne Fire Station became an operational fire station utilising the crew and equipment from the former station.

### *Capital Spending*

The Authority has purchased seven fire appliances totalling £1.779 million.

The Authority has purchased rescue equipment for the seven new fire appliances which included investment in new battery-operated cutting equipment for wholetime stations.

The Authority has carried out property works to existing properties and has completed the construction of a new fire station and training facility in Huntingdon, the total cost of this project was £11.355 million.

The Authority has purchased ICT systems, hardware and is currently upgrading the communications equipment used within the control room.

### *Financial governance*

Each year we publish sets of accounts for public consumption. These documents explain our financial performance over a given financial year which always runs from April 1 to March 31. Recent versions of these documents are available on our website.

### *External audit*

The Fire Authority has external auditors appointed by central government to assess its financial standing. The Authority's appointed auditor, BDO LLP, undertakes an annual audit of the financial standing of the Fire Authority. The auditors are required, under the Code of Audit Practice, to highlight all issues of significance arising from an audit, in the form of an annual audit letter.

Due to significant backlogs within the sector the external audit of the 2021/22 and 2022/23 won't be taking place until later in the year, with the results not being available until each audit is completed.

### Governance matters

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority has arrangements with an external auditor to audit the governance arrangements of the Authority. The Authority undertakes an annual assessment of the governance arrangements using the principles of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA)/Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) framework 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government'. The external auditor also undertakes their assessment of compliance against these standards.

### Internal audit

The Fire Authority appoints internal auditors to ensure their internal systems of control are appropriate. Reports and recommendations arising from these audits are taken to the Fire Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee before being presented to full Fire Authority for consideration and approval.

### Financial transparency

The Local Government Transparency Code 2015 is a tool to embed transparency in local authorities, which includes fire and rescue authorities and sets out the minimum data that local authorities should be publishing, the frequency it should be published and how it should be published. To streamline and simplify access to this information, [our website includes a specific Transparency section](#) - a link for which can be found in the footer of each webpage.

## 11. How we compare nationally

All public bodies must now make difficult decisions about priorities and find more efficient and innovative ways of delivering their responsibilities.

In our 2021 HMICFRS inspection, we were awarded 'Good' in the Value for Money assessment. The report did highlight that we could improve on making sure it knows how it makes the service affordable now and in the future. A lot of work has gone on in this area in this financial year to ensure we can meet any potential shortages in our budget as a result of the cost of living crisis and higher than budgeted pay awards. At the end of 2022/23, we were looking forward to sharing this with the HMICFRS during our imminent inspection.

## 12. Our inspection results

In the Spring of 2021, HMICFRS carried out a its second full inspection of the Service, where again we were rated as Good in all three pillar areas of effectiveness, efficiency and how we look after our people. This put us among the best performing fire and rescue services in the country.

The inspection team commented on the positive and constructive way that we engaged with the inspection and it found that overall we are doing a good job, that we are effective and efficient at keeping people safe and secure from fire, and we look after our people well.

As the financial year drew to a close, we were preparing to welcome the inspection team back for their third full visit to Cambridgeshire.

### 13. Planning and future priorities

Our Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) provides full details of how we plan for the future, how we set our priorities and what those priorities are until 2024.

The draft IRMP went out for public consultation at the end of 2019 and was presented to the Fire Authority in March 2020 for final agreement. We began the action plan to deliver the first year of the IRMP in April 2020 and continue to work through the priorities.

This annual report looks back on our progress against the action plan for the third year of the current IRMP.

The full 2020-2024 IRMP is [available to view on our website](#).

One of our key areas of work for the coming year is to prepare our next IRMP which will have a slight name change to Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). This will give us our strategic direction for the next five years. We will be drafting the plan and engaging with employees and our residents to include their input. The draft plan will be presented to the Fire Authority in Spring 2024.

## 14. Letters of appreciation

Each week we get letters, cards and posts on our social media sites thanking our staff for the many great things they do including attending incidents and events, visiting homes to provide safety advice and delivering awareness sessions.

Our staff appreciate every letter, card and comment they receive and it is always heart-warming to see the difference our staff and the service we provide makes to people.

Here is a small selection of some we have received this year:

Just a note to say a really big thank you to the team who came out in the early hours and assisted the ambulance crew to get my poorly husband down our stairs. Hubby left in an ambulance and thanks to your swift actions and was operated on later that morning.

### **A resident in East Cambs**

I cannot find enough superlatives to express how fantastically the crew worked as a team. I took a lot of pics and videos, which I have shared with my sisters to show what really happens in a serious fire. They are all heroes!

### **A resident in Peterborough**

The PTA Team and everyone at Brampton Village Primary School wanted to say a huge thank you for coming down to our Summer Fayre. The day was a great success and it was so nice to see all the children having so much fun (despite the rain) and coming away with their haul of winnings.

They absolutely loved seeing the fire engine!

### **A school in Huntingdonshire**

Just want to say how amazing the crews were in attending a house fire in Werrington. I was absorbed at my bedroom window close by but safe. They were so thorough inspecting every inch, especially the chimney stack, which stubbornly remained a threat from what I could see. We are so grateful to all of you.

### **A resident in Peterborough**

Thank you so much to you, and your crews, for giving up your valuable time to come and talk to NFU members yesterday. Your session, along with the practical one in the workshop next door to you, were the greatest hits with members, and so I am sure members have learned something from your wise words.

Many thanks once again for all your planning, time, support and enthusiasm.

### **A representative from the National Farmers Union**

A big thank you to Stanground Red watch, for hosting my Guide unit and teaching them all about fire safety and showing them around the pump etc. I've had lots of messages from parents saying how much the girls enjoyed it.

Thank you for having us!

### **A resident in Peterborough**

I attended the Biker Down course and am writing to express how much I enjoyed it. The course was extremely well presented, in an engaging and professional manner by the two trainers and I found the content interesting, practical and 'real world' relevant. Full marks!

**A resident attending a Biker Down session**

We love and appreciate that you put your time aside to help us. There is no kinder act than helping others. As organisers we were so proud of all the educators and you exceeded our expectations to an extent that we were blown away with the enthusiasm, involvement and support that everyone gave on the day.

What a day it was! The event reached 3,000 children from five counties this year. Some 43 schools were present, coming together to learn where their food comes from, the importance of agriculture and our countryside.

Once again, please accept my heartfelt thanks for your invaluable help and support contributing to such a fantastic day that without the input of all you wonderful exhibitors this year's events wouldn't have been anywhere near as much fun!

Keep up the great work guys!

**An organiser of an event in Cambridgeshire**

I was unfortunate enough to come across an incident on the A1198 involving a car that had struck a lorry.

One occupant within the car was injured, so whilst I gave first aid, and kept them reassured, two of your appliances arrived quickly, and soon got to work, while I was in the rear of the vehicle ensuring minimal movement of the injured driver.

The teamwork involved, and the removal of the doors and roof around me, opened my eyes to how much public rely on the emergency service of the fire and rescue.

Very impressed with everything, from arrival, during and after, just wanted to say thanks for all the hard work and professional service these firefighters did today.

Thanks for all you do on the frontline and behind the scenes!

**A resident from Huntingdonshire**

## 15. Your feedback

We would very much welcome any comments you may have about this document to help us improve the way we report back to you on what we have done and what we plan to do. We would be very grateful if you could take the time to provide us with any comments and send them to us at the address below:

Fire HQ

Hinchingbrooke Cottage

Brampton Road

Huntingdon

Cambs

PE29 2NA

Alternatively, you can share your thoughts via email at [feedback@cambsfire.gov.uk](mailto:feedback@cambsfire.gov.uk), via our website [through the 'contact us' section](#), or post a message on our social media channels.

If you require a response, please don't forget to include details of how we can contact you.

Thank you for your time.



To: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

From: Head of Service Transformation – Tamsin Mirfin

Presenting officer: Deputy Chief Executive (DCEO) – Matthew Warren

Telephone: 07786 023436  
[matthew.warren@cambsfire.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.warren@cambsfire.gov.uk)

Date: 20 December 2023

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## Systel Mobilising and Integrated Communication Control System (ICCS) Replacement Project - Update

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Fire Authority with an update on the progress of the mobilising system and integrated communication control system (ICCS) replacement project.

### 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Fire Authority is asked to note the contents of this report.

### 3. Risk Assessment

- 3.1 **Political** - this is a critical system enabling the taking of emergency calls, dispatching appropriate resources and communications and coordination activities. There may be interest in the progress of this project and particularly in our readiness for 'go live,' our projected 'go live' date and the impact(s) on our partner organisation.
- 3.2 **Economic** – the project has been impacted by the financial situation of Systel. The financial sustainability of our supplier is important to the Service due to the critical nature of the system that is being provided and supported.
- 3.3 **Social** – this is a critical system; the public perception may be impacted should we experience any disruptions to our service delivery.
- 3.4 **Technological** – this is a technically complex project with multiple interfaces to other systems. Ensuring that we have the right skills and knowledge to support the project is important.

### 4. Equality Impact Assessment

- 4.1 The systems in place have had equality impact assessments conducted and these are regularly reviewed.

## 5. Systel Position

- 5.1 In November 2022, Systel entered a process called the 'redressement judiciaire' and began an observation period. Systel has worked with its banks and its suppliers to reduce their liabilities and put in place payment plans. Systel have renegotiated contracts and have proved themselves to be in a profitable position. On 6 October 2023, the continuation plan presented by Systel to the Commercial Courts of La Rochelle was accepted and they exited the 'redressement judiciaire'.
- 5.2 During this process, Systel has put in place a new management and ownership structure to move the company forward.
- 5.3 Systel not only supply UK customers; half of the fire and rescue services in France use the Systel solution and they also supply customers in Switzerland, Belgium, Ireland and Monaco.

## 6. Project Progress and Plans for 'Go Live'

- 6.1 The joint project team has been working hard to move the project towards 'go-live' and noteworthy progress has been made.
- 6.2 In July 2023 Combined Fire Control (CFC) was the first UK fire and rescue service to 'go live' with the new dispatch communications service (DCS). This service is the connector between our radios and the Airwave network. It is crucial that we can operate on this network to provide secure and resilient communications. To enable this, we have 'gone live' with the Systel ICCS for voice over radio. This means that our (both Cambridgeshire and Suffolk) voice communications from CFC to crews Airwave radios are now via the Systel ICCS and DCS connection. All other fire and rescue services in the UK will also be transitioning to DCS.
- 6.3 Also in July 2023 we successfully completed site acceptance testing. Work has been ongoing to test the system functionality, upload data and configure the system to function with our ways of working.
- 6.4 The training roll out has commenced to CFC colleagues all of whom have now received the first two training modules. Four further training days will be delivered in the new year. We are extremely pleased with the training delivery and the positive reactions of CFC colleagues to the system.
- 6.5 Work is progressing on our detailed transition plans; these outline how we will move from our current mobilising system to our new system while minimising disruption to our live service delivery. We intend to commence our transition process in February 2024 and complete in March 2024.

## Source Documents:

None

To: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

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

Presenting officer: Deputy Chief Executive Officer - Matthew Warren  
Telephone: 01480 444619  
[matthew.warren@cambsfire.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.warren@cambsfire.gov.uk)

Date: 20 December 2023

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## Firefighters Pension Scheme - Update

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Fire Authority with latest the position relating to immediate detriment and the Firefighters Pension Scheme (FPS) now that the enabling legislation has been passed.

### 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Fire Authority is asked to note the latest position regarding immediate detriment claims and the timetable for processing.

### 3. Risk Assessment

- 3.1 **Economic** – the liability associated with paying pensions is to be underwritten by central government.

### 4. Background

- 4.1 Following the 2018 Court of Appeal judgment in Sargeant, an interim order was made by the Employment Tribunal on 18 December 2019 which provided members of the FPS (who had brought claims) entitlement to be treated as if they remained in the FPS 1992, as long as they were in the scheme at 31 March 2012 and 31 March 2015.
- 4.2 In January 2020, the Government position regarding the judgment was that all entitlements, including immediate ones, should proceed under the 2015 scheme rules. This included those that were due to taper into the 2015 scheme and those due to retire.
- 4.3 In August 2020, the Home Office issued a note to fire and rescue authorities about immediate detriment. The note was labelled as informal guidance and highlighted that the issues raised within it were still subject to ongoing litigation and a UK government consultation. The note was issued at the request of the Fire Brigades Union (FBU).

- 4.4 Whilst the note did provide a useful update from the previous government position communicated in January 2020, several questions (below) remained for each fire and rescue authority that were detailed in the Local Government Association (LGA) immediate detriment note issued in October 2020.
- What the position is for fire and rescue authorities if members make decisions without all the correct information, such as pension tax relief.
  - How auditors might treat such payments under legacy terms and on what basis a fire and rescue authority can rely on the guidance to satisfy the auditor.
  - What risk the member accepts by having benefits paid out before the consultation has concluded, although the note does state that **all** cases will need to be revisited once the remedy is finalised.
- 4.5 Further to the guidance, legal advice was sought by the LGA. The legal opinion, which was subject to legal privilege, did not provide the necessary reassurance needed for the Authority to proceed with all cases.
- 4.6 Further to this advice, the LGA and FBU worked to agree a position that would allow fire and rescue authorities to process immediate detriment cases. The memorandum of understanding (MOU) was agreed in October 2021. At this time, based on advice from the Service, the Fire Authority approved a process to begin paying immediate detriment cases.
- 4.7 Shortly after this decision was taken, the Government withdrew the guidance note that was being relied upon within the MOU. This left the Authority and individuals potentially vulnerable to additional costs and tax charges because of government, through Treasury, not having the appropriate legislative safeguards in place. Given this position the Treasurer, as Scheme Manager, took the decision to suspend all immediate detriment payments, whilst further guidance was sought.
- 4.8 Subsequently, the Home Office issued clear advice that immediate detriment claims should not be processed until legislation was enacted, which was to be no later than 1 October 2023.
5. Update on Position Post 1 October 2023
- 5.1 The enabling legislation to process immediate detriment cases with regard to 'Sargent' came into force on 1 October 2023. A clear timetable setting out an order of processing accompanied this legislation. The timetable prioritises the processing of ill health retirees and beneficiaries before it processes ordinary retirees, which will be done based upon the impact of the remedy (those whose pension is likely to have been impacted the most will be processed first). All members impacted by the remedy will receive a remedial service statement (RSS), which will provide detailed options in turn allowing an informed decision to be made.

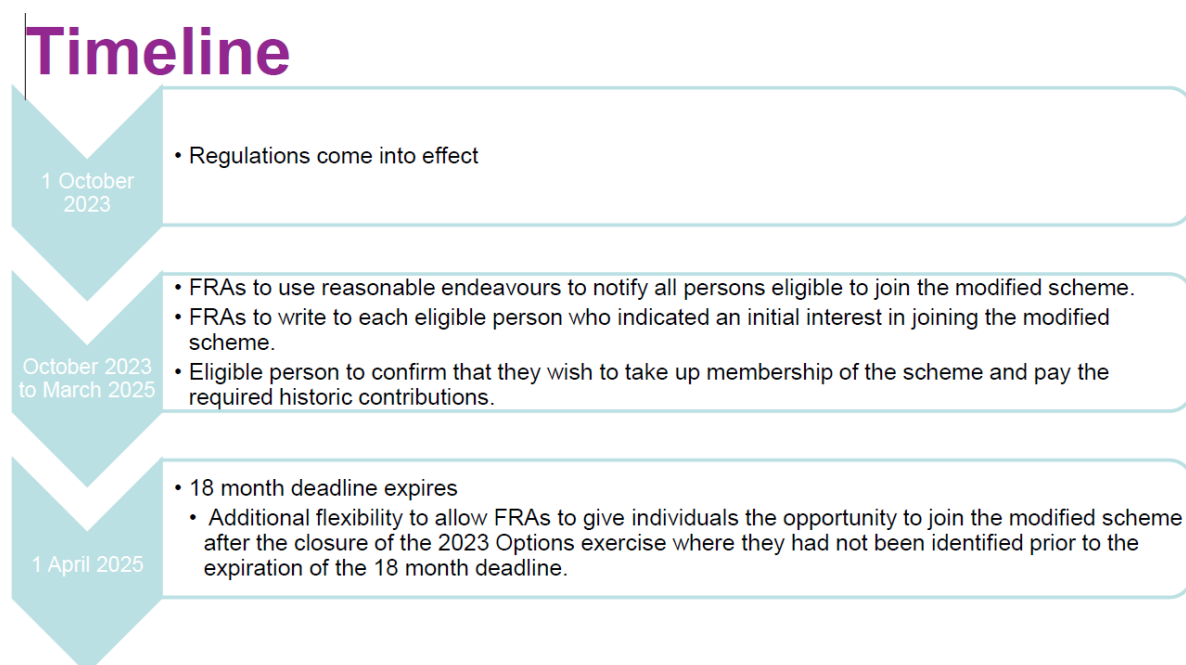
- 5.2 The National Fire Scheme Advisory Board has formally agreed timeframes for fire authorities to deliver the RSS, with all categories to have received this information by 31 March 2025;

Pensioner Member	Indicative timetable to receive RSS
Ill health pensioner	October 2023 to March 2024
Beneficiaries (ill health, taper protected and unprotected)	October 2023 to May 2024
Taper protected pensioner	October 2023 to November 2024
Unprotected pensioner	October 2023 to November 2024
Protected pensioner (2006 Scheme)	May 2024 to January 2025
Beneficiaries (protected members 1992 and 2006 Scheme)	August 2024 to March 2025
Protected pensioner (1992 Scheme)	October 2024 to March 2025

- 5.3 In parallel to 'Sargent', legislation relating to the 'Matthew's' remedy was also enacted on 1 October 2023. This legislation relates to On-Call firefighters employed between 7 April 2000 and 5 April 2006 and their ability to buy back service. The options exercise is split into three parts;



- 5.4 The National Fire Scheme Advisory Board has set a timeline that runs in parallel to that of 'Sargent'. The process will be very intensive for services and will require significant input from our in-house payroll team. The agreed timeline is set out below;



## Source Document

The Firefighters Pension Scheme (England) (Amendment) Order 2023

## Location

Hinchingbrooke Cottage

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## Contact Officer

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To: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

From: Area Commander Community Safety and Combined Fire Control - Simon Newton

Presenting officer(s): Area Commander Community Safety and Combined Fire Control – Simon Newton

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Date: 20 December 2023

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## His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) – Round Three Update

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Fire Authority with an overview of the changes made to the HMICFRS inspection process for 2023 to 2025 and the outcomes of the round three inspection for Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS).

### 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Authority is asked to note CFRS's strategic approach to respond to and address the findings identified in the latest HMICFRS report.

### 3. Risk Assessment

- 3.1 **Economic** – while there is limited economic impact identified in the report it should be noted that our ability to respond positively to some recommendations could be limited due to budget restraints.
- 3.2 **Political** – there is significant political interest in the outcome of inspection activity which can be heightened depending on media reporting or sector events occurring at the time of publication. Negative attention is likely for those services receiving poor inspection reports or who are not addressing issues raised in previous reports.

- 3.3 **Social** – as a highly regarded public service, an inspection report can assure or raise concerns among communities depending on findings. A good report reflects well on the fire and rescue service and those who are part of it.
- 3.4 **Equality Impact Assessment** – these will be completed when new policies or procedures are introduced to address HMICFRS recommendations (our report highlights that we do this well).
4. **Summary of Changes to the HMICFRS Inspection Criteria**
- 4.1 In this round of inspections the focus areas of effectiveness, efficiency and how the Service looks after its people remained the same however the way in which HMICFRS presented the graded judgements changed. The three pillar judgements have been removed and the graded judgements are given only across the 11 sub sections.
- 4.2 Adequate is now an addition to the graded judgement available which means a Service can be graded; outstanding, good, adequate, requiring improvement or inadequate. The adequate judgement is now applied to any sub section that might have previously been good but has an area for improvement (AFI). If the adequate judgement had been available during the round two inspection (2020/2021), CFRS could have received five goods and five adequate grades instead of the 10 goods we received.
- 4.3 The introduction of the adequate grade makes it difficult to compare the report scoring from our last two inspections.
- 4.4 We are monitoring with interest the remaining round three inspection results which culminate with County Durham and Darlington and Kent in Spring 2025; this will offer us an opportunity to benchmark. Of course, it is likely that fire and rescue services who are inspected later in the round, will benefit from the sector learning being shared by services such as ourselves. Some consideration of this may be necessary when reflecting over round three outcomes.
5. **Summary of CFRS Round Three Inspection Report and Points of Note**
- 5.1 In February 2023 HMICFRS inspected CFRS to assess how effective and efficient we are in our activities to prevent, protect the public against and respond to fires and other emergencies. They also assessed us on how well we look after the people who work for us.
- 5.2 The three areas that were inspected can be summarised as:



- how **effective** are we at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks,
  - how **efficient** are we at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks,
  - how well do we look after our **people**.
- 5.3 As stated in Paragraph 4.2 above there are five possible outcomes in the judgement criteria; outstanding, good (this is where HMICFRS expect every service to be), adequate, requires improvement or inadequate (serious or critical failings in policy, practice or performance).
- 5.4 We have been judged with one outstanding, six goods, three adequate and one requires improvement.
- 5.5 The following items were highlighted as areas for improvement for the Service;
- the Service should review its On-Call suitability meeting to ensure there is no bias in recruitment (refers to inconsistency in application of that part of the process and compared to the recruitment policy).
  - the Service should make sure On-Call staff are familiar with the risks in their local areas and have an understanding of fires in tall buildings, so they are better prepared to fight fires and carry out rescues safely.
  - the Service should make sure it has an effective electronic method for sharing multiple fire survival guidance information and a dedicated communication link in place.
  - the Service should assure itself that all staff are appropriately trained for their role.
  - the Service should make sure managers have an effective system to monitor the training and skills of its staff and the service they provide to the public.
  - the Service should put in place effective systems, with the aim of diversifying the pool of future and current leaders; it currently does not have any and the recording of recruitment diversity data was found to be inconsistent meaning opportunities to diversify could be missed. The Service told HMICFRS had considered direct entry recruitment but would not be introducing it now due to funding and capacity issues.
  - the Service should make sure its mechanisms to manage and develop talent within the organisation are applied consistently.
  - the Service should do more to make sure staff see promotion processes as transparent and fair.
- 5.6 All the areas in Paragraph 5.5 above have already been considered and prioritised. Some were already underway but had not been completed before our inspection; we will continue to implement these. Most will be completed before our next inspection. Any not completed before April 2024 will be

included within our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2024 to 2029 planning.

- 5.7 The HMICFRS report also recognised several areas where CFRS was delivering promising (two) or innovative (three) practice. These were;
- Promising practice - CFRS provides facilities to support staff's physical fitness and health and has improved its maternity and menopause provisions.
  - Innovative practice – CFRS's financial and resource planning is agile and flexible, it has an effective ecological strategy and uses assessors from its local community to monitor recruitment.

## 6. HMICFRS National Overview

- 6.1 At the time of writing, the 'Annual Assessment of Fire and Rescue Services in England' is still to be published; it is expected in Spring 2024. CFRS has responded to the national request from HMICFRS for feedback to support the content of the report. The document makes comment on the outcomes of the inspections undertaken so far in round three. It will also focus on progress made across the national inspection recommendations. The report is published and issued to Parliament by His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Fire and Rescue Services in pursuant to Section 28B of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.
- 6.2 We are confident that we are well sighted on the national recommendations and closely monitor trends coming out of round three inspections. This allows us to include areas of inspection interest into our CRMP planning and blending them into our service priorities.
- 6.3 There continues to be scrutiny of the culture in fire and rescue services because of several concerning reports from organisations such as London Fire Brigade and Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service. HMICFRS inspection findings continue to identify worrying practises leading them to publish their 'Values and Culture in Fire and Rescue Services Spotlight Review' in March 2023. This highlighted widespread issues with poor behaviour, values and cultures in many services. The report made 35 recommendations to the sector and Government. CFRS has created an action plan against these recommendations and has embedded the ones for fire and rescue services into our existing Integrated Risk Management Plan and future CRMP. In our latest report, CFRS was graded as being good at both promoting its values and culture and fairness and diversity.
- 6.4 HMICFRS has also been commissioned by the Home Secretary to undertake a thematic inspection into how misconduct is handled in fire and rescue services. This involves 10 fire and rescue services that were selected by

HMICFRS and are being inspected in service. All fire and rescue services have been asked to support and share a survey with existing staff and staff who have left within the last five years who might have experience of misconduct to share their views. We will consider the outcomes of this report when it becomes available in 2024.

## Source Documents

[Effectiveness, efficiency and people 2023-25: An inspection of Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service](#)

[State of Fire and Rescue: The Annual Assessment of Fire and Rescue Services in England 2022 \(justiceinspectors.gov.uk\)](#)

<https://assets-hmicfrs.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/uploads/values-and-culture-in-fire-and-rescue-services.pdf>

## Location

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Tamsin Mirfin

Service Transformation Manager

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To: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

From: Area Commander, Head of Operations and Fire Protection - Stuart Smith

Presenting officer(s): Chief Fire Officer - Chris Strickland  
07765 402358  
[chris.strickland@cambsfire.gov.uk](mailto:chris.strickland@cambsfire.gov.uk)

Date: 20 December 2023

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## Service Operational Improvement Opportunity

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members of plans to explore the opportunity to redistribute operational resources from lower risk areas of the county to higher risk areas where guaranteed appliance availability is required at weekends. The report also outlines how the Service will provide Members with suitable assurance that appropriate change protocols have been employed in reaching any final decision(s).

### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to;
- 2.1.1 note and endorse the contents of this report;
- 2.1.2 note that a further report, based on findings from the review, will be presented to the Authority as and when available.

### 3. Risk Assessment

- 3.1 **Political** – unless the Service uses its operational resources efficiently and effectively, there is a high likelihood of a failure to meet the response standards set within our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). This will lead to negative scrutiny from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS), the Home Office (HO) and local politicians.

Re-distribution of resources will require engagement with local Councillors and Members of Parliament. There is a risk that any operational change may be challenged by representative bodies and local communities. The Service must engage with all stakeholders to ensure the risks and benefits of any proposed course of action are understood.

- 3.2 **Economic** – population growth within Cambridgeshire continues and to mitigate the risks associated with such growth, having the right resources in the right location at the right time is vital. Recruitment and retention in the On-Call workforce is recognised as a national concern; it continues to challenge this Service. There are currently no surplus funds to support an increase in workforce, finances will need to be sourced within current budgets. If our operational availability maintains or worsens, the Service may not be able to meet its CRMP objectives.
- 3.3 **Social** – changes to crewing arrangements and re-distribution of resources will impact our people and may create additional concern and tension within the operational workforce. There may be a perception within communities that removing services from an area will lead to an increased localised risk. The Service currently experiences low levels of guaranteed appliance availability at weekends. With the population growth in county there will be an increased need to target those most vulnerable in society. Ensuring we have the right resources for prevention, protection and response activities will help facilitate these activities.
- 3.4 **Legal** – any proposals for change will need to be consulted on with affected colleagues to ensure the Service follows employment law correctly. The Service must ensure it is using its resources to provide the best operational response under its statutory duties within the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and meet its CRMP objectives.
- 3.5 **Equality Impact Assessment** – to be completed as this process moves forward to understand the impact on all those involved in the change.

## 4. Background

- 4.1 For several years, the Service has strived to recruit and retain operational On-Call firefighters who provide cover in most rural areas of the county. Whilst the Service has good availability in the evenings, availability during the daytime is extremely challenging.
- 4.2 Data from the pandemic confirmed that most of our rural community commute away from home to work and are therefore not available during daytime hours to provide the much-needed fire cover. Naturally people want a work life balance so after a week at work the likelihood of individuals providing additional cover at weekends is limited. Weekend availability is lower during the daytime hours where our countywide cover can be poor against the demand from operational incidents.
- 4.3 In 2018 the Service introduced two roaming appliances to help deal with increased risk and demand. Officers believe there is a need to further enhance and adapt the Service's operational resources to meet the continued growth across the county.

- 4.4 The Service has 10 wholtime appliances available (eight across wholtime and day crewed stations plus two roaming appliances) between 0800 and 1800 hours, Monday to Friday. At weekends this drops to eight whole time appliances owing to Ely and St Neots appliances becoming On-Call crewed.
- 4.5 The Service's operational planning assumptions require a minimum of 14 appliances being available to support a large incident (12 appliances with two for resilience) or multiple incident occurrence (two x six appliances with two for resilience). Our planning assumptions for periods of business continuity is to maintain a minimum of 10 appliances available.
- 4.6 As stated above, there has been significant population growth within Cambridgeshire over the last 10 years. This has seen the number of incidents the Service is attending increase (as well as an increase in static risk in domestic and non-domestic properties); this is likely to continue.

## **5. Plan**

- 5.1 The Service has identified a potential opportunity to re-distribute operational resources to guarantee the minimum resource requirement at times of higher risk and demand. Initial analysis identifies the re-distribution could improve operational services in higher risk areas of the county and enable enhancements to be made to prevention and protection activities.
- 5.2 To support this, the Service is considering the potential impacts of re-distributing operational resources from the three lowest risk areas identified as Sutton, Manea and Kimbolton to the higher risk areas of St Neots and Ely, by increasing the number of wholtime firefighters to provide guaranteed fire cover during the daytime, seven days a week (St Neots and Ely are currently day-crewed Monday to Friday only).
- 5.3 It is envisaged that the additional guaranteed daytime operational resources would be able to operate flexibly across the county, in a similar way to existing roaming appliances, to provide better strategic fire cover and enable wider opportunities for proactive prevention and protection work in hard-to-reach rural and vulnerable communities, especially in the northeast and southwest of our operational area. This would be significantly more positive for those areas, where we currently struggle to provide support as effectively as we would like.
- 5.4 The plan (as it develops) for this proposal will be subject to formal consultation and engagement with key stakeholders, including colleagues who work at the named stations. Public engagement will also take place as part of this process.
- 5.5 This initiative is one part of ongoing work within the CRMP to help the Service mitigate the risk of continued growth across the county and ensure resources match this demand across all prevention, protection and response activities.

- 5.6 Once plans have been further explored and fully developed a report will be brought to Members detailing how the Service has discharged their responsibility to meet the requirements under the CRMP and properly consulted and engaged with all relevant stakeholders.

## Source Document

Modelling 2022 On-Call Station Weekday vs Weekend Availability 2022 Operational Planning Assumptions

## Location

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Huntingdon

## Contacts

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07900267853



To: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

From: Deputy Chief Executive Officer – Matthew Warren

Presenting officer: Democratic Services Officer – Dawn Cave  
Telephone: 01223 699178  
Email: [dawn.cave@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:dawn.cave@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

Date: 20 December 2023

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## Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 To make appointments to Committees, outside organisations and other bodies.

### 2. Reasons for updating the schedule

- 2.1 There have been changes to Peterborough City Council membership of the Fire Authority since the last Fire Authority meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2023
- 2.2 At the July full Council meeting of Peterborough City Council, Councillor John Howard (Peterborough First) was appointed to the Fire Authority, replacing Councillor Andrew Bond (Liberal Democrat). At the November full Council meeting of Peterborough City Council, Councillor Andrew Bond was appointed, replacing Councillor John Howard. The net effect is no change to either membership or proportionality of the Fire Authority.
- 2.3 Technically, it is necessary for the Fire Authority to formally appoint Councillor Bond to Committees, as he ceased to be a Fire Authority Member between July and November.
- 2.4 Political Group Leaders have been consulted, and advised they did not wish to make any incidental changes to their Committee memberships.

### 3. Recommendations

- 3.1 The Authority is asked to agree the updated schedule of appointments, as attached at Appendix 1.

### 4. Risk Assessment

- 4.1 Political – It is important, where possible, to fill vacancies to ensure the effective operation of the Fire Authority's democratic process.

Source documents

Schedule of appointments – attached

**APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES, OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS AND OTHER BODIES**

**POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE (9 members)**

KEVIN REYNOLDS	C
DAVID OVER	C
SIMON BYWATER	C
DOUG DEW	LD
MANDY SMITH	C
EDNA MURPHY	LD
PHILIPPA SLATTER	LD
MOHAMMED JAMIL	L
BRYONY GOODLIFFE	L

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**(8 members not to be appointed to the Policy and Resources Committee)**

IAN GARDENER	C
MAC MCGUIRE	C
SCOTT WARREN	C
SIMONE TAYLOR	IND
ROS HATHORN	LD
SEBASTIAN KINDERSLEY	LD
<b>ANDREW BOND</b>	<b>LD</b>
CATHERINE RAE	L

**APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE (7 members)**

KEVIN REYNOLDS	C
MAC MCGUIRE	C
DAVID OVER	C
EDNA MURPHY	LD
SEBASTIAN KINDERSLEY	LD
MOHAMMED JAMIL	L
DOUG DEW	LD

**PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE (3 Members + 3 Substitutes)**

MOHAMMED JAMIL	L	
KEVIN REYNOLDS	C	
EDNA MURPHY	LD	
MAC MCGUIRE	C	Substitute
DOUG DEW	LD	Substitute
BRYONY GOODLIFFE	L	Substitute

**APPEALS (PENSIONS) COMMITTEE (3 Members + 3 Substitutes)**

BRYONY GOODLIFFE	L	
SIMON BYWATER	C	
<b>ANDREW BOND</b>	<b>LD</b>	
IAN GARDENER	C	Substitute
SEBASTIAN KINDERSLEY	LD	Substitute
MOHAMMED JAMIL	L	Substitute

**FIRE AUTHORITY DISCIPLINARY AND GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE (3 Members + 3 Substitutes)**

DAVID OVER	C	
CATHERINE RAE	L	
PHILIPPA SLATTER	LD	
MAC MCGUIRE	C	Substitute
<b>ANDREW BOND</b>	<b>LD</b>	<b>Substitute</b>
BRYONY GOODLIFFE	L	Substitute

**FIRE AUTHORITY APPEALS COMMITTEE (3 Members + 3 Substitutes)**

KEVIN REYNOLDS	C	
MOHAMMED JAMIL	L	
SEBASTIAN KINDERSLEY	LD	
MANDY SMITH	C	Substitute
DOUG DEW	LD	Substitute
CATHERINE RAE	L	Substitute

**COMBINED AUTHORITY**

Combined Authority	EDNA MURPHY	LD
	(SUBSTITUTE: MOHAMMED JAMIL)	L

**MEMBER CHAMPIONS/LEAD MEMBERS**

[Not subject to proportionality]

Equality and Inclusion	MANDY SMITH  MOHAMMED JAMIL
<del>Health and Safety</del>	<del>JOHN GOWING</del>

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION**

EDNA MURPHY	LD
MOHAMMED JAMIL	L
KEVIN REYNOLDS	C

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION FIRE SERVICE COMMISSION**

EDNA MURPHY	LD
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## Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

### Public Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting

Date: 31 October 2023  
Time: 2.00pm – 3.32pm  
Place: Fire HQ, Huntingdon  
Present: Councillors: S Bywater, B Goodliffe (Chair), M Jamil (Vice Chair), D Dew, E Murphy, K Reynolds, P Slatter and M Smith  
Officers: Jon Anderson, John Fagg, Tamar Oviatt-Ham, Stuart Smith, Chris Strickland and Matthew Warren

#### 50. Apologies for absence and declarations of interest

Apologies were received from Cllr David Over.

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 51. Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee held 26 April 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 April 2023 were approved as a correct record.

#### 52. Action Log

The action log was noted. All actions were completed or in hand.

#### 53. Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report 2023-24

Members considered an update on revenue and capital spending as of 31 March 2023.

Members noted:

- The budget for full-time firefighters was currently slightly overspent this financial year, primarily due to mandatory training and associated overtime payments. Actual firefighter numbers were slightly lower than budgeted for in the establishment however the Service had robust plans in place to bring wholetime crewing levels back in line with the budgeted establishment by the end of the calendar year.

- The property maintenance budget was currently underspent but that was not expected to continue to year-end as the Service anticipated energy cost pressures through the colder months.
- The Service continued to work with District Council colleagues and external advisors to clarify the position regarding business rate income. This income continued to exceed the indicative baseline funding level. There were ongoing discussions around what the Service would be able to retain. This income would be utilised on capital projects so not to commit to on-going expenditure. The Service continued to work with District Council partners to understand the income position moving forward and hoped to be able to report this to the Fire Authority in February 2024.
- In the Capital budget there had been the carry forward related to flexi Officer car purchases that have been delayed by almost two years.

Arising from the report:

- A member highlighted an error on page 17 of the agenda pack as it showed external interest as red when it was showing a 132% increase. The Deputy Chief Executive Officer explained this was an error and actually showed that the Service had received more than what had been expected so should be green.
- A member queried how work was progressing on next years budget. The Deputy Chief Executive Officer stated that the draft budget would go to the Fire Authority meeting in December but that the government settlement was not likely to be received until late in December. He explained that the authority was lobbying for £5 in the Council Tax precept again. He stated that pay awards were pending and that they would take a view against the national position and this would not be negotiated until after the budget had been settled.

It was resolved unanimously to note the position on revenue and capital spending.

#### 54. Annual Review of the Operation of the ICT Shared Service

The Committee considered the annual review of the operation of the ICT Shared Service.

Members noted:

- There had been an independent review of the ICT service which had shown the service to be value for money and to have good governance in place.



- There were a number of recommendations that would be taken forward focusing on how the service interacts with other functions. forward, how we interact with other functions.
- Paragraph 4.6 of the report set out the current projects taking place.
- There was a cross charge for the service between Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire. The service had been running successfully for 10 years now and a new delivery manager was due to come into post in December. Officers were preparing paperwork to sign the agreement for a further 5 years.

Arising from the report:

- A member queried if there was any risk in relation to the future of the shared service going forward. The Head of ICT and Occupational Health Unit explained that he did not currently foresee a risk to the service over the medium term. The Chief Fire Officer stated that this was taken into account as part of the services business continuity planning. The Head of ICT and Occupational Health Unit commented that if partners wished to terminate the agreement they would be required to give 18 months notice and the service would be extremely difficult to decouple. He explained that there would be clauses in the contract that covered this.
- A member questioned whether technology was moving in the direction where economy of scale was not there anymore. The Head of ICT and Occupational Health Unit explained that technology was completely different from when the agreement was first set up 10 years ago and operating models were changing. He stated that as long as both parties were investing in the same areas the agreement would continue to work well.
- A member commented on 10.2 in the report in relation to the procurement and contracting and noted that Cambridgeshire predominantly lead on this. The Head of ICT and Occupational Health Unit acknowledged that this was the case and that there was a recommendation to create a joint procurement function. He explained that the working relationship with both parties was good and that there was a programme board that oversaw the progress of projects. The Deputy Chief Executive Officer commented that there was still the opportunity for other services to join as it was the only joint ICT service currently in the country.

It was resolved unanimously to

- 1) consider the outcomes of the annual review of the operation of the ICT Shared Service Agreement;
- 2) note the continued achievement of the aims of improved resilience, flexibility, cover, quality and customer focus.

## 55. Digital Strategy 2022-2025

Members considered the Digital Strategy for 2022-2025.

Members noted:

- The themes in the strategy were the same as in previous years.
- The strategy highlighted development opportunities.
- Licencing costs had increased above inflation and officers were looking at how the service could get better value for money.
- The STEP team were looking at process automation and system integration.
- There was a focus on data reporting including real time data for operational decision making.
- The new mobilisation system was core to how the service could improve communications on the fire ground.

Arising from the report:

- A member question whether there was a risk in relation to the telephone network change which had recently been communicated, that would take place in 2025. The Head of ICT and Occupational Health Unit stated that this was a risk to the whole country and would have a big impact for emergency services. He explained that this was being worked on at the moment with all stations needing to change to IP and the call centres. He stated that they were in the final testing stages and hoped to go live before Christmas.
- A member queried what would happen if there was a power cut and in relation to 999 calls getting through. The Head of ICT and Occupational Health Unit explained that internally the Service was covered but that externally the telephone companies would need to provide back up for vulnerable customers.
- A member asked if Artificial Intelligence (AI) would be used within the Service. The Head of ICT and Occupational Health Unit stated that AI was already being used and was part of a new project to look at how it could be used in decision making in the future. He explained that there were risks in using it but that these risks would be monitored.

It was resolved unanimously to:

approve the revised Digital Strategy for 2022 to 2025, attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

## 56. Property Portfolio Update

Members considered an update on the Property Portfolio.

Members noted:

- It was the final day for bids on the old Huntingdon site on Wednesday 1 November 2023. The Deputy Chief Executive Officer explained that there had been a lot of interest in the site but that it was not clear how this would translate into offers. He stated that as soon as he had an understanding of what offers had been made, he would update the Fire Authority.
- Officers had been working closely with the NHS on the St Ives site. Officers were also working with Cheffins to establish the value of the entire site. The Chief Fire Officer stated that clear timescales would be established with partners to ensure that plans would go ahead.

Arising from the report:

- A member questioned if there were any issues with RACC in any of the Services buildings. The Deputy Chief Executive Officer stated that there was no building that had been identified as having RACC but that there were a number that had asbestos, that were currently being dealt with.
- A member queried how the money would be used from any sales. The Deputy Chief Executive Officer explained that the proceeds would go into the property investment reserve. He explained that a more detailed report on the St Neots site would be going to the next Fire Authority meeting. The Chief Fire Officer stated that it had been difficult to find a new premises in St Neots and that the Service was looking at what would happen if the Constabulary pulled out of the agreement in relation to the site and any associated costs.
- A member commented that there had been a lot of growth around St Neots and queried if there had been any section 106 money available. The Chief Executive Officer stated that there was potential funding through the Community Infrastructure Levy from Huntingdonshire District Council and the service would apply for this.

It was resolved unanimously to note the current position at the properties detailed in the report.

## 57. Strategic Risk and Opportunity Management Register - Monitoring Report

The Committee considered the updated strategic risk report, as of September 2023 which highlighted those risks that are considered above the risk appetite of the Authority.

Arising from the report:

- A member sought clarity on risk a new risk R224 'a risk that if Hertfordshire withdraw cross border support this may negatively impact on operational response times in the south of the county'. The Chief Fire Officer stated that there were ongoing discussions with Hertfordshire and that currently they called on Hertfordshire services under section 13 but paid them the national agreed rate for services which did not have a cross border agreement. He explained they had pulled out of the previous agreement over a year ago.
- A member highlighted that the EV Chargers risk R205 had become very high in public perception due to recent incidents and that this needed to be discussed in more detail at the next Fire Authority meeting regarding the Services approach and what was being done both locally and nationally. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer explained that a report had gone to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on this subject but that a report could be taken to the Fire Authority for further discussion, including the actions taken following the recent coroners report . **Action Required**. He also explained that the Service was lobbying MPs for a change in legislation.
- A member stated that they felt the scoring of the extreme weather conditions risk R215 was not high enough, particularly in relation to the extreme heat experienced over recent years. The Chief Fire Officer explained that officers could provide further detail on how they had reached the score including a degradation plan which looked at how best to respond with less and less appliances. He explained that this was reviewed on a quarterly basis.
- A member sought further clarity on the on-call availability risk R112 and the introduction of to three crew pumps and whether this caused additional risks. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer stated that the majority of staff still did stand by and that the longer the policy had been in place the more evidence was in place to show its effectiveness. He stated that he had some communications on three crew pumps which he could share with members. **Action Required** Members sought an update to Fire Authority in 6 months time to update on progress. **Action Required**. A member commented that a different name could be used for three crew pumps to differentiate them such as first response team.

It was resolved unanimously to note the strategic risk report.

## 58. Work Programme

Members noted the forward Work Programme.

59. Minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee meetings held 20 April and 4 October 2023

Members noted the Overview & Scrutiny Committee minutes of the meetings held 20 April and 4 October 2023.

Chair



## Fire Overview and Scrutiny Committee Minutes

Date: 4 October 2023

Time: 2.00p.m. – 3.55p.m.

Venue: New Shire Hall, Alconbury Weald, Huntingdon

Present: Councillors Gardener, Hathorn, Kindersley (Chair), Rae, Taylor and Warren

### 64. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

Apologies were received from Councillor McGuire and there were no declarations of interest.

### 65. Minutes – 20 April 2023 and Action Log

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 April 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair. In noting the action log, the Chair reported that Constabulary data covering in excess of three years on road traffic collisions on the A14 around Ellington/Keyston was e-mailed to Members on 28 September 2023; this information was particularly welcomed by one Member.

### 66. Integrated Risk Management Plan Performance Measures

The Committee considered a report reviewing the Service's progress against its Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) between 1 April and 30 June 2023. Attention was drawn to Appendix 1 detailing attendance times for urban and rural areas and all incidents, total fires, primary and secondary fires, fire deaths and casualties, road traffic collisions (RTCs) attended, people killed or seriously injured in RTCs, special service incidents attended, applicant and workforce diversity, the number of non-domestic fires, and the number of business engagements identified through the risk based audit programme. Members also received an update on crews of three and noted a detailed overview in Appendix 2.

In response to a query regarding secondary fires in East Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire, it was noted that these areas had not been highlighted in the report as there had been no significant change.

The Chair invited Mr Mark Harriss, Brigade Secretary, Region 9, Eastern, Fire Brigades Union (FBU) to address the committee. He expressed concern that the report only highlighted the benefits of deficient crewing rather than concerns. He challenged the reference in Appendix 2 to a "positive news story" regarding on-call crews mobilising with four or more fire fighters when the rota system showed three, as this demonstrated a lack of knowledge about the availability of firefighters. He was of the view that deficient crews were an unnecessary use of taxpayer's money, created unnecessary risks for both emergency responders and the public, and diminished availability across

the county and disrupted IRMP locations. He further disputed the claim that “fully crewed appliances” were being sent as backup.

He reminded Members that he had raised concerns at their meeting in January which had then been addressed by letter. It had been reported originally that the average time taken by a second pump to arrive would be four minutes and nine seconds but this report stated five minutes and nineteen seconds which was in line with projections. Firefighters on their first day were knowingly being used in deficient crews. Although there was a big focus on recruiting more on-call firefighters, barriers put in place had made the role less attractive. Over 200 firefighters had signed letters either of objection, duress or resignation. He was of the view that crews of three was a conscious choice taken by the Service.

In conclusion, he drew attention to a statement shared by an incident commander with over 25 years wholetime service, who had attended an incident as a crew of three a few months ago and had since decided to leave the Service. He had waited for nine minutes for a second pump.

The Chair invited officers to respond to the issues raised by Mr Harriss, as follows:

- the Service’s aim had always been to recruit crews of four, five or six but it had struggled to recruit on-call firefighters.
- the crew of three had carried out defensive firefighting tactics at the incident referred to above in Wisbech. It was reported that such crews could carry out a number of actions to improve outcomes before a second pump arrived.
- a survey of communities had identified that they wanted three people to do something rather than to wait longer for a second pump. It would also enable fully trained crews to risk assess the situation without putting themselves in danger and prevent the public from taking action. In response, Mr Harriss challenged the leading questions in the survey.
- confirmed that the incident commander referred to above had retired from the Service.
- many incidents were false alarms which released vehicles to attend other incidents.
- the Service was committed and had identified significant funding to recruit on-call firefighters, it also welcomed any ideas from the FBU to assist with recruitment.
- people did not generally live and work in the same place and prevention campaigns meant there were less calls. A considerable amount of work had therefore taken place to incentivise on call-firefighters including meaningful work in the community such as working in partnership with the East of England Ambulance Service to attend heart attacks.



The Chair invited Mr Harriss to respond to issues raised by Members, as follows:

- actions taken by an on-call crew of three were very limited. There were therefore concerns that the public would act to rescue someone, which would then put a moral pressure on the three firefighters to respond.
- a crew of five could demand more resources to enable them to effect rescues inside buildings for example. There were so many restrictions as to what a crew of three could or could not do. In response, Members commented that waiting for a crew of more than three to attend would result in unacceptable delays.
- acknowledged that whether it was better for a crew of three to turn up before a fully staff crewed depended on the incident. It was noted that concerns related to such crews turning up first rather than as additional support.
- Control Room staff were highly trained to extract information from callers to determine the right resources to deploy to incidents.
- there needed to be more investment, against a backdrop of 12,000 and 260 firefighters cut nationally and locally since 2010, to improve on-call recruitment. The Chief Fire Officer reported that he did not recognise the figure of 260. Since 2010 the Service had reduced the number of Wholetime staff by 25 but had not deliberately lost any on-call staff. Any reduction in on-call staffing was due to difficulties with recruitment and retention, not funding.
- noted that in the last ten years there had only been two occasions when on-call crews had been mobilised to rescue people inside a building. However, it was important to be prepared for the worst case scenario.
- the on-call crew at the Wisbech incident had carried out defensive firefighting tactics for four minutes but it had taken 13 minutes for a second pump to arrive. In response, the Chair commented that the on-call crew of three had taken six minutes to arrive and then five minutes to conduct defensive firefighting tactics with the second pump arriving in 12 minutes, which meant that they had spent only one minute doing nothing. It was acknowledged that issues relating to over the border appliances being used in urban areas was being addressed. Mr Harriss reminded Members that he had not personally attended the incident and the times reported had been provided by the incident commander at the scene. The Chair commented that management would need to consider two different interpretations of the same incident.

Members noted the following responses to their questions from officers:

- the intervention of a crew of three at Wisbech would have resulted in better outcomes.
- acknowledged the need to add to on-call training the importance of all firefighters booking on to avoid on-call crews mobilising with four or more fire fighters when the rota system showed three. **Action Required.**

It was resolved unanimously to:

note the contents of the performance report in Appendix 1 to the report which covered the first quarter of the year, 1 April to 30 June 2023.

## 67. Programme Management Monitoring Report

The Committee received an update on progress against projects for 2023/24. Attention was drawn to the Replacement Integrated Command and Control System & Mobilising Solution and the disappointing decision taken by Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) to introduce its own standalone fire control centre from December 2024. Members were advised of the progress, and timetable to go live from February 2024. Other projects highlighted included the Review of Operations where a report on operational resource would be presented to the next Fire Authority meeting, the Finance System Software Replacement Project, which was under budget and due go live in November 2023, and Microsoft 365 Implementation and Cultural Change.

Members noted the following responses to their questions from officers:

- the importance of providing continuity of service.
- confirmed that the decision taken by SFRS would not prevent the new system going live from February 2024. Officers were working hard to support SFRS, which had committed resourcing to ensure this date was met.
- the 4x4's were currently based at Burwell and Cottenham.

It was resolved unanimously to:

note the Programme Status Report, as of September 2023, attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

## 68. Cyber Security Update Report

The Committee considered an update on the current position with regards cyber security. Cyber incidents had increased as a result of events in Ukraine. The Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS) had always taken cyber security seriously, being only one of two fire and rescue services to have achieved and maintained its ISO 27001 accreditation. This standard required regular external audits to ensure compliance. The Service was therefore in a good position working constantly to address issues. This included a number of enhancements and the implementation of additional cyber security tools since an independent audit in 2021. The Service had also participated in an assessment by IBM against the Cyber Assessment Framework, which had identified some areas for improvement that were currently being progressed.

The Chief Fire Officer acknowledged that cyber security had been a high priority for the service and had always been resourced appropriately. He thanked the Head of ICT and OHU and his Team for their hard work to place CFRS in such a good position. On behalf of the committee, the Chair added his thanks.

Members noted the following responses to their questions from officers:

- government support was available to public organisations depending on the scale of the attack; lower level attacks were expected to be dealt with internally. The continuous level of investment in multi levels of security had helped to prevent attacks penetrating beyond the outer levels.
- the importance of staff training and a number of good tools to prevent breaches.
- all Wi-Fi enabled infrastructure was tested annually.

It was resolved unanimously to:

note the contents of this report.

#### 69. Annual Review – Compliance with the Local Government Transparency Code

The Committee received the annual update on an assurance of compliance with the Local Government Transparency Code 2015. The annual review had found that the Service was currently fully compliant with the requirements of the Code except for the publication of the Trade Union Facility Time data from financial year 2022/23. Assurances had been given that the necessary work would be completed by the end of October 2023.

It was resolved unanimously to:

note the current position in terms of compliance and in particular the assurances given at Paragraph 7.2. of the report.

#### 70. Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Annual Governance Statement

The Committee considered the draft Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2022/23. Attention was drawn to the areas where the Authority would continue to take action to deal with governance issues. These included the Combined Fire Control, assets including the disposal of the former Huntingdon Fire Station site, culture, financial climate and sector developments. It was noted that a full review of the Asset and Fleet Management System was in progress.

Members noted the following responses to their questions from officers:

- the decision of SFRS to introduce its own standalone fire control centre would result in a loss of income of around £1m. The financial impact of this decision was currently being considered and in particular how the budget gap would be addressed. Early discussions had taken place with other possible partners.
- the CFRS would not be informed of its funding by government until mid-December at the earliest. Letters had been sent to local MPs and the relevant government department asking for an increase in grant in line with inflation. The Financial Business Continuity Plan would reflect arrangements to downsize if necessary.

- 80% of the budget covered pay which was outside the control of the CFRS. An announcement on pay would be made next June which added to the level of uncertainty.
- the Fair Funding Review had been delayed and was unlikely to take place during the current parliament. There was also unlikely to be any review of the business rates system until post general election.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- scrutinise the AGS, attached at Appendix 1 to the report.
- recommend to the Authority that the AGS is approved for external publication.

## 71. Report on use of Lithium-ion Batteries and Response by Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service

The Committee received an update on the rise of lithium-ion batteries and specifically their use in micro mobility items being involved in fire and the response by the CFRS. There was growing concern over the rise in incidents involving fire of lithium-ion batteries in electrical items such as mobile phones, laptops, e-scooters, e-bikes and e-cigarettes, which had resulted in fatalities. External factors such as the cost of living had led to an increase in e-bike usage. The primary risk associated with these batteries in micro mobility products was thermal runaway. Battery safety and stability depended on the maintaining internal temperatures within specific limits. Poor quality and substandard components, flawed design, physical abuse and improper charging or discharging could all cause a battery to become unstable and lead to catastrophic failure. Even if a fire was extinguished, it could easily start again. Attention was drawn to the incident data and analysis, and the activities being undertaken by the CFRS and National Fire Chiefs Council to mitigate against these risks.

During discussion, Members:

- acknowledged the importance of educational safety with regard to not charging micro mobility items at night. There was also a need to highlight the replacement of batteries with the manufacturer's battery rather than one purchased cheaply on the Internet.
- queried the impact of the planning process on the safety of micro mobility items. The Area Commander highlighted the importance of advising early in the planning process. It was noted that more work was being carried out nationally and locally in this area. The concern was that safety would take up more space thereby impacting on financial gain for developers.
- requested information on the training available to firefighters to handle lithium-ion based fires. Organisational training was being provided on the risk and tactics for firefighting such fires, which include first aid and pre-hospital medical training.
- requested information or data to supply to parish councils who could then disseminate it to residents to try and prevent such fires. The Area Commander

reported that a social media campaign on safe charging had recently been launched. A newsletter has also been sent to all parish councils.

- queried whether education not just via online had sufficient resources. The Area Commander acknowledged that the situation was fast moving. On 11 September 2023, The Office for Product Safety and Standards had published information for consumers to raise awareness around the safe purchasing, use and charging of e-bikes and e-scooters. The Service had also written to the Coroner following the fatal fire in Cambridge asking him to write to the government to request legislation in relation to the sale of battery chargers.
- queried whether the Service was liaising with the NHS to ensure warning leaflets regarding battery safety were provided with mobility scooters. Members were informed that the Service was reaching out to partners including Trading Standards.
- expressed concern that flats could contain a number of e-scooters and queried whether the engagement with the Landlord Forum was just Cambridge. It was noted that the joint team from prevention and protection had started in Cambridge but would be looking to approach other districts.
- noted that there was no separate breakdown of fires caused by faulty e-scooters or e-bike batteries.

It was resolved unanimously to:

note the contents of the report.

## 72. Internal Audit Annual Report 2022-23

The Chair reported that the Governance Audit Opinion had changed post the April committee from reasonable to substantial assurance.

The Internal Audit Annual Report 2022-23 provided an annual internal audit opinion, based upon and limited to the work performed, on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's risk management, control and governance processes. The opinion was that the organisation had an adequate and effective framework for risk management, governance and internal control. However, further enhancements had been identified to the framework of risk management, governance and internal control to ensure that it remained adequate and effective. It was noted that the opinion would contribute to the organisation's annual governance reporting. Members were informed that this had been the same opinion for the last few years.

It was resolved unanimously to:

note the annual internal audit report 2022/23.

### 73. Emergency Services Benchmarking Report 2022-23

The Emergency Services Benchmarking Report 2022-23 provided a benchmark, which allowed for self-assessment against other emergency services. There was a thematic overview of high priority management actions covering the following: people, health and safety; finance; IT; estates, storage and disposal; fleet management, and commissioning and service collaboration. Comparisons showed that the CFRS was performing well against other services.

It was resolved unanimously to:

note the Emergency Services Benchmarking Report 2022-23.

### 74. Internal Audit Progress Report

The report provided a summary update on progress against each plan and summarised the results of work to date. Attention was drawn to the reports finalised since the last meeting highlighted in bold. The Deputy Chief Executive Officer acknowledged the importance of this report, which reflected concerns the Service had regarding the utilisation and best use of its estate. A review of Estates Strategy including its headquarters would therefore be carried out.

It was queried whether a review would consider the location of fire stations. The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that it would consider how the service could use its stations more effectively rather than relocation. The Chief Fire Officer added that the review would be looking at people and resources rather than fire stations to make sure they were in the right places. Another Member queried the cost per call out of £2,329.59 for St Neots Station. It was noted that this reflected the overall cost of the station in relation to the people sited there and number of calls but did not allow for risk. The review was about using the station more effectively in the future.

It was resolved unanimously to:

note the Internal Audit Progress Report.

### 75. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

The Committee resolved unanimously to note its work programme.

Chair