FIRE AUTHORITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

CAMBRIDGESHIRE & PETERBOROUGH FIRE AUTHORITY
Working together to improve community safety

Date:Wednesday, 09 October 2024

14:00hr

Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters Hinchingbrooke Cottage, Brampton Road, HUNTINGDON, PE29 2NA

AGENDA

Open to Public and Press

1	**Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest** *Guidance on declaring interests is available in Chapter 6 of the Council's Constitution (Members' Code of Conduct)*	
2	**Fire Authority Overview and Scrutiny Minutes - 25 July 2024**	**5 - 12**
	OVERVIEW	
3	**Community Risk Management Plan 2024-29 Performance Measures**	**13 - 24**
4	**Annual Review - Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority Compliance with the Local Government Transparency Code 2015**	**25 - 68**
	AUDIT	

The Fire Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee 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 Catherine Rae (Chair) Councillor Simone Taylor (Vice-Chair) Councillor Andrew Bond Councillor Douglas Dew Councillor Wayne Fitzgerald Councillor Ian Gardener Councillor John Gowing and Councillor Ros Hathorn

Clerk Name:	Sophie Rankine
Clerk Telephone:	01223 728170
Clerk Email:	Sophie.rankine@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting

Date: 25 July 2024

Time: 2.00 p.m. – 3.15 p.m.

Venue: Fire and Rescue Services Headquarters

Present: Councillors S Taylor (Vice-Chair), A Bond, D Dew, I Gardener, J Gowing, R Hathorn, W Fitzgerald

86. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

Apologies were received from Councillor Rae.

There were no declarations of interest.

87. Minutes – 22 April 2024 and Action Log

The minutes of the meeting held on 22nd April 2024 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

The Action Log was noted.

88. Petitions and Public Questions

No petitions or public questions were received.

89. Fire Authority Programme Management Monitoring Report

The Committee received the Fire Authority Programme Management Report. This provided Members with a timely update on the performance of current Service projects, as set out in Appendix 1.

While discussing the report, Members:

- queried the confidence the Service had in their partner, Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS), regarding the revised go live date for the Integrated Communications and Control System (ICCS) and Mobilising Systems. Members learnt there was a priority order for issues, however some issues had been resolved. Business continuity measures may be put in place where necessary; this would also include a SFRS presence in the control room following the go live date.

- noted that after ICCS and Mobilising System went live, Suffolk MPs would be contacted regarding the Service arrangements. Members suggested that

Cambridgeshire MPs should also be included in these conversations. Members learnt that conversations were underway regarding the Section 16 arrangements.

- clarified that historic financial data would remain on the existing system while undergoing external financial audits; this would be reviewed by IT in later years. Members learnt that records had to be kept for seven years.

It was resolved unanimously to:

note and comment on the Programme Status Report, attached at Appendix 1, as of July 2024.

90. Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service Fleet and Vehicle Provision

The Committee received a report which provided an update on the Service's fleet and vehicle provision strategy. The report was presented at the Policy and Resources Committee on 18th July 2024.

It was noted that Members would like an annual update on the Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service Fleet and Vehicle Provision.

While discussing the report, Members:

- learnt that the courier provisions now operated on a demand-led basis.

- queried the contract for petrol plug-in hybrids and not fully electric cars. Members learnt that the petrol plug-in hybrid provided assurance that the silver fleet would have sufficient milage to be able to respond. It was noted that fully electric cars and their battery range were currently not sufficient and did not align with the budget.

- noted that hydrogen cars were not feasible at the current time.

It was resolved unanimously to:

1. note the contents of this report.

2. receive annual update reports relating to the fleet and vehicle provision.

91. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority Audit Planning Report

The Committee received a report which provided the proposed audit approach and scope for the 2023/24 audit, in accordance with the auditing standards and other professional requirements. It was highlighted that there were no dates or guidance released regarding the audit reset.

Members were reassured that 'Misstatement due to fraud or error' was not a specific risk to the Service but was required by auditing standards.

While discussing the report, Members:

- noted that there were no current areas of concern.

- learnt that the planning materiality of £0.903m was the overall materiality of the accounts. The performance materiality of £0.451m was used to scope the audit work. Any audit difference of £0.045m would be reported to the Committee.

- highlighted that the audit approach differed due to a system change. For the 2024/25 accounts there would be an extract of the whole general ledger so they could analyse information to help identify and focus on risks and trends. For reassurance during the current accounts, there would be procedures, as set out by the Financial Reporting Council (FRC), and a detailed mapping exercise. These accounts would use sampling and a more traditional audit approach, but this would change next year.

It was resolved unanimously to:

note the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Audit Planning Report.

92. Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

The Committee received a report which provided an annual internal audit opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's risk management, control and governance processes.

While discussing the report, Members:

- clarified that there was only one level above 'adequate' which was rarely given.

- queried what improvements would be necessary for 'contaminants and staff health and safety.' Members learnt that the Service had asked for this review in order to know where improvements were needed. The Service had taken a proactive approach to reduce the risk of contaminants and key findings were detailed in the report. The Assistant Director Operational Support informed Members that contaminants were a fast moving and evolving area. The importance of personal protective equipment (PPE) was highlighted.

It was resolved unanimously to:

note the Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24.

93. Internal Audit Progress Report

The Committee received a report which provided an update on the progress of the internal audit plan for 2024/25, which was approved at the previous Overview and Scrutiny Committee in April 2024.

While discussing the report, Members:

- queried the order in which the management actions would be undertaken. Members learnt that high priority actions were often more complex. The Service had an action plan which they aimed to complete by January 2025.

- highlighted their desire to see the new fire appliance.

- acknowledged the importance of the Contaminants Working Group.

- clarified details regarding the washing of breathing apparatus kits trial in Huntingdon.

94. Terms of Reference for Member-Led Reviews

The Committee received a report regarding the three Terms of Reference for the previously agreed areas for scrutiny by a Member-led Review.

It was resolved unanimously to:

1) review, amend as necessary and approve Terms of Reference for three separate Member-led Reviews attached at Appendices 1 to 3,

2) confirm which Member(s) of the Committee will lead and drive each of the reviews, as detailed below:

    - Councillor Gowing and Councillor Hathorn were appointed to 'Employee Recruitment and Retention (On-Call)'.

    - Councillor Gardener, assisted by Councillor Taylor, were appointed to 'Impacts of Planning and Growth on the Service'.

    - Councillor Rae and Councillor Dew were appointed to 'TRiM Replacement'.

3) Determine timelines for end reports to be presented to the Committee, as detailed below:

    - 'Employee Recruitment and Retention (On-Call)' A report would be brought to Committee in January 2025 and would be presented at the Cambridgeshire Fire Authority meeting in February 2025.

    - 'Impacts of Planning and Growth on the Service' A report would be brought to Committee in March 2025 and would be presented at the Cambridgeshire Fire Authority meeting in June 2025.

    - 'TRiM Replacement' A report would be brought to Committee in October 2025 and would be presented at the Cambridgeshire Fire Authority meeting in December 2025.

95. Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Members learnt that the Service were expecting the new fire appliance on 1st September 2024 and requested the next Committee meeting be hosted at Huntingdon Fire Station. It was noted that the Ernst & Young report needed to be included in the work programme.

The Committee noted its work programme.

Chair

Fire Authority
Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes - Action Log

This is the updated action log as of **9 October 2024** and captures the actions arising from the most recent Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings and will form an outstanding action update to Members on the progress on compliance in delivering the necessary actions.

Minute No.	Report Title	Action to be taken by	Action	Comments	Status
Minutes of the 25 July 2024 Committee					
90	Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service Fleet and Vehicle Provision	Scrutiny and Assurance Manager	It was noted that Members would like an annual update on the CFRS fleet and vehicle provision.	**Update 9 October 2024** Added to Committee Work Programme for July 2025.	**Complete**
95	Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme	Scrutiny and Assurance Manager	Members requested that the next Committee meeting be hosted at Huntingdon Fire Station so that the new fire appliance could be viewed. It was noted that the Ernst and Young LLP report needed to be included in the work programme.	**Update 9 October 2024** Venue remains New Shire Hall (NSH) as no meeting space available at the fire station. Appliance will attend NSH subject to operational requirements. Added to Committee Work Programme for January 2025.	**Complete** **Complete**

TO: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

FROM: Assistant Director Service Transformation – Tamsin Mirfin

PRESENTING OFFICER(S): Assistant Director Service Transformation – Tamsin Mirfin

Telephone: 07900 267944

email: tamsin.mirfin@cambsfire.gov.uk

DATE: 9 October 2024

COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN 2024/29 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with our performance against our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) performance measures.

2. Recommendation

2.1 The Committee is asked to;

2.1.1 note and comment on the contents of the performance report in Appendix 1 which covers Quarter 1 of the year 2024/25 (1 April to 30 June 2024),

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 **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 The CRMP is a public facing document covering a five-year period and represents the output of the CRMP process for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. The document reviews the Service's progress to date and highlights initiatives that may be explored to further improve the quality of operational service provision and importantly in balance, further reduce the level of risk in the community.

5.2 The planning process is supported using risk modelling. This is a process by which performance data over the last five years in key areas of prevention, protection and response is used to assess the likelihood of fires and other related emergencies from occurring; we term this 'community risk'. This, together with data from other sources such as the national risk register and our business delivery risks, is then used to identify the activities required to mitigate risks and maximise opportunities, with measures then set to monitor and improve our performance.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

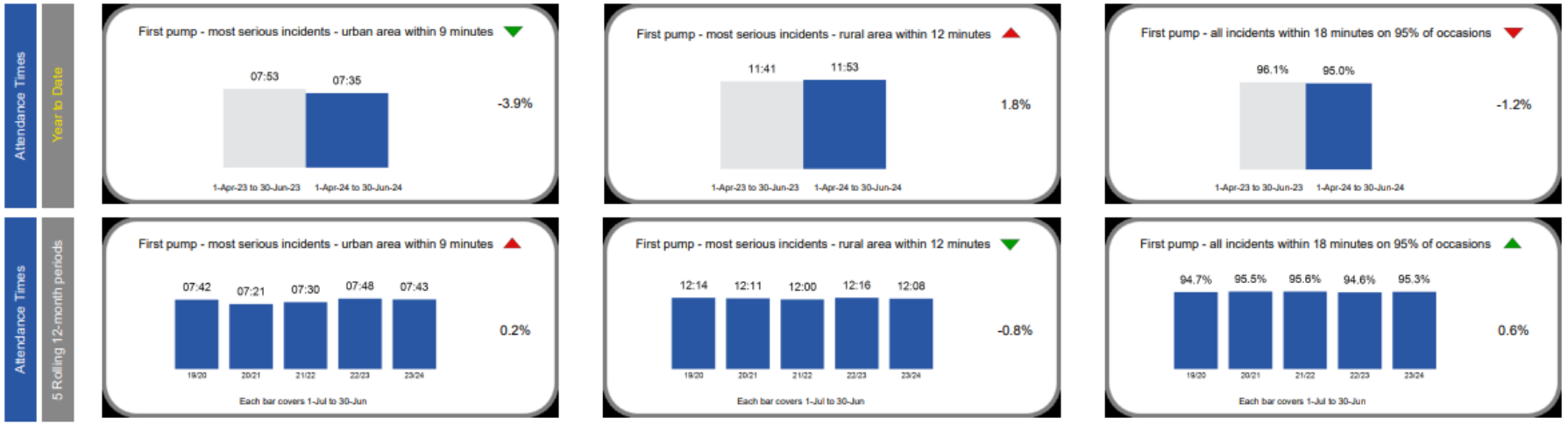
Source Document	**Location**	**Contact Officer**
CRMP 2024/29	Hinchingbrooke Cottage Brampton Road Huntingdon	Tamsin Mirfin Assistant Director Service Transformation tamsin.mirfin@cambsfire.gov.uk

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – CRMP Performance Review 2024/25 Quarter 1

1. We will respond to the most serious incidents within an average of 9 minutes in urban areas and 12 minutes in rural areas for the first fire engine in attendance. And 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.

The graphs below show that we are achieving across all three measures in the first quarter of the year. Although our attendance within 12 minutes is up slightly against the same period in the previous year. The rolling five-year data is also positive with the slight exception of the rural attendance which is over the 12 minutes by 8 seconds.



2. We will be monitoring the following areas to ensure that we are making effective decisions about the targeting of our resources:

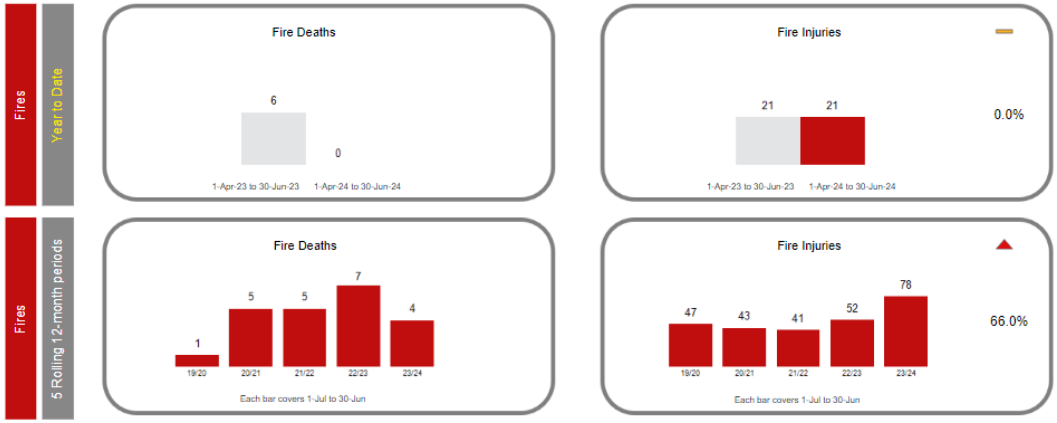
The number of primary and secondary fires.

The number of secondary fires in down by 21.1% from 261 to 206 in the same quarter, this is linked to the wetter weather this year. The average monthly temperatures between April to June in both 2023 and 2024 was very similar (an average of 18 deg C daytime and 8 deg C nighttime). The main weather difference between the years was the amount of rainfall with 121mm in Q1 2023 compared to 151mm in Q1 2024. Geographically, all districts have seen a reduction in secondary fires in Q1 2024 compared to Q1 2023, so it is likely that rainfall is a factor.

Over the rolling five years there is a significant drop of 35% from 1,179 in 2022/23 to 690 in 2023/24. The total numbers of fires is down by 10.1% compared to the same period the previous year. 2022/23 had significant numbers of secondary fires due to the very high temperatures and also the very low rainfall over the summer months of that year.

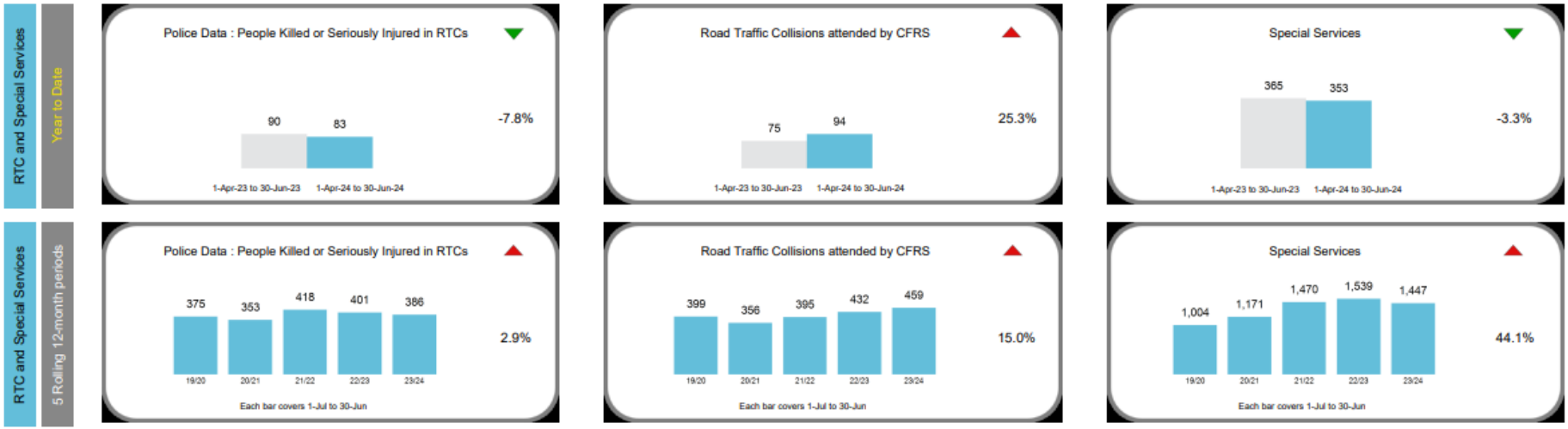
The number of associated deaths and injuries from fire.

There have not been any fire deaths in the first quarter of 2024/25. The number of fire injuries is comparable to the previous year, the rolling five year figures are high and this is impacted by the high number of injuries that we saw in 2023/24.



The number of people killed and seriously injured on our roads.

There has been a slight decrease in the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads compared to the same period last year. This is down from 90 people to 83 people. The rolling five year data is showing an increase of 2.9% over the five years, however the first two years in this period will have been impacted by the pandemic and the reduced traffic on the roads. There is an upward trend in the number ot road traffic collisions that the Service is attending this is reflected over the five year period but again the pandemic will impact these figures slightly.

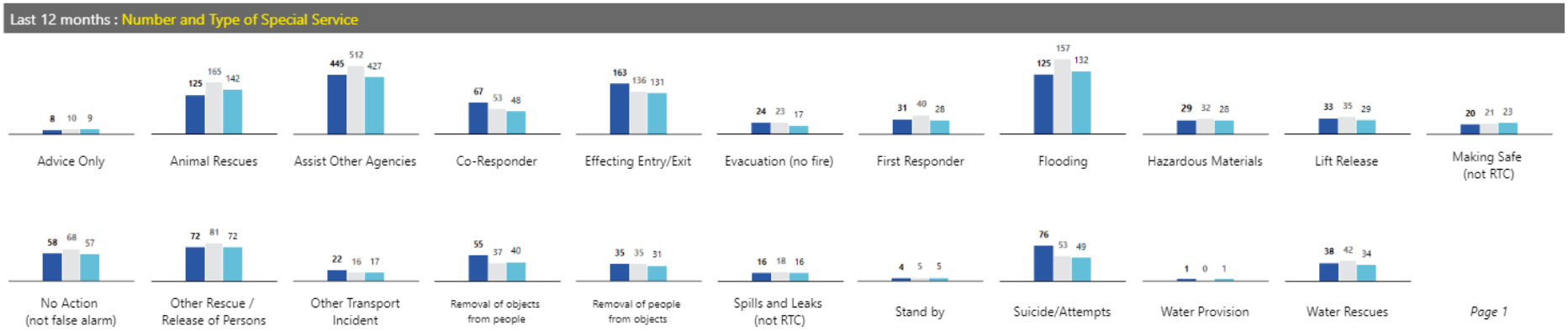


The number and type of special services that we attend.

There has been a marginal decrese in the number of special services that we have attenend compared to the same period last year. However, the rolling five-year data is again showing an increase trend up by 44.1%. Again the pandemic impact must be remembered.

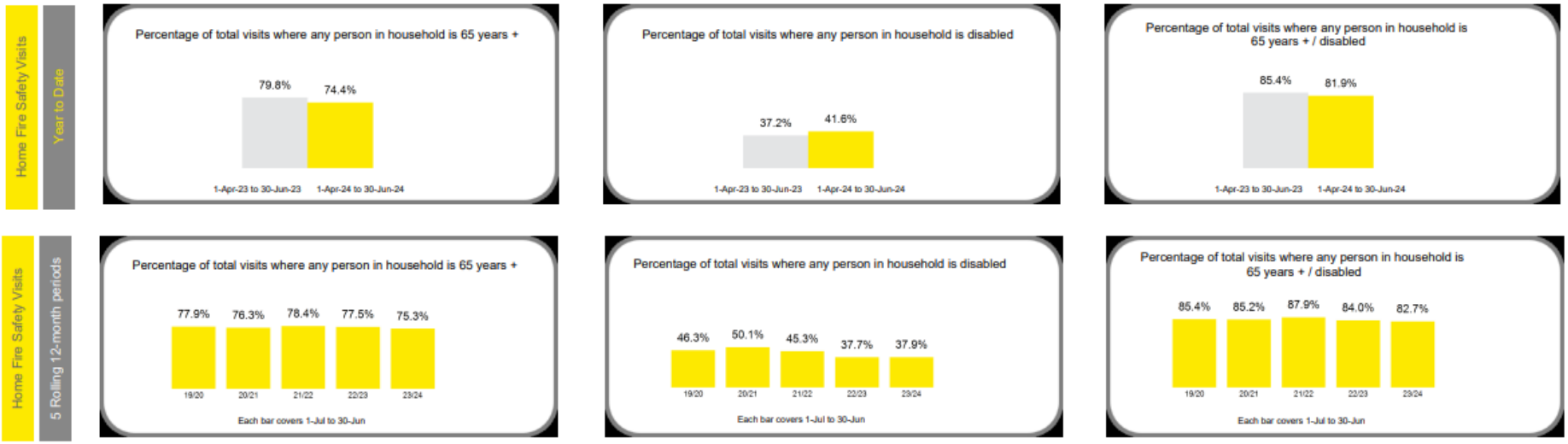
Effecting entry/exit, removal of objects from people and animal assistance incidents are the largest growth areas in special service incidents this quarter, however all increases in these types of incidents are marginal. On the other end of the spectrum, road traffic collisions - release of person/s and make vehicle safe and flooding have fallen against previous quarters and call years.

Assist other agencies continues to be our highest demand special service incident type, by a significant margin compared to all other special service incident types in this quarter.



The number of Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV) against our target groups.

The target groups for our HFSV's are for people over 65+ and also to households were a person is disabled. The data below shows that we are continuing to focus these visits to our target groups. We will also target other risk groups such as identified horders or those that have recently had fires.



3. 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 inspection programme, particularly:

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

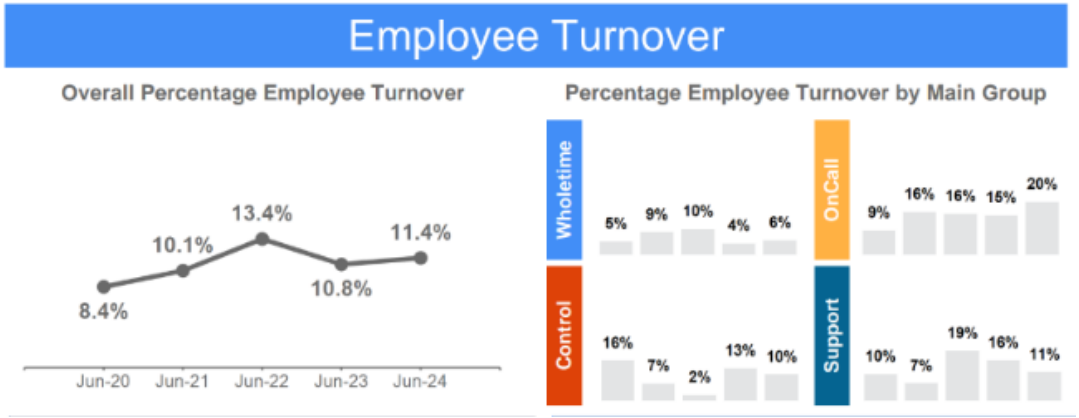
In this year to date our inspection activity in these premises is down by 36.9%. This is becuase we inspect on a cycle basis and the inspections due may have been less than at the same time last year. Of those premises inspected we have found 88.8% broadly compliant this quarter. Work is currently ongoing to refine our high-risk premises identification. This work will continue to the end of this year and will enable us to better refine the data and ensure we are targetting the highest risk premises.

4. We measure our work towards People Excellence by looking at:

Employee engagement and cultural surveys and metrics

The Service will be reviewing a number of different metrics to understand the employee enagements and culture. The next cultural survey is due to commence in October 2024. This will be a good indicator for the Service. The 2022 engagement survey showed CFRS to have 79% engagement which is above average. Employee turnover is down in most areas with the exception on the On-Call group which has increased slightly to 20% from 15%. CIPD UK average for employee turnover in public sector is 21%.

Total sickness has seen a slight increase in Quarter 1 compared to last year. This rise has come from a slight increase in sickness across all groups with only a noticeable exception in the On-Call long term sick (0.91 decrease)

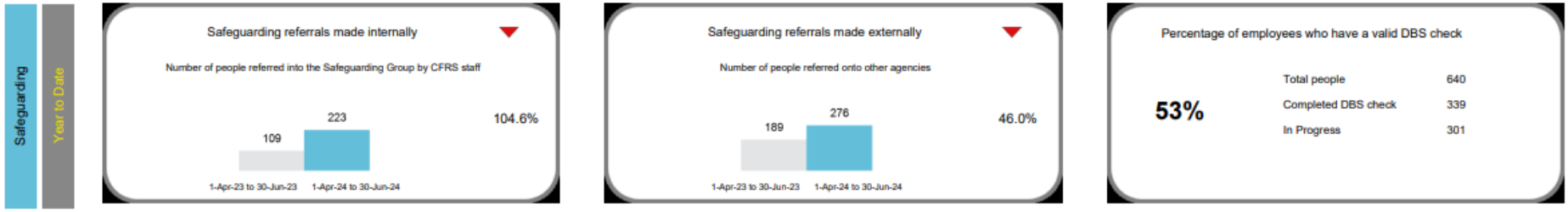


The number of safeguarding referrals made both internally and externally

The number of referrals made internally and then to external have increased which is positive and shows increased awareness of safeguarding and the routes for appropriate actions.

Percentage of Employees who have a valid (and at the appropriate level) DBS check

The roll-out of DBS checking for existing employees/volunteers started in November 2023. The Service has made positive progress in implementing this across the Service with 53% in this quarter, that is 330 completed DBS checks and 301 in progress. DBS checking started in recruitment in July 2023. The Service has retracted conditional offers for five candidates in the last year following risk reviews. 100% of candidates have been DBS checked before starting, in two cases this has meant delaying pre-boarding slightly.



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

Spend against profiled budget

The Service is within budget for the first quarter. Committed is higher but these will include purchase orders that are drawn down through the year.

Expenditure Type	Revised Budget	Budget to date	Actual to Date	Variance	Committed Expenditure	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Employee Expenditure	32,980	8,199	8,062	(136)	8,183	(16)
Premises Expenditure	2,350	1,295	1,284	(11)	1,413	118
Transport and Plant Expenditure	1,186	309	243	(65)	294	(15)
Supplies and Services Expenditure	4,254	1,516	1,205	(311)	2,365	849
Controllable Expenditure	**40,770**	**11,319**	**10,794**	**(523)**	**12,255**	**967**
Other Income	(3649)	(1804)	(1521)	283	(1520)	284
New Controllable Expenditure	**37,121**	**9,514**	**9,274**	**(240)**	**10,734**	**1,221**

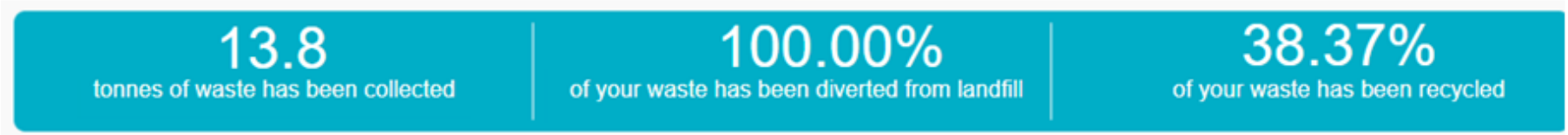
6. Sustainability Measures

Offsetting of carbon footprint

Sustainability is a focus for the Service. Offsetting our carbon footprint is our aspiration; we are looking at the options available to us for offsetting.

Waste reduction – amounts that we send to land fills

Service waste both non-hazardous and hazardous, is recycled or incinerated to make energy. The Service has been working for several years to acheive this and has seen the recycling rate increase from 18% to 38.37%. The average domestic recycling rate in the UK is 40%.



Single use plastic usage

The reduction of single use plastics is an ongoing activity within CFRS. In 2022/23 we used 41,600 plastic bottles, this was reduced to 36,600 in 2023/24. Reducing single use water bottles has been the primary driver for this reduction. Further work is focussed this year on using refillable supplies and distributing these by the Equipment group to further reduce our use of single use plastics.

7. Crews of Three

CFRS attended 69 incidents during the period 1 April to 30 June 2024 as crews of three. Where a crew of three attended the incident as the first appliance in attendance the delay of the second crews attending was three minutes 40 seconds. Crews of three continue to offer approximately 6.4% additional availability. Of the 69 calls, crews of three were first in attendance 32 of times making quicker interventions at the scene of the incident.

TO: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

FROM: Assistant Director Communication and Engagement – Hayley Douglas

PRESENTING OFFICER(S): Assistant Director Communication and Engagement – Hayley Douglas

Telephone **01480 444646**
hayley.douglas@cambsfire.gov.uk

DATE: 9 October 2024

Annual Review - Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority Compliance with the Local Government Transparency Code 2015

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an (annual) update on and assurance of compliance with the Local Government Transparency Code 2015.

2. Recommendation

2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to note CFRS is fully compliant with the Transparency Code and all documents are up to date.

3. Risk Assessment

3.1 **Economic** – the Government believes that transparency is the foundation of local accountability and the key that gives people the tools and information they need to enable them to play a bigger role in society. It is also considered that the availability of data can also open new markets for local business, the voluntary and community sectors and social enterprises to run services or manage public assets.

3.2 **Political** – the Local Government Transparency Code 2015 was issued to meet the Government's desire to place more power into citizens' hands to increase democratic accountability and make it easier for local people to contribute to the local decision-making process and help shape public services.

3.3 **Social** – the Government believes that in principle all data held and managed by local authorities should be made available to local people unless there are specific sensitivities for example, protecting vulnerable people or commercial and operational considerations. It encourages local authorities to see data as a valuable resource not only to themselves but their partners and local people.

3.4 **Equality Impact Assessment** – completed at source.

4. Background

4.1 The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) published a revised Transparency Code in February 2015 as a tool to embed transparency in local authorities and set out the minimum data that such authorities should be publishing, the frequency it should be published and how it should be published. The Code can be found at Appendix 1.

4.2 Under this Code local authority means a fire and rescue authority (constituted by a scheme under section 2 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 or a scheme to which section 4 of that Act applies).

4.3 In July 2015 a Member-led review was undertaken, the objective of which was to provide assurance that the Authority was complying with the requirements of the Code whilst also considering its wider approach to transparency. A number of recommendations to improve compliance were made by the review group which were accepted by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and then the Authority in October 2015.

4.4 The redesigned Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS) website was launched on 15 February 2016. Prior to the launch a considerable amount of effort was expended to ensure the findings of the Member-led review were incorporated into the design and the website now features a separate section for ***Transparency*** providing a central repository for all information demanded by the Code. Under this section there are sub sections for Constitution of Fire Authority, Organisation Structure, Procurement, Expenditure, Senior Officer Pay, Assets, Grants and Trade Union Time. There is also a link to wider service documents that may be of interest to the public for example, the Annual Report and Statement of Assurance.

5. Requirements of the Local Government Transparency Code 2015

5.1 Under the Code the following information is to be published **quarterly**, not later than one month after the quarter to which the data and information is applicable;

- Expenditure exceeding £500
- Government procurement card transactions and
- Procurement information.

5.2 The following (applicable) information is to be published **annually**, not later than one month after the year to which the data and information is applicable;

- Local authority land
- Grants to voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations
- Organisation chart
- Trade union facility
- Senior salaries
- Constitution
- Pay multiple
- Fraud

5.3 The following information is to be published once only;

- Waste contracts.

6. Compliance with the Requirements of the Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017

6.1 In August 2018, the Service became aware, through the submission of a Freedom of Information request relating to Trade Union Facility Time, of a Statutory Instrument (SI) that detailed additional publication requirements. Full details of the SI can be found via the following link http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/328/made

6.2 The then Information Governance Manager subsequently reviewed the publication requirements of the SI which are summarised below;

- Number of relevant trade union officials,
- Percentage of time spent on facility time (banded),
- Percentage of pay bill spent on facility time,
- Paid trade union facility time activities.

6.3 The SI was discussed at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in October 2018 where it was agreed that data from financial year 2018/19 onwards would be published. This review has found that the Service has published the required data for the applicable financial year.

7. Compliance with the Code – October 2024

7.1 The last report of compliance was presented to this Committee on 4 October 2023.

7.2 At the time of writing, this annual review has found that the Service is currently fully compliant with the requirements of the Local Government Transparency Code 2015.

7.3 In addition to the requirements of the Code (and the Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations 2018), the Service continues to have very active social media channels and routinely publishes a range of information which it believes is likely to be of public interest.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Documents	Location	Contact Officer
Local Government Transparency Code 2015 Review of CPFA Compliance with the Local Government Transparency Code Overview and Scrutiny Committee Minutes	Hinchingbrooke Cottage Brampton Road Huntingdon	Hayley Douglas Assistant Director Communication and Engagement hayley.douglas@cambsfire.gov.uk

Department for Communities and Local Government

Local Government Transparency Code 2015

February 2015
Department for Communities and Local Government

This document/publication is also available on our website at www.gov.uk/dclg

If you have any enquiries regarding this document/publication, complete the form at http://forms.communities.gov.uk/ or write to us at:

Department for Communities and Local Government
Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF
Telephone: 030 3444 0000

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Part 1: Introduction

Policy context

1. This Code is issued to meet the Government's desire to place more power into citizens' hands to increase democratic accountability and make it easier for local people to contribute to the local decision making process and help shape public services. Transparency is the foundation of local accountability and the key that gives people the tools and information they need to enable them to play a bigger role in society. The availability of data can also open new markets for local business, the voluntary and community sectors and social enterprises to run services or manage public assets.

2. 'Data' means the objective, factual data, on which policy decisions are based and on which public services are assessed, or which is collected or generated in the course of public service delivery. This should be the basis for publication of information on the discharge of local authority functions.

3. Analysis by Deloitte[1] for the Shakespeare Review of Public Sector Information estimates the economic benefits of public sector information in the United Kingdom as £1.8 billion, with social benefits amounting to £5 billion. The study highlights the significant potential benefits from the publication of public data. And, local authorities and local people want to see published open data:

    - 80 per cent of those responding to a transparency survey[2] by the Local Government Association in September 2012 cited external accountability as a benefit, with 56 per cent citing better local decision making and democracy as a benefit
    - a survey of 800 members of Bedford's Citizens Panel[3] showed that 64 per cent of respondents thought it was very important that the council makes data available to the public and the public were most interested in seeing data made available about council spending and budgets (66 per cent)
    - research by Ipsos MORI[4] found that the more citizens feel informed, the more they tend to be satisfied with public services and their local authorities.

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[1] "Market Assessment of Public Sector Information", Deloitte, May 2013, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/198905/bis-13-743-market-assessment-of-public-sector-information.pdf

[2] "Local Government Transparency Survey 2012", LGA, December 2012, http://www.local.gov.uk/documents/10180/11541/Local_Government_Transparency_Survey_2012.pdf/dd4c24ed-20ba-4feb-b6eb-fea21e4af049

[3] "Citizens Panel Summer 2011 Survey Results Data Transparency" Bedford Borough Council, August 2011 (unpublished)

[4] "What do people want, need and expect from public services?", Ipsos MORI, 2010, http://www.ipsos-mori.com/DownloadPublication/1345_sri_what_do_people_want_need_and_expect_from_public_services_110310.pdf

4. Therefore, the Government believes that in principle all data held and managed by local authorities should be made available to local people unless there are specific sensitivities (eg. protecting vulnerable people or commercial and operational considerations) to doing so. It encourages local authorities to see data as a valuable resource not only to themselves, but also their partners and local people.

5. Three principles have guided the development of this Code:

    - **demand led** – there are growing expectations that new technologies and publication of data should support transparency and accountability. It is vital that public bodies recognise the value to the public of the data they hold, understand what they hold, what their communities want and then release it in a way that allows the public, developers and the media to use it
    - **open** – provision of public data should become integral to local authority engagement with local people so that it drives accountability to them. Its availability should be promoted and publicised so that residents know how to access it and how it can be used. Presentation should be helpful and accessible to local people and other interested persons, and
    - **timely** – the timeliness of making public data available is often of vital importance. It should be made public as soon as possible following production even if it is not accompanied with detailed analysis.

6. This Code ensures local people can now see and access data covering (annex A summarises the publication requirements specified in this Code):

    - **how money is spent** – for example, all spending transactions over £500, all Government Procurement Card spending and contracts valued over £5,000
    - **use of assets** – ensuring that local people are able to scrutinise how well their local authority manages its assets[5]. For example, self-financing for council housing – introduced in April 2012 – gave each local authority a level of debt it could support based on the valuation of its housing stock. This Code gives local people the information they need to ask questions about how their authority is managing its housing stock to ensure it is put to best use, including considering whether higher value, vacant properties could be used to fund the building of new affordable homes and so reduce waiting lists. The requirement in paragraphs 38 to 41 builds on existing Housing Revenue Account practices[6]
    - **decision making** – how decisions are taken and who is taking them, including how much senior staff are paid, and
    - **issues important to local people** – for example, parking and the amount spent by an authority subsidising trade union activity.

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[5] Nationally, local authorities' estate (all forms of land and buildings) is estimated to be worth about £220 billion.

[6] The Housing Revenue Account (Accounting Practices) Directions 2011 require that local authorities' annual statement of accounts include disclosure of the total balance sheet value of the land, houses and other property and the vacant possession value of dwellings within the authority's Housing Revenue Account, https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-housing-revenue-account-directions-2011.

7. Local authorities are encouraged to consider the responses the Government received[7] to its consultation and look to go further than this Code by publishing some of the data proposed by respondents, in line with the principle that all data held and managed by local authorities should be made open and available to local people unless there are specific sensitivities to doing so.

8. Fraud can thrive where decisions are not open to scrutiny and details of spending, contracts and service provision are hidden from view. Greater transparency, and the provisions in this Code, can help combat fraud. Local authorities should also use a risk management approach with strong internal control arrangements to reduce the risk of any payment fraud as a result of publishing public data. Local authorities should refer to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Code of Practice on Managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption[8]. Annex B provides further information on combating fraud.

Application

9. This Code is issued by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in exercise of his powers under section 2 of the Local Government, Planning and Land Act 1980 ("the Act") to issue a Code of Recommended Practice (the Code) as to the publication of information by local authorities about the discharge of their functions and other matters which he considers to be related. It is issued following consultation in accordance with section 3(11) of the Act.

10. The Code does not replace or supersede the existing legal framework for access to and re-use of public sector information provided by the:

    - Freedom of Information Act 2000 (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012)
    - Environmental Information Regulations 2004
    - Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2005
    - Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community (INSPIRE) Regulations 2009, and
    - sections 25 and 26 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014[9] which provide rights for persons to inspect a local authority's accounting records and supporting documentation, and to make copies of them.

11. This Code does not apply to Police and Crime Commissioners, for whom a separate transparency framework applies.

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[7] https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/266815/Transparency_Code_Government_Response.pdf (see paragraph 37)

[8] http://www.cipfa.org/services/counter-fraud-centre/code-of-practice

[9] See the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (S.I. 2014/234) for details of when and how those rights may be exercised.

12. This Code only applies to local authorities in relation to descriptions of information or data where that type of local authority undertakes the particular function to which the information or data relates.

13. The Code applies in England only.

Definitions

14. In this Code:

"local authority" means:

- a county council in England
- a district council
- a parish council which has gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is the higher) exceeding £200,000
- a London borough council
- the Common Council of the City of London in its capacity as a local authority
- the Council of the Isles of Scilly
- a National Park authority for a National Park in England
- the Broads Authority
- the Greater London Authority so far as it exercises its functions through the Mayor
- the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority
- Transport for London
- a fire and rescue authority (constituted by a scheme under section 2 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 or a scheme to which section 4 of that Act applies, and a metropolitan county fire and rescue authority)
- a joint authority established by Part IV of the Local Government Act 1985 (fire and rescue services and transport)
- a joint waste authority, i.e. an authority established for an area in England by an order under section 207 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007
- an economic prosperity board established under section 88 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009
- a combined authority established under section 103 of that Act
- a waste disposal authority, i.e. an authority established under section 10 of the Local Government Act 1985, and
- an integrated transport authority for an integrated transport area in England.

"a social enterprise"[10] means a business that trades for a social and/or environmental purpose and is a business which:

- aims to generate its income by selling goods and services, rather than through grants and donations
- is set up to specifically make a difference, and
- reinvests the profits it makes for the purpose of its social mission.

"a small or medium sized enterprise" means an undertaking which has fewer than 250 employees.

"voluntary and community sector organisations" means a non-governmental organisation that is value-driven and which principally reinvests its surpluses to further social, environmental or cultural objectives.

Data protection

15. The Government believes that local transparency can be implemented in a way that complies with the Data Protection Act 1998. Where local authorities are disclosing information which potentially engages the Data Protection Act 1998, they must ensure that the publication of that information is compliant with the provisions of that Act. The Data Protection Act 1998 does not restrict or inhibit information being published about councillors or senior local authority officers because of the legitimate public interest in the scrutiny of such senior individuals and decision makers. The Data Protection Act 1998 also does not automatically prohibit information being published naming the suppliers with whom the authority has contracts, including sole traders, because of the public interest in accountability and transparency in the spending of public money.

16. For other situations where information held by local authorities contains public data which cannot be disclosed in a Data Protection Act compliant manner, the Information Commissioner's Office has published guidance on anonymisation of datasets, enabling publication of data which can yield insights to support public service improvement, whilst safeguarding individuals' privacy[11].

17. To ensure that published valuation information for social housing assets (see paragraphs 38 to 41) is not disclosive of individual properties, authorities are required to publish their valuation data at postal sector level, i.e. full 'outbound' code (first part of the postcode) and first digit of the 'inbound' code (second part of the postcode). This provides an average cell size of 2,500 households, which should be large enough to prevent identification of individual dwellings. However, in particular areas where the postcode sector gives a number of households below 2,500 the postcode level should be set higher, that is at postcode district level (e.g.PO1 ***).

[10] https://www.gov.uk/set-up-a-social-enterprise
[11] http://ico.org.uk/for_organisations/data_protection/topic_guides/anonymisation

18. Local authorities should also make the following adjustment prior to publishing social housing valuation data in order to mitigate the possibility of identifying individual properties:

    - Step 1 – for any given postcode sector where the number of occupied social housing properties in any valuation bands is less than a threshold of ’10’, authorities should merge that particular cell with the next lowest valuation band, and so on until the resultant merged cells contain at least ‘10’ occupied social housing properties. However, if continued repetition of step 1 leads to the number of valuation bands applied to that postcode sector falling below the proposed minimum threshold of valuation bands as set out in paragraph 17, authorities should then apply step 2.
    - Step 2 – authorities should merge the original (non-merged) valuation data for the relevant postcode sector with the valuation data with any adjoining postcode sectors which show the lowest number of socially rented properties. Then apply Step 1.

Licences

19. When using postcode data (for example, in connection with paragraphs 35 to 41), local authorities will need to assess their current licence arrangement with the Royal Mail with regards to the terms of use of the Postcode Address File (PAF).

Commercial confidentiality

20. The Government has not seen any evidence that publishing details about contracts entered into by local authorities would prejudice procurement exercises or the interests of commercial organisations, or breach commercial confidentiality unless specific confidentiality clauses are included in contracts. Local authorities should expect to publish details of contracts newly entered into – commercial confidentiality should not, in itself, be a reason for local authorities to not follow the provisions of this Code. Therefore, local authorities should consider inserting clauses in new contracts allowing for the disclosure of data in compliance with this Code.

Exclusions and exemptions

21. Authorities should ensure that they do not contravene the provisions of sections 100A, 100B or 100F of the Local Government Act 1972.

22. Where information would otherwise fall within one of the exemptions from disclosure, for instance, under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, the Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community (INSPIRE) Regulations 2009 or fall within Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 then it is at the discretion of the local authority whether or not to rely on that exemption or publish the data. Local authorities should start from the presumption of openness and disclosure of information, and not rely on exemptions to withhold information unless absolutely necessary.

Timeliness and errors

23. Data should be as accurate as possible at first publication. While errors may occur, the publication of information should not be unduly delayed to rectify mistakes. This concerns errors in data accuracy. The best way to achieve this is by having robust information management processes in place.

24. Where errors in data are discovered, or files are changed for other reasons (such as omissions), local authorities should publish revised information making it clear where and how there has been an amendment. Metadata on data.gov.uk should be amended accordingly.

Further guidance and support

25. The Local Government Association has published guidance[12] on transparency (eg. technical guidance notes, best practice examples and case studies) to help local authorities comply with this Code.

[12] http://www.local.gov.uk/practitioners-guides-to-publishing-data

Part 2: Information which must be published

Part 2.1: Information to be published quarterly

26. Data covered by this section includes:

- expenditure exceeding £500 (see paragraphs 28 and 29)
- Government Procurement Card transactions (paragraph 30), and
- procurement information (see paragraphs 31 and 32).

27. The data and information referred to in this Part (2.1) must be:

- first published within a period of three months from the date on which the local authority last published that data under the Local Government Transparency Code 2014[13] and not later than one month after the quarter to which the data and information is applicable
- published quarterly thereafter and on each occasion not later than one month after the quarter to which the data and information is applicable.

Expenditure exceeding £500

28. Local authorities must publish details of each individual item of expenditure that exceeds £500[14]. This includes items of expenditure[15], consistent with Local Government Association guidance[16], such as:

- individual invoices
- grant payments
- expense payments
- payments for goods and services
- grants
- grant in aid
- rent
- credit notes over £500, and
- transactions with other public bodies.

[13] Under the Local Government Transparency Code 2014, local authorities were required to publish this data on the first occasion, not later than 31 December 2014 and quarterly thereafter.
[14] The threshold should be, where possible, the net amount excluding recoverable Value Added Tax.
[15] Salary payments to staff normally employed by the local authority should not be included. However, local authorities should publish details of payments to individual contractors (e.g. individuals from consultancy firms, employment agencies, direct personal contracts, personal service companies etc) either here or under contract information.
[16] http://www.local.gov.uk/practitioners-guides-to-publishing-data

29. For each individual item of expenditure the following information must be published:

- date the expenditure was incurred
- local authority department which incurred the expenditure
- beneficiary
- summary of the purpose of the expenditure[17]
- amount[18]
- Value Added Tax that cannot be recovered, and
- merchant category (eg. computers, software etc).

Government Procurement Card transactions

30. Local authorities must publish details of every transaction on a Government Procurement Card. For each transaction, the following details must be published:

- date of the transaction
- local authority department which incurred the expenditure
- beneficiary
- amount[19]
- Value Added Tax that cannot be recovered
- summary of the purpose of the expenditure, and
- merchant category (eg. computers, software etc).

[17] This could be the descriptor that local authorities use in their accounting system providing it gives a clear sense of why the expenditure was incurred or what it purchased or secured for the local authority.
[18] Where possible, this should be the net amount excluding recoverable Value Added Tax. Where Value Added Tax cannot be recovered – or the source of the data being used cannot separate out recoverable Value Added Tax – then the gross amount should be used instead with a note stating that the gross amount has been used.
[19] Where possible, this should be the net amount excluding recoverable Value Added Tax. Where Value Added Tax cannot be recovered – or the source of the data being used cannot separate out recoverable Value Added Tax – then the gross amount should be used instead with a note stating that the gross amount has been used.

Procurement information

31. Local authorities must publish details of every invitation to tender for contracts to provide goods and/or services[20] with a value that exceeds £5,000[21, 22]. For each invitation, the following details must be published:

    - reference number
    - title
    - description of the goods and/or services sought
    - start, end and review dates, and
    - local authority department responsible.

32. Local authorities must also publish details of any contract[23], commissioned activity, purchase order, framework agreement and any other legally enforceable agreement with a value that exceeds £5,000[24]. For each contract, the following details must be published:

    - reference number
    - title of agreement
    - local authority department responsible
    - description of the goods and/or services being provided
    - supplier name and details
    - sum to be paid over the length of the contract or the estimated annual spending or budget for the contract[25]
    - Value Added Tax that cannot be recovered
    - start, end and review dates
    - whether or not the contract was the result of an invitation to quote or a published invitation to tender, and
    - whether or not the supplier is a small or medium sized enterprise and/or a voluntary or community sector organisation and where it is, provide the relevant registration number[26].

[20] This includes contracts for staff who are employed via consultancy firms or similar agencies.
[21] The threshold should be, where possible, the net amount excluding recoverable Value Added Tax.
[22] Tenders for framework agreements should be included, even though there may be no initial value.
[23] This includes contracts for staff who are employed via consultancy firms or similar agencies.
[24] The threshold should be, where possible, the net amount excluding recoverable Value Added Tax.
[25] Where possible, this should be the net amount excluding recoverable Value Added Tax. Where Value Added Tax cannot be recovered – or the source of the data being used cannot separate out recoverable Value Added Tax – then the gross amount should be used instead with a note stating that the gross amount has been used.
[26] For example, this might be the company or charity registration number.

Part 2.2: Information to be published annually

33. Data covered by this section includes:

- local authority land (see paragraphs 35 to 37)
- social housing assets (see paragraphs 38 to 41)
- grants to voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations (see paragraphs 42 and 43)
- organisation chart (see paragraph 44)
- trade union facility time (see paragraph 45)
- parking account (see paragraph 46)
- parking spaces (see paragraph 47)
- senior salaries (see paragraphs 48 and 49)
- constitution (see paragraph 50)
- pay multiple (see paragraphs 51 and 52), and
- fraud (see paragraph 53).

34. With the exception of data relating to social housing assets (paragraphs 38 to 41), the data and information in this Part (2.2) must be:

- first published within a period of one year from the date on which the local authority last published that data under the Local Government Transparency Code 2014[27] and not later than one month after the year to which the data and information is applicable
- published annually thereafter and on each occasion not later than one month[28] after the year to which the data and information is applicable.

The data on social housing assets (see paragraphs 38 to 41) must be published:

- on the first occasion, not later than 1 September 2015 (based on the most up to date valuation data available at the time of publishing the information), then
- in April 2016, and
- every April thereafter.

[27] Under the Local Government Transparency Code 2014, local authorities were required to publish this data on the first occasion, not later than 2 February 2015 and annual thereafter.
[28] In relation to parking account data, where the local authority's annual accounts have not been finalised, the authority should publish estimates within one month after the year to which the data is applicable and subsequently publish final figures as soon as the authority's accounts are finalised.

Local authority land

35. Local authorities must publish details of all land and building assets including:

- all service and office properties occupied or controlled by user bodies, both freehold and leasehold
- any properties occupied or run under Private Finance Initiative contracts
- all other properties they own or use, for example, hostels, laboratories, investment properties and depots
- garages unless rented as part of a housing tenancy agreement
- surplus, sublet or vacant properties
- undeveloped land
- serviced or temporary offices where contractual or actual occupation exceeds three months, and
- all future commitments, for example under an agreement for lease, from when the contractual commitment is made.

Information about the following land and building assets are to be excluded from publication:

- rent free properties provided by traders (such as information booths in public places or ports)
- operational railways and canals
- operational public highways (but any adjoining land not subject to public rights should be included)
- assets of national security, and
- information deemed inappropriate for public access as a result of data protection and/or disclosure controls (eg. such as refuge houses).

36. For the purposes of this dataset about local authority land (paragraphs 35 to 37), details about social housing should not be published. However, information about the value of social housing stock contained in a local authority's Housing Revenue Account does need to be published for the social housing asset value dataset (paragraphs 38 to 41).

37. For each land or building asset, the following information must be published together in one place:

- Unique Property Reference Number[29]
- Unique asset identity - the local reference identifier used by the local body, sometimes known as local name or building block. There should be one entry per asset or user/owner (eg. on one site there could be several buildings or in one building there could be several users floors/rooms etc – where this is the case, each of these will have a separate asset identity). This must include the original reference number from the data source plus authority code
- name of the building/land or both
- street number or numbers - any sets of 2 or more numbers should be separated with the '-' symbol (eg. 10-15 London Road)
- street name – this is the postal road address[30]
- post town
- United Kingdom postcode
- map reference – local authorities may use either Ordnance Survey or ISO 6709 systems to identify the location of an asset, but must make clear which is being used. Where an Ordnance Survey mapping system is used (the grid system) then assets will be identified using Eastings before Northings. Where geocoding in accordance with ISO 6709 is being used to identify the centre point of the asset location then that reference must indicate its ISO coordinates
- whether the local authority owns the freehold or a lease for the asset and for whichever category applies, the local authority must list all the characteristics that apply from the options given below:

  for freehold assets:

  - occupied by the local authority
  - ground leasehold
  - leasehold
  - licence
  - vacant (for vacant properties, local authorities should not publish the map reference or full address details, they should only publish the first part of the postcode[31]).

[29] The Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN) is a unique twelve digit number assigned to every unit of land and property recorded by local government, this is a statutory obligation. The UPRN uniquely and definitively identifies every addressable location in the country. The numbers originate from Geo-Place (an OS and LGA joint venture).

[30] Local authorities should use the official postal address. Exceptionally, where this is not available, local authorities should use the address they hold for the asset.

[31] The first part of the postcode, or Outward Code, refers to the area and the district only, http://www.postcodeaddressfile.co.uk/products/postcodes/postcodes_explained.htm

for leasehold assets:

- occupied by the local authority
- ground leasehold
- sub leasehold
- licence.

for other assets:

- free text description eg. rights of way, access etc[32].

- whether or not the asset is land only (i.e. without permanent buildings) or it is land with a permanent building.

Social housing asset value

38. Local authorities must publish details of the value of social housing stock that is held in their Housing Revenue Account[33].

39. The following social housing stock data must be published:

- valuation data to be listed at postal sector level[34] (e.g. PO1 1**), without indicating individual dwelling values, and ensuring that data is not capable of being made disclosive of individual properties, in line with disclosure protocols set out in paragraphs 15 to 18
- valuation data for the dwellings using both Existing Use Value for Social Housing and market value (valued in accordance with guidance[35]) as at 1 April. This should be based on the authority's most up to date valuation data at the time of the publication of the information
- an explanation of the difference between the tenanted sale value of dwellings within the Housing Revenue Account and their market sale value, and assurance that the publication of this information is not intended to suggest that tenancies should end to realise the market value of properties.

[32] Where a local authority feels unable to verify rights of way information, for example, it should add a short narrative explaining why it is unable to identify and verify the information.
[33] All local housing authorities who hold housing stock are required to account for all income and expenditure in relation to that stock in a separate account which is called the Housing Revenue Account.
[34] The first part of the postcode, or Outward Code (which refers only to the area and the district only), and first digit of the second part of the postcode, or Inward Code (the number identifies the sector in the postal district). http://www.postcodeaddressfile.co.uk/products/postcodes/postcodes_explained.htm
[35] *Guidance for Valuers on Stock Valuation for Resource Accounting 2010* published by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in January 2011, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/5939/1825886.pdf

40. The valuation data and information referred to in paragraph 39 must be published in the following format:

- for each postal sector level, the valuation data should be classified within set bands of value. Authorities must set their valuation bands within the general parameters set out in the table below, in light of the local characteristics of the housing market in their area, in order to ensure that valuation data published by all authorities is consistent and clear to understand:

Valuation Band Range	Intervening bands value
< £50,000 -£99,999	6 Bands of £10,000
£100,000 - £299,999	10 Bands of £20,000
£300,000 - £499,999	4 Bands of £50,000
£500,000 - £999,999	5 Bands of £100,000
£1,000,000 – £2,999,999>	5 Bands of £500,000

- authorities should ensure that any band should only include values that fall within the band parameters (i.e. not give a top value band). If that is the case, the lowest and highest band should be further disaggregated
- authorities should bear in mind that it is likely that the numbers of properties in the lowest and highest bands will be low, leading to potential disclosure problems. The protocol to address this issue is set out in paragraphs 15 to 18
- for each postal sector level, within the set band of value, the data should indicate:
  - the total number of dwellings
  - the aggregate value of the dwellings and their mean value, using both Existing Use Value for Social Housing and market value, and
  - the percentage of the dwellings that are occupied and the percentage that are vacant
- authorities must publish the valuation data for both tenanted and vacant dwellings.

41. An example of how the data specified in paragraphs 39 and 40 could be presented is included at annex C.

Grants to voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations

42. Local authorities must publish details of all grants to voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations. This can be achieved by either:

- tagging and hence specifically identifying transactions which relate to voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations within published data on expenditure over £500 or published procurement information, or
- by publishing a separate list or register.

43. For each identified grant, the following information must be published as a minimum:

- date the grant was awarded
- time period for which the grant has been given
- local authority department which awarded the grant
- beneficiary
- beneficiary's registration number[36]
- summary of the purpose of the grant, and
- amount.

Organisation chart

44. Local authorities must publish an organisation chart covering staff in the top three levels of the organisation[37]. The following information must be included for each member of staff included in the chart:

- grade
- job title
- local authority department and team
- whether permanent or temporary staff
- contact details
- salary in £5,000 brackets, consistent with the details published under paragraph 48, and
- salary ceiling (the maximum salary for the grade).

Trade union facility time

45. Local authorities must publish the following information on trade union facility time:

- total number (absolute number and full time equivalent) of staff who are union representatives (e.g. general, learning and health and safety representatives)
- total number (absolute number and full time equivalent) of union representatives who devote at least 50 per cent of their time to union duties
- names of all trade unions represented in the local authority
- a basic estimate of spending on unions (calculated as the number of full time equivalent days spent on union duties by authority staff that spent the majority of their time on union duties multiplied by the average salary), and
- a basic estimate of spending on unions as a percentage of the total pay bill (calculated as the number of full time equivalent days spent on union duties by authority staff that spent the majority of their time on union duties multiplied by the average salary divided by the total pay bill).

[36] For example, this might be the company or charity registration number.
[37] This should exclude staff whose salary does not exceed £50,000.

Parking account

46. Local authorities must publish on their website, or place a link on their website to this data if published elsewhere:

    - a breakdown of income and expenditure on the authority's parking account[38, 39]. The breakdown of income must include details of revenue collected from on-street parking, off-street parking and Penalty Charge Notices, and
    - a breakdown of how the authority has spent a surplus on its parking account[38,40].

Parking spaces

47. Local authorities must publish the number of marked out controlled on and off-street parking spaces within their area, or an estimate of the number of spaces where controlled parking space is not marked out in individual parking bays or spaces.

Senior salaries

48. Local authorities are already required to publish, under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (Statutory Instrument 2015/234)[41]:

    - the number of employees whose remuneration in that year was at least £50,000 in brackets of £5,000
    - details of remuneration and job title of certain senior employees whose salary is at least £50,000, and
    - employees whose salaries are £150,000 or more must also be identified by name.

49. In addition to this requirement, local authorities must place a link on their website to these published data or place the data itself on their website, together with a list of responsibilities (for example, the services and functions they are responsible for, budget held and number of staff) and details of bonuses and 'benefits-in-kind', for all employees whose salary exceeds £50,000. The key differences between the requirements under this Code and the Regulations referred to above is the addition of a list of responsibilities, the inclusion of bonus details for all senior employees whose salary exceeds £50,000 and publication of the data on the authority's website.

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[38] A parking account kept under section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 as modified by Regulation 25 of the Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions (England) General Regulations 2007.
[39] Local authorities should also have regard to both statutory guidance*, The Secretary of State's Statutory Guidance to Local Authorities on the Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions*, http://assets.dft.gov.uk/publications/tma-part-6-cpe-statutory-guidance/betterprkstatutoryguid.pdf, and non-statutory operational guidance, *Operational Guidance to Local Authorities: Parking Policy and Enforcement*, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/212559/parkingenforcepolicy.pdf
[40] Section 55 (as amended) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 sets out how local authorities should use a surplus on their parking account. Local authorities should breakdown how they have spent a surplus on their parking account within the categories set out in section 55.
[41] For the accounting year 2014-15, the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 (Statutory Instrument 2011/817) remain applicable.

Constitution

50. Local authorities are already required to make their Constitution available for inspection at their offices under section 9P of the Local Government Act 2000. Local authorities must also, under this Code, publish their Constitution on their website.

Pay multiple

51. Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011 requires local authorities to produce Pay Policy Statements, which should include the authority's policy on pay dispersion – the relationship between remuneration of chief officers and the remuneration of other staff. Guidance produced under section 40 of that Act[42], recommends that the pay multiple is included in these statements as a way of illustrating the authority's approach to pay dispersion.

52. Local authorities must, under this Code, publish the pay multiple on their website, defined as the ratio between the highest paid taxable earnings for the given year (including base salary, variable pay, bonuses, allowances and the cash value of any benefits-in-kind) and the median earnings figure of the whole of the authority's workforce. The measure must:

    - cover all elements of remuneration that can be valued (eg. all taxable earnings for the given year, including base salary, variable pay, bonuses, allowances and the cash value of any benefits-in-kind)
    - use the median earnings figure as the denominator, which should be that of all employees of the local authority on a fixed date each year, coinciding with reporting at the end of the financial year, and
    - exclude changes in pension benefits, which due to their variety and complexity cannot be accurately included in a pay multiple disclosure.

[42] Openness and accountability in local pay: Guidance under Section 40 of the Localism Act (February 2012), https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/5956/2091042.pdf

Fraud

53. Local authorities must publish the following information about their counter fraud work[43]:

- number of occasions they use powers under the Prevention of Social Housing Fraud (Power to Require Information) (England) Regulations 2014[44], or similar powers[45]
- total number (absolute and full time equivalent) of employees undertaking investigations and prosecutions of fraud
- total number (absolute and full time equivalent) of professionally accredited counter fraud specialists
- total amount spent by the authority on the investigation and prosecution of fraud, and
- total number of fraud cases investigated.

Part 2.3: Information to be published once only

Waste contracts

54. Local authorities must publish details of their existing waste collection contracts, in line with the details contained in paragraph 32. Local authorities must publish this information at the same time as they first publish quarterly procurement information under paragraphs 27, 31 and 32 of this Code.

Part 2.4: Method of publication

55. Public data should be published in a format and under a licence that allows open re-use, including for commercial and research activities, in order to maximise value to the public. The most recent Open Government Licence published by the National Archives should be used as the recommended standard. Where any copyright or data ownership concerns exist with public data these should be made clear. Data covered by Part 2 of this Code must be published in open and machine-readable formats (further information about machine-readable formats can be found in Part 3.2).

[43] The definition of fraud is as set out by the Audit Commission in *Protecting the Public Purse*.
[44] S.I. 2014/899.
[45] For example, the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Detection of Fraud and Enforcement) (England) Regulations 2013 gives local authorities the power to require information from listed bodies, during the investigation of fraud connected with an application for or award of a reduction under a council tax reduction scheme: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/501/contents/made

Part 3: Information recommended for publication

56. Part 2 of this Code set out details of the minimum data that local authorities must publish. The Government believes that in principle all data held and managed by local authorities should be made available to local people unless there are specific sensitivities to doing so. Therefore, it encourages local authorities to go much further in publishing the data they hold, recognising the benefits of sharing that data for local people, more effective service delivery and better policy making. Part 3 of this Code sets out details of data that the Government recommends local authorities publish.

Part 3.1: Information recommended for publication

57. Data covered by this section includes:

- expenditure data (see paragraph 58)
- procurement information (see paragraphs 59 and 60)
- local authority land (see paragraph 61 and 62)
- parking spaces (see paragraphs 63 and 64)
- organisation chart (see paragraph 65)
- grants to voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations (see paragraphs 66 and 67), and
- fraud (see paragraph 68).

Expenditure data

58. It is recommended that local authorities go further than the minimum publication requirements set out in Part 2 and:

- publish information on a monthly instead of quarterly basis, or ideally, as soon as it becomes available and therefore known to the authority (commonly known as ‘real-time’ publication)
- publish details of all transactions that exceed £250 instead of £500. For each transaction the details that should be published remain as in paragraph 29
- publish all transactions on all corporate credit cards, charge cards and procurements, including those that are not a Government Procurement Card. For each transaction the details that should be published remain as set out in paragraph 30
- publish the total amount spent on remuneration over the period being reported on, and
- classify expenditure using the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Service Reporting Code of Practice to enable comparability between local authorities.

Procurement information

59. It is recommended that local authorities place on Contracts Finder[46], as well as any other local portal, every invitation to tender or invitation to quote for contracts to provide goods and/or services with a value that exceeds £10,000. For each invitation, the details that should be published are the same as those set out in paragraph 31.

60. It is recommended that local authorities should go further than the minimum publication requirements set out in Part 2 and publish:

- information on a monthly instead of quarterly basis, or ideally, as soon as it is generated and therefore becomes available (commonly known as 'real-time' publication)
- every invitation to tender for contracts to provide goods and/or services with a value that exceeds £500 instead of £5,000. The details that should be published are the same as those set out in paragraph 31
- details of invitations to quote where there has not been a formal invitation to tender. The details that should be published are the same as those set out in paragraph 31
- all contracts in their entirety where the value of the contract exceeds £5,000[47]
- company registration number at Companies House
- details of invitations to tender or invitations to quote that are likely to be issued in the next twelve months. The details that should be published are the same as those set out in paragraph 31
- details of the geographical (eg. by ward) coverage of contracts entered into by the local authority
- details of performance against contractual key performance indicators, and
- information disaggregated by voluntary and community sector category (eg. whether it is registered with Companies House, Charity or Charitable Incorporated Organisation, Community Interest Company, Industrial and Provident Society, Housing Association, etc).

Local authority land

61. It is recommended that local authorities should go further than the minimum publication requirements set out in Part 2 and publish information on a monthly instead of annual basis, or ideally, as soon as it becomes available and therefore known to the authority (commonly known as 'real-time' publication). It is also recommended that local authorities should publish all the information possible on Electronic Property Information Mapping Service.

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[46] Documentation for all procurements valued at over £10,000 is stored on Contracts Finder for public viewing as part of government's transparency commitment. https://online.contractsfinder.businesslink.gov.uk/

[47] Where a contract runs into several hundreds of pages or more, a local authority should publish a summary of the contract or sections of the contract, if this would be more helpful to local people and businesses.

62. It is further recommended that local authorities also go further than the minimum publication requirements set out in paragraph 37 by publishing, alongside them in one place, the following information:

- size of the asset measured in Gross Internal Area (m^2) for buildings or hectares for land, in accordance with the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors Code of Measuring Practice. The Gross Internal Area is the area of a building measured to the internal face of the perimeter walls at each floor level. Local authorities using Net Internal Area (m^2) should convert measurements to Gross Internal Area using appropriate conversion factors[48] and state the conversion factor used
- services offered from the asset using the services listed in the Effective Services Delivery government service function list http://doc.esd.org.uk/FunctionList/1.00.html (listing up to five main services)
- reason for holding asset such as, it is occupied by the local authority or it is providing a service on the authority's behalf, it is an investment property, it supports economic development (eg. provision of small businesses or incubator space), it is surplus to the authority's requirements, it is awaiting development, it is under construction, it provides infrastructure or it is a community asset
- whether or not the asset is either one which is an asset in the authority's ownership that is listed under Part 5 Chapter 3 of the Localism Act 2011 (assets of community value) and/or an asset which the authority is actively seeking to transfer to the community
- total building operation (revenue) costs as defined in the corporate value for money indicators for public services[49]
- required maintenance - the cost to bring the property from its present state up to the state reasonably required by the authority to deliver the service and/or to meet statutory or contract obligations and maintain it at that standard. This should exclude improvement projects but include works necessary to comply with new legislation (eg. asbestos and legionella)
- functional suitability rating using the scale:
    - good – performing well and operating efficiently (supports the needs of staff and the delivery of services)
    - satisfactory – performing well but with minor problems (generally supports the needs of staff and the delivery of services)
    - poor – showing major problems and/or not operating optimally (impedes the performance off staff and/or the delivery of services)
    - unsuitable – does not support or actually impedes the delivery of services
- energy performance rating as stated on the Display Energy Certificate under the Energy Performance of Buildings (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

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[48] Local authorities are not expected to re-measure buildings. Research undertaken for the Scottish Government offers one method of converting Net Internal Area to Gross Internal Area and can be found at: http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/217736/0121532.pdf

[49] http://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/2010-11-Estates-Management.pdf (See page 17).

Parking spaces

63. It is recommended that local authorities should publish the number of:

- free parking spaces available in the local authority's area and which are provided directly by the local authority, and
- parking spaces where charges apply that are available in the local authority's area and which are provided directly by the local authority.

64. Where parking space is not marked out in individual parking bays or spaces, local authorities should estimate the number of spaces available for the two categories in paragraph 63.

Organisation chart

65. It is recommended that local authorities should go further than the minimum publication requirements set out in Part 2 and publish:

- charts including all employees of the local authority whose salary exceeds £50,000
- the salary band for each employee included in the chart(s), and
- information about current vacant posts, or signpost vacancies that are going to be advertised in the future.

Grants to voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations

66. It is recommended that local authorities should go further than the minimum publication requirements set out in Part 2 and publish information on a monthly instead of annual basis where payments are made more frequently than a single annual payment, or ideally, as soon as the data becomes available and therefore known to the authority (commonly known as 'real-time' publication).

67. It is further recommended that local authorities publish information disaggregated by voluntary and community sector category (eg. whether it is registered with Companies House, charity or charitable incorporated organisation, community interest company, industrial and provident society, housing association, etc).

Fraud

68. It is recommended that local authorities should go further than the minimum publication requirements set out in Part 2 and publish:

- total number of cases of irregularity investigated
- total number of occasions on which a) fraud and b) irregularity was identified
- total monetary value of a) the fraud and b) the irregularity that was detected, and
- total monetary value of a) the fraud and b) the irregularity that was recovered.

Part 3.2: Method of publication

69. The Government endorses the five step journey to a fully open format:

One star	Available on the web (whatever format) but with an open license
Two star	As for one star plus available as machine-readable structured data (eg. Excel instead of an image scan of a table)
Three star	As for two star plus use a non-proprietary format (eg. CSV and XML)
Four star	All of the above plus use open standards from the World Wide Web Consortium (such as RDF and SPARLQL21)
Five star	All the above plus links an organisation's data to others' data to provide context

70. The Government recommends that local authorities publish data in three star formats where this is suitable and appropriate[50], alongside open and machine-readable format, within six months of this Code being issued.

Shehla Husain
A Senior Civil Servant in the Department for Communities and Local Government

Department for Communities and Local Government
27 February 2015

[50] Statistical data, lists etc should be capable of being published in this format but others (eg. organisation charts) may be more difficult.

Annex A: Table summarising all information to be published

Information title	Information which must be published	Information recommended for publication
Expenditure exceeding £500	Quarterly publication Publish details of each individual item of expenditure that exceeds £500, including items of expenditure, consistent with Local Government Association guidance, such as: • individual invoices • grant payments • expense payments • payments for goods and services • grants • grant in aid • rent • credit notes over £500 • transactions with other public bodies. For each individual item of expenditure the following information must be published: • date the expenditure was incurred • local authority department which incurred the expenditure • beneficiary • summary of the purpose of the expenditure • amount • Value Added Tax that cannot be recovered • merchant category (eg. computers, software etc).	• Publish information on a monthly instead of quarterly basis, or ideally, as soon as it becomes available and therefore known to the authority (commonly known as 'real-time' publication). • Publish details of all transactions that exceed £250 instead of £500. For each transaction the details that should be published remain as set out in paragraph 29. • publish the total amount spent on remuneration over the period being reported on. • classify purpose of expenditure using the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Service Reporting Code of Practice to enable comparability between local authorities.

Information title	Information which must be published	Information recommended for publication
Government Procurement Card transactions	Quarterly publication Publish details of every transaction on a Government Procurement Card. For each transaction, the following details must be published: • date of the transaction • local authority department which incurred the expenditure • beneficiary • amount • Value Added Tax that cannot be recovered • summary of the purpose of the expenditure • merchant category (eg. computers, software etc).	• Publish all transactions on all corporate credit cards, charge cards and procurements, including those that are not a Government Procurement Card. For each transaction the details that should be published remain as set out in paragraph 30.
Procurement information	Quarterly publication Publish details of every invitation to tender for contracts to provide goods and/or services with a value that exceeds £5,000. For each invitation, the following details must be published: • reference number • title • description of the goods and/or services sought • start, end and review dates • local authority department responsible. Quarterly publication Publish details of any contract, commissioned activity, purchase order, framework agreement and any other legally enforceable agreement with a value that exceeds £5,000. For each contract, the following details must be published: • reference number • title of agreement • local authority department responsible	Place on Contracts Finder, as well as any other local portal, every invitation to tender or invitation to quote for contracts to provide goods and/or services with a value that exceeds £10,000. Publish: • information on a monthly instead of quarterly basis, or ideally, as soon as it is generated and therefore becomes available (commonly known as 'real-time' publication) • every invitation to tender for contracts to provide goods and/or services with a value that exceeds £500 instead of £5,000 • details of invitations to quote where there has not been a formal invitation to tender • all contracts in their entirety where the value of the contract exceeds £5,000

Information title	Information which must be published	Information recommended for publication
	• description of the goods and/or services being provided • supplier name and details • sum to be paid over the length of the contract or the estimated annual spending or budget for the contract • Value Added Tax that cannot be recovered • start, end and review dates • whether or not the contract was the result of an invitation to quote or a published invitation to tender • whether or not the supplier is a small or medium sized enterprise and/or a voluntary or community sector organisation and where it is, provide the relevant registration number.	• company registration number at Companies House • details of invitations to tender or invitations to quote that are likely to be issued in the next twelve months • details of the geographical (eg. by ward) coverage of contracts entered into by the local authority • details of performance against contractual key performance indicators • information disaggregated by voluntary and community sector category (eg. whether it is registered with Companies House, charity or charitable incorporated organisation, community interest company, industrial and provident society, housing association, etc).
Local authority land	Annual publication Publish details of all land and building assets including: • all service and office properties occupied or controlled by user bodies, both freehold and leasehold • any properties occupied or run under Private Finance Initiative contracts • all other properties they own or use, for example, hostels, laboratories, investment properties and depots • garages unless rented as part of a housing tenancy agreement • surplus, sublet or vacant properties • undeveloped land • serviced or temporary offices where contractual or actual occupation exceeds three months • all future commitments, for example under an agreement for lease, from when the contractual commitment is made.	Publish information on a monthly instead of annual basis, or ideally, as soon as it becomes available and therefore known to the authority (commonly known as 'real-time' publication). It is also recommended that local authorities should publish all the information possible on Electronic Property Information Mapping Service. Publish the following additional information: • the size of the asset measured in Gross Internal Area (m^2) for buildings or hectares for land, in accordance with the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors Code of Measuring Practice. The Gross Internal Area is the area of a building measured to the internal face of the perimeter walls at

Information title	Information which must be published	Information recommended for publication
	However, information about the following land and building assets are to be excluded from publication: • rent free properties provided by traders (such as information booths in public places or ports) • operational railways and canals • operational public highways (but any adjoining land not subject to public rights should be included) • assets of national security • information deemed inappropriate for public access as a result of data protection and/or disclosure controls (eg. such as refuge houses). Information on social housing is also excluded from this specific dataset. For each land or building asset, the following information must be published together in one place: • Unique Property Reference Number • Unique asset identity - the local reference identifier used by the local body, sometimes known as local name or building block. There should be one entry per asset or user/owner (eg. on one site there could be several buildings or in one building there could be several users, floors/rooms etc – where this is the case, each of these will have a separate asset identity). This must include the original reference number from the data source plus authority code • name of the building/land or both • street number or numbers - any sets of 2 or more numbers should be separated with the '-' symbol (eg. 10-15 London Road) • street name – this is the postal road address • post town	each floor level. Local authorities using Net Internal Area (m^2) should convert measurements to Gross Internal Area using appropriate conversion factors and state the conversion factor used • the services offered from the asset, using the services listed in the Effective Services Delivery government service function list http://doc.esd.org.uk/FunctionList/1.00.html (listing up to five main services) • the reason for holding asset such as, it is occupied by the local authority or it is providing a service in its behalf, it is an investment property, it supports economic development (eg. provision of small businesses or incubator space), it is surplus to the authority's requirements, it is awaiting development, it is under construction, it provides infrastructure or it is a community asset • whether or not the asset is either one which is an asset in the authority's ownership that is listed under Part 5 Chapter 3 of the Localism Act 2011 (assets of community value) and/or an asset where the authority is actively seeking transfer to the community • total building operation (revenue) costs as defined in the corporate value for money indicators for public services

Information title	Information which must be published	Information recommended for publication
	• United Kingdom postcode • map reference – local authorities may use either Ordnance Survey or ISO6709 systems to identify the location of an asset, but must make clear which is being used. Where an Ordnance Survey mapping system is used (the grid system) then assets will be identified using Eastings before Northings. Where geocoding in accordance with ISO 6709 is being used to identify the centre point of the asset location then that reference must indicate its ISO coordinates • whether the local authority owns the freehold or a lease for the asset and for whichever category applies, the local authority must list all the characteristics that apply from the options given below: *for freehold assets:* ○ occupied by the local authority ○ ground leasehold ○ leasehold ○ licence ○ vacant (for vacant properties, local authorities should not publish the full address details and should only publish the first part of the postcode) *for leasehold assets:* ○ occupied by the local authority ○ ground leasehold ○ sub leasehold ○ licence *for other assets:* ○ free text description eg. rights of way, access etc. • whether or not the asset is land only (without permanent buildings) or it is land with a permanent building.	• required maintenance - the cost to bring the property from its present state up to the state reasonably required by the authority to deliver the service and/or to meet statutory or contract obligations and maintain it at that standard. This should exclude improvement projects but include works necessary to comply with new legislation (eg. asbestos and legionella) • functional suitability rating using the scale: ○ good – performing well and operating efficiently (supports the needs of staff and the delivery of services) ○ satisfactory – performing well but with minor problems (generally supports the needs of staff and the delivery of services) ○ poor – showing major problems and/or not operating optimally (impedes the performance off staff and/or the delivery of services) ○ unsuitable – does not support or actually impedes the delivery of services • energy performance rating as stated on the Display Energy Certificate under the Energy Performance of Buildings (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

Information title	Information which must be published	Information recommended for publication
Social housing asset value	Annual publication Publish details on the value of social housing assets within local authorities' Housing Revenue Account. Information to be published using the specified value bands and postal sector: • total number of homes • the aggregate value and mean value of the dwellings for both existing use value (social housing) and market value, and • percentage of homes that are vacant and that are tenanted. Information to be published at a general level: • an explanation of the difference between the tenanted sale value of homes within the Housing Revenue Account and their market sale value, and • an assurance that the publication of this information is not intended to suggest that tenancies should end to realise the market value of properties. Other residential tenanted properties that the authority may hold within their General Fund are excluded from this specific dataset, as is information on other building assets or land that local authorities hold within their Housing Revenue Account.	
Grants to voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations	Annual publication Publish details of all grants to voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations. This can be achieved by either: • tagging and hence specifically identifying transactions which relate to voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations within published data on expenditure over £500 or published procurement information, or • by publishing a separate list or register.	• Publish information on a monthly instead of annual basis where payments are made more frequently than a single annual payment, or ideally, as soon as the data becomes available and therefore known to the authority (commonly known as 'real-time' publication).

Information title	Information which must be published	Information recommended for publication
	For each identified grant, the following information must be published as a minimum: • date the grant was awarded • time period for which the grant has been given • local authority department which awarded the grant • beneficiary • beneficiary's registration number • summary of the purpose of the grant • amount	• information disaggregated by voluntary and community sector category (eg. whether it is registered with Companies House, charity or charitable incorporated organisation, community interest company, industrial and provident society, housing association etc).
Organisation chart	Annual publication Publish an organisation chart covering staff in the top three levels of the organisation. The following information must be included for each member of staff included in the chart: • grade • job title • local authority department and team • whether permanent or temporary staff • contact details • salary in £5,000 brackets, consistent with the details published for Senior Salaries • salary ceiling (the maximum salary for the grade).	Local authorities should publish: • charts including all employees in the local authority whose salary exceeds £50,000 • the salary band for each employee included in the chart(s) • information about current vacant posts, or signpost vacancies that are going to be advertised in the future.
Trade union facility time	Annual publication Publish the following information: • total number (absolute number and full time equivalent) of staff who are union representatives (including general, learning and health and safety representatives) • total number (absolute number and full time equivalent) of union representatives who devote at least 50 per cent of their time to union duties • names of all trade unions represented in the local authority	

Information title	Information which must be published	Information recommended for publication
	• a basic estimate of spending on unions (calculated as the number of full time equivalent days spent on union duties multiplied by the average salary), and • a basic estimate of spending on unions as a percentage of the total pay bill (calculated as the number of full time equivalent days spent on union duties multiplied by the average salary divided by the total pay bill).	
Parking account	Annual publication Publish on their website, or place a link on their website to this data published elsewhere: • a breakdown of income and expenditure on the authority's parking account. The breakdown of income must include details of revenue collected from on-street parking, off-street parking and Penalty Charge Notices • a breakdown of how the authority has spent a surplus on its parking account.	
Parking spaces	Annual publication Publish the number of marked out controlled on and off-street parking spaces within their area, or an estimate of the number of spaces where controlled parking space is not marked out in individual parking bays or spaces.	Local authorities should publish the number of: • free parking spaces available in the local authority's area and which are provided directly by the local authority, and • parking spaces where charges apply that are available in the local authority's area and which are provided directly by the local authority. Where parking space is not marked out in individual parking bays or spaces, local authorities should estimate the number of spaces available for the two categories.

Information title	Information which must be published	Information recommended for publication
Senior salaries	Annual publication Local authorities must place a link on their website to the following data or must place the data itself on their website: • the number of employees whose remuneration in that year was at least £50,000 in brackets of £5,000 • details of remuneration and job title of certain senior employees whose salary is at least £50,000 • employees whose salaries are £150,000 or more must also be identified by name. • a list of responsibilities (for example, the services and functions they are responsible for, budget held and number of staff) and details of bonuses and 'benefits in kind', for all employees whose salary exceeds £50,000.	
Constitution	Annual publication Local authorities must publish their Constitution on their website.	
Pay multiple	Annual publication Publish the pay multiple on their website defined as the ratio between the highest taxable earnings for the given year (including base salary, variable pay, bonuses, allowances and the cash value of any benefits-in-kind) and the median earnings figure of the whole of the authority's workforce. The measure must: • cover all elements of remuneration that can be valued (eg. all taxable earnings for the given year, including base salary, variable pay, bonuses, allowances and the cash value of any benefits-in-kind) • use the median earnings figure as the denominator, which should be that of all employees of the local authority on a fixed date each year, coinciding with reporting at the end of the financial year • exclude changes in pension benefits, which due to their variety and complexity cannot be accurately included in a pay multiple disclosure.	

Information title	Information which must be published	Information recommended for publication
Fraud	Annual publication Publish the following information: • number of occasions they use powers under the Prevention of Social Housing Fraud (Power to Require Information) (England) Regulations 2014, or similar powers • total number (absolute and full time equivalent) of employees undertaking investigations and prosecutions of fraud • total number (absolute and full time equivalent) of professionally accredited counter fraud specialists • total amount spent by the authority on the investigation and prosecution of fraud • total number of fraud cases investigated.	Local authorities should publish: • total number of cases of irregularity investigated • total number of occasions on which a) fraud and b) irregularity was identified • total monetary value of a) the fraud and b) the irregularity that was detected, and • total monetary value of a) the fraud and b) the irregularity that was recovered.
Waste contracts	One-off publication Local authorities must publish details of their existing waste collection contracts, in line with the details contained in paragraphs 32 of the Code, at the point they first publish quarterly contract information under Part 2 of this Code.	

Annex B: Detecting and preventing fraud

Tackling fraud is an integral part of ensuring that tax-payers money is used to protect resources for frontline services. The cost of fraud to local government is estimated at £2.1 billion a year. This is money that can be better used to support the delivery of front line services and make savings for local tax payers.

A culture of transparency should strengthen counter-fraud controls. The Code makes it clear that fraud can thrive where decisions are not open to scrutiny and details of spending, contracts and service provision are hidden from view. Greater transparency, and the provisions in this Code, can help combat fraud.

Sources of support to tackle fraud include:

Fighting Fraud Locally, The Local Government Fraud Strategy (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/118508/strategy-document.pdf), was drafted by the National Fraud Authority and CIPFA (the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy). The document calls for the adoption of a tougher approach to tackle fraud against local authorities. The strategy is part of a wider collaboration on counter fraud and is the local authority contribution to the national fraud strategy – *Fighting Fraud Together* (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nfa-fighting-fraud-together) which encompasses both the public and private sectors response to fraud in the UK.

Local authorities should use a risk management approach with strong internal control arrangements to reduce the risk of any payment fraud as a result of publishing public data. Local authorities should refer to the *Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Code of Practice on Managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption* (http://www.cipfa.org/services/counter-fraud-centre/code-of-practice). The document sets out a step by step toolkit to tackling fraud: identifying and understanding your fraud risks and potential exposure to fraud loss; assessing current resilience to fraud; evaluating the organisation's ability to respond to potential or identified fraud; and developing a strategy. Developing an anti-fraud culture is an important part of improving resilience; the benefits of improving resilience to fraud include reduced exposure to fraud and an organisation that is better able to identify attempted frauds or vulnerabilities.

The National Fraud Authority have produced a guide on procurement fraud, *Procurement Fraud in the Public Sector*, (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/118460/procurement-fraud-public-sector.pdf) which deals with the whole process, from bidding during the pre-contract award phase through to false invoicing in the post-contract award phase.

There are some specific steps local authorities can take to prevent procurement fraud. These might include:

- only accepting requests for changes to supplier standing data in writing

- seeking confirmation from the supplier that the requested changes are genuine, using contact details held on the vendor data file or from previous and legitimate correspondence; and not contacting the supplier via contact details provided on the letter requesting the changes
- ensuring that there is segregation of duties between those who authorise changes and those who make them
- only authorising changes when all appropriate checks have been carried out with legitimate suppliers and only making the changes when the proper authorisations to do so have been given
- maintaining a suitable audit trail to ensure that a history of all transactions and changes is kept
- producing reports of all changes made to supplier standing data and checking that the changes were valid and properly authorised before any payments are made
- carrying out standard checks on invoices before making any payments, and
- regularly verifying the correctness of standing data with suppliers.

Annex C: Social housing asset data to be published

Postal Sector	Valuation Band Range	Intervening bands	Dwellings value					Tenure status	
			Total number social housing dwellings	EUV-SH Values		Market Values		% occupied dwellings	% vacant dwellings
				Total	Average	Total	Average		
PO1 1**	<£50,000 - £99,999	<£50,000							
		£50,000 - £59,999							
		£60,000 - £69,999							
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CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH FIRE AUTHORITY

Internal Audit Progress Report

9 October 2024

CONTENTS

Appendices

KEY MESSAGES

The internal audit plan for 2024/25 was approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the 22 April 2024 meeting. This report provides an update on progress against the plan and summarises the results of our work to date.

We have issued two reports in final in the areas of Procurement and Management Recruitment Framework. In addition, one piece of work is currently in progress in line with our agreed internal audit plan.

Details of the progress made against the internal audit plan are included at Appendix A.

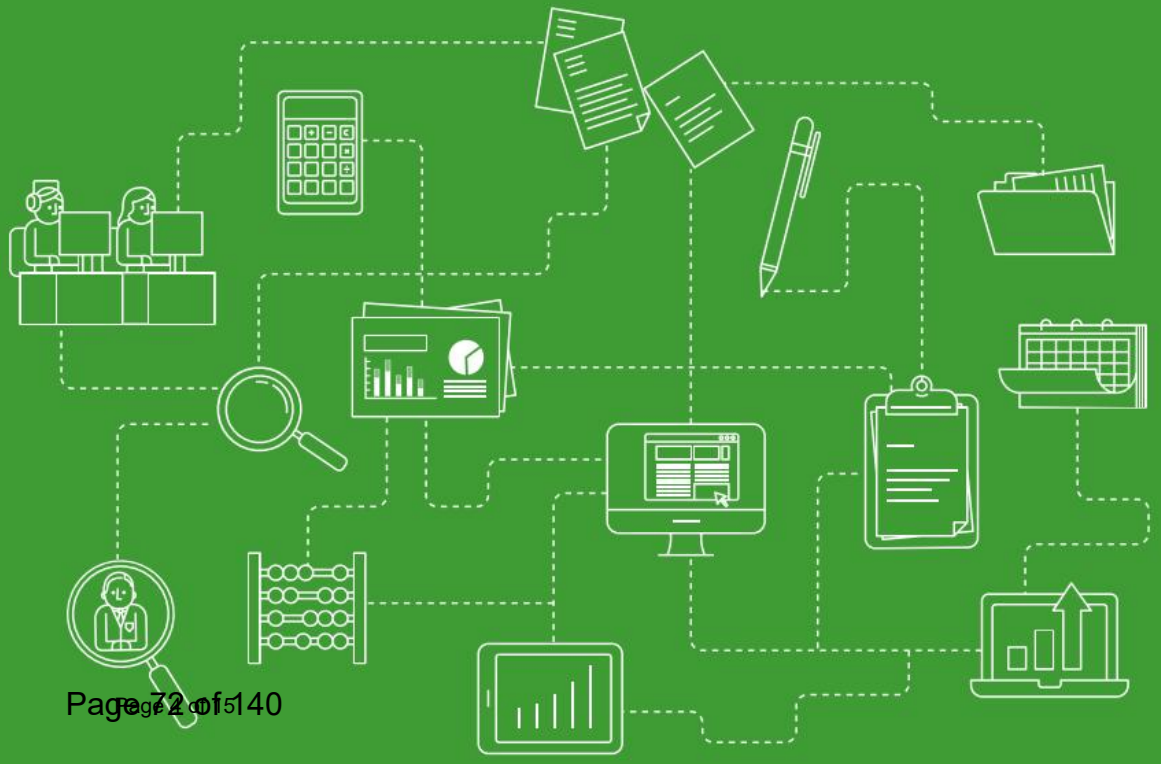
Communications

We have issued three communications in the areas of:

- Risk Radar
- Emergency services - benchmarking of internal audit findings 2023/24
- Emergency Services News Briefing – August 2024

Appendices

02



APPENDIX A: PROGRESS AGAINST THE INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2024/25

The reports finalised since the last Committee are highlighted in **bold** below.

Assignment	Status / Opinion issued	Actions agreed			
		A	L	M	H
2023/24					
Procurement	**Final – Reasonable Assurance**	**0**	**2**	**1**	**0**
2024/25					
Medium Term Financial Plan	Final – Substantial Assurance	0	2	0	0
Management Recruitment	**Final – Substantial Assurance**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**
IT Assets	In Progress				
Key Financial Controls	To commence 14 October 2024				
Control System	To commence 6 January 2025				
Culture	To commence 29 January 2025				
Follow Up	To commence 25 February 2025				
Asset and Fleet Management	To commence 3 March 2025				

APPENDIX B: OTHER MATTERS

Head of Internal Audit Opinion

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee should note that the assurances given in our audit assignments are included within our Annual Assurance report.

Changes to the audit plan

There have been no changes to the plan since the last meeting.

Information and briefings

Since the last Audit Committee meeting, we have issued the following briefings:

Risk Radar

This publication identifies emerging risk themes for the organisation to consider

Emergency services - benchmarking of internal audit findings 2023/24

This paper provides a benchmark for our individual clients, allowing for self-assessment against all of our emergency services (ES) clients.

Emergency services briefing August 2024

In this edition of our news briefing, we draw attention to some of the key developments and publications in the sector, with particular focus on the annual assessment of policing and the new internal governance and assurance fire standard.

Quality assurance and continual improvement

To ensure that RSM remains compliant with the PSIAS framework we have a dedicated internal Quality Assurance Team who undertake a programme of reviews to ensure the quality of our audit assignments. This is applicable to all Heads of Internal Audit, where a sample of their clients will be reviewed. Any findings from these reviews are used to inform the training needs of our audit teams. As part of the Quality Assessment and Improvement Programme, none of your files were selected for Internal Quality Monitoring programme during 2023/24. From the results of the reviews undertaken across our client base, there are no areas which we believe warrant flagging to your attention as impacting on the quality of the service we provide to you.

In addition to this, any feedback we receive from our post assignment surveys, client feedback, appraisal processes and training needs assessments is also taken into consideration to continually improve the service we provide and inform any training requirements.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT

Suzanne Rowlett, Head of Internal Audit

Email: suzanne.rowlett@rsmuk.com
Telephone: 07720 508148

Louise Davies, Manager

Email: louise.davies@rsmuk.com
Telephone: 07720 508146

rsmuk.com

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - PROCUREMENT

Why we completed this audit

We have undertaken an audit of Procurement at Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority in line with the organisations internal audit plan for 2023/24. The purpose of the audit was to assess the effectiveness of the procurement process in place for the purchase of goods and services through contracts awarded via tender and quotations, and how the organisation ensures that value for money is considered.

The organisation currently has in place a Commercial Awareness Strategy and a Procurement Strategy, both of which are out of date pending the implementation of the new Procurement Act in October 2024, although both current documents will remain in place until a new single Procurement Strategy has been published. At this point, these will be combined into a single Procurement Strategy, which has been drafted and will be amended accordingly when the new Legislation update is received. Contracts are procured in line with these strategies and signed off at the appropriate level.

The organisations' Contracts Register is maintained on an excel spreadsheet and capture the key details for each active contract. The contracts register also provides details for each contract of the contract owner and the method of procurement e.g. tender process, quotations or by a direct award.

The organisation has a Commercial Team who help facilitate the procurement process to ensure the correct procurement method is utilised.

Conclusion

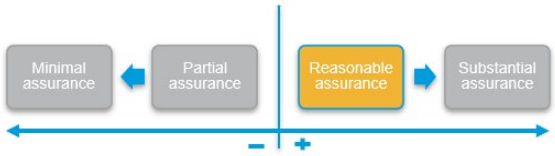
Overall, we found that the organisation had well-established and applied processes for procurement. This was supported by the documentation for each of the sample of contracts chosen. We also reviewed a sample of 10 payments made and confirmed that procurement rules were complied with and that adequate documentation was produced demonstrating that the process had been followed. There are also a number of detailed training slides covering various procurement areas to help guide staff. Though there is no separate Procurement Policy, the Procurement Strategy includes a clear flowchart detailing the processes to be followed. A similar flowchart has also been published on the Intranet.

We were however informed that the Procurement Strategy had not been updated as the new Procurement Legislation is expected to supersede the old one and has many amendments. As such the Procurement Strategy will be updated in line with the new legislation in October 2024.

Internal audit opinion:

Taking account of the issues identified, the Authority can take reasonable assurance that the controls upon which the organisation relies to manage this risk are suitably designed, consistently applied and effective.

However, we have identified issues that need to be addressed in order to ensure that the control framework is effective in managing the identified risk(s).



Key findings

We identified the following weaknesses and issues, resulting in the agreement of one medium priority management action. Two further low priority actions were also agreed, which are included in the detailed findings section below:

Commercial Awareness Strategy and Procurement Strategy:

We confirmed through the review that the procurement strategies are out of date and will remain in place until the new Procurement Strategy has been published. Review of the strategies confirmed they included all relevant areas and though out of date, the replacement strategy has already been drafted by the Authority. When the new Procurement Strategy is finalised, it will incorporate both the above strategies into one and the Commercial Awareness Strategy will cease to exist.

We reviewed the Procurement Strategy and confirmed that roles and responsibilities regarding procurement have not been defined and as such there is a risk that the correct procurement process will not be followed. In addition, when reviewing both these documents, we found that both strategies do not give details such as the date it was last reviewed, the forum where the strategies were approved and the author of the strategy. As the strategies are going to be reviewed, this is an opportunity to include this information as good practice. **(Medium)**

The following controls were found to be well designed and operating effectively:

Procurement Procedure:

Review confirmed the organisation does not currently have any operational guidance regarding the procurement process. Discussion with the Head of Commercial and Business Support identified that this was due to the requirement for any procurement to be discussed with the procurement team, regardless of value, to ensure the correct process is followed. There is however a flowchart as one of the appendices to the Procurement Policy and also a procurement procedure flowchart has been published on the Intranet which provide guidance on the process to be followed.

Procurement Route:

We confirmed through our review of the contracts register that the contracts have been a combination of direct award, quotes or a full tender process. Testing on a sample of five contracts from the contracts register confirmed that the correct process had been followed through direct award, quotes or a full tender.

Compliance with Strategy and procedures:

We confirmed that each year the organisation holds a procurement planning day where the contracts register is reviewed to confirm which contracts are coming up for renewal in the next 12 months to 5 years. Following this, the Head of Commercial and Business Support, alongside the area commanders, will discuss the contracts that have been identified through the contracts register as requiring renewal, both in the next 12 months as well as long term. They are also asked at this point to identify any other contracts on the horizon that they are aware of. This was confirmed by review of a paper to the Policy and Resource Committee 26 April 2023 where the pipeline for the year was included as an Appendix for review.

In addition, all services are requested to contact the procurement service when they have to procure good and services, regardless of the value of the contract. We confirmed through our review that the Procurement Strategy has a flowchart as an appendix, which gives the procurement process to be followed. In addition, the organisation also has a flowchart that is published on the intranet.

Testing undertaken throughout this review confirmed that procurement is regularly discussed

Governance Structure:

Review of the minutes for the Policy and Resource Committee for the month of April 2023, and October 2023 confirmed that an annual update on the 2022-23 procurement activities was provided along with the plans for 2023/24. The paper 'Transforming Public Procurement' was also presented detailing some of the expected key changes to the Public Procurement Regulations, the expected timescales and preparation for these. In addition, a report was also provided detailing the efficiencies that had been gained due to the procurement processes followed. The members requested that waivers also be published by the organisation.

No report was provided to the October 2023 meeting, however, there was information in the Action log regarding commercial activity. This lists the action that was requested by the members regarding waivers information to be published. This was provided by the procurement service.

As part of the governance structure a Project Board is in place for each project. From our sample of five contracts, one was classified as a project (Occupational Health Contract), we confirmed the Project Board will have their first meeting on 11 March 2024, as such no testing could be carried out. However, the project brief was approved in September 2023 and evidence for this was provided.

Purchases - Compliance with Financial Regulations:

For procurements between £5,000 and £25,000 a minimum of three quotations should be obtained, those over £25,000 should be subject to a formal tender exercise. Testing undertaken on a sample of 10 invoices (five over £25,000 and five between £5000- £25,000) confirmed that:

- For the five invoices that were over the £25,000 where a tender was required, no issues were identified.
- For the five invoices that were between £5,000 and £24,999 where quotes were required, only one minor exception was noted as detailed in Section 2 below

In addition, for those where an exemption was required (three instances), this was in place and had been appropriately approved.

Procurement Training

Review of the Commercial Awareness training slides confirmed that the training slides include adequate information and cover areas such as contract management, evaluation, innovation, New Procurement bill, overview of proposed changes, pre market engagement, procurement principles, specifications, value for money and leadership day. We were informed at the time of the audit that the commercial awareness training documents are currently being reviewed and updated in light of the introduction of the new Procurement Act. Other training is provided as required.

Procurement - Financial Regulations:

Review confirmed that the Financial Regulations state:

5.1. All procurement of goods and services shall take place in accordance with the Fire Authority's Standing Orders in relation to Contracts, including compliance with EU directives. No further information is included within the Financial Regulations. Review of the Procurement Strategy confirmed that information regarding limits of the contract and the action necessary (eg. tender process, quotes etc.) has been included, as well as the flowchart that has been published on the Intranet.

We confirmed through the review of ten invoices that appropriate action had been taken in respect of compliance with the procurement process when establishing the procurement route

Roles and Responsibilities - Procurement Team:

We reviewed the document called 'Welcome to the Commercial Team'. This document details the roles of the members of the procurement team and the areas of their expertise. It also gives the thresholds for procurement and what action is necessary.

Key Supplier Dependencies:

We obtained copies of the Tactical Risk Register, Strategic Risk Register and Commercial Risk Tracker. We confirmed through our review that the Tactical Risk Register does not have any risks that have been listed regarding the Key supplier dependencies. We also reviewed the Strategic Risk Register and confirmed that there was one risk, which sits at score 6 on it that relates to Key Supplier Dependencies.

In addition, the Commercial Team had produced a document for internal use to facilitate contract management process to ensure that all risks have been checked and mitigated.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND ACTIONS

This report has been prepared by exception Therefore, we have included in this section, only those areas of weakness in control or examples of lapses in control identified from our testing and not the outcome of all internal audit testing undertaken.

Management Action 2	The Procurement Strategy will be updated to include the roles and responsibilities regarding procurement, both for individual services as well as the procurement service.	**Responsible Owner:** Tracey Stradling	**Date:** 30 September 2024	**Priority:** Medium

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AUDIT OUTCOME OVERVIEW – MANAGEMENT RECRUITMENT FRAMEWORK

Background: We have undertaken a review of Management Recruitment Framework as part of our annual internal audit plan for 2024/25. The HMICFRS inspection of Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service in 2023 rated the Service as requiring improvement under the head of 'Managing performance and developing leaders'. An area for improvement (AFI) was identified, stating that the Service should do more to make sure staff see promotion processes as transparent and fair. This related to roles at the Group Commander (GC) level and above. The Service subsequently included actions in their People Plan to ensure the AFI is addressed, and has introduced clear and documented processes and procedures to ensure the transparency and fairness of their management recruitment processes. All essential documentation completed as part of the recruitment cycle is retained within Sharefile. In particular, the Service has been careful to ensure clear and transparent internal communications relating to senior vacancies, which are provided to all relevant groups within the organisation, and which clearly set out the recruitment and selection process that will be followed.

Conclusion: We confirmed that the Service has a robust People Plan in place with clear, SMART actions established to address the AFI in relation to management recruitment. Actions have clear owners and deadlines assigned. We reviewed all four senior recruitments at GC level and above (including support equivalents) in the 12 months leading up to our audit. For each of these, we confirmed there had been clear and transparent communications to eligible candidates, clearly setting out the recruitment and selection process. Appropriate job descriptions and person specifications were in place in each case, the requirements of which had been used as scoring criteria in the shortlisting and selection processes. Documentation had been retained demonstrating the robustness of the shortlisting and interview processes, as well as of feedback received from independent external assessors. Selection panels included an appropriate mix of assessors, including representation by the Head of People in each instance. We did note one area of weakness whereby no evidence had been retained of constructive feedback provided to unsuccessful internal candidates.

Internal audit opinion:

Taking account of the issues identified, the Authority can take substantial assurance that the controls upon which the organisation relies to manage this risk are suitably designed, consistently applied and effective.

Audit themes:

- **Feedback to unsuccessful candidates.** For the sample of four senior recruitments, we sought to confirm that constructive feedback had been given to unsuccessful internal candidates with suggested areas for development. No evidence of such feedback was retained on file. We were advised this would be given verbally. However, in the absence of retained, documented evidence, the Service may be unable to demonstrate transparency in the process. **(Medium)**

Good practice:

- **Actions to address HMICFRS Area for Improvement.** We confirmed that the Service has a CRMP People Plan in place, which includes specific actions aligned to the AFI relating to recruitment and the level of perceived transparency in this process. The Head of People was recorded as the action owner, and there was a clear timeline for the implementation of the actions. Progress against AFI actions is monitored through Senior Leadership Team meetings via the Strategic Performance Update reports. We reviewed the SLT meeting papers for January, April, and July 2024, confirming that this report was on the agenda for each meeting, that it contained a clear progress update in relation to the recruitment actions, and that it had been reviewed through the meeting.
- **Internal communications: process.** We reviewed a sample of four senior vacancies at permanent GC+ and support equivalent levels in the 12 months prior to audit. We sought to confirm in the first instance that internal communications had been issued to all relevant individuals regarding the vacancy and the process for applying for that role. In three instances, we confirmed internal emails had been sent to the relevant email groups for each role, and that these were transparent in describing the vacancy and the process for application. We confirmed all relevant documentation was retained on Sharefile. In the fourth instance, no internal communications had been issued as no-one had been identified as eligible internally. We confirmed that the external vacancy advertising documentation had been retained on Sharefile and was transparent in terms of the process.
- **Internal communications: outcome.** We also sought to confirm that communications relating to the outcome of the recruitment process had been issued, and that these were transparent concerning the outcome. We confirmed that in three instances, there was clear evidence of appropriate communication held on file. In the fourth instance, there had been no communications as this related to an extension to a temporary role and not a substantive appointment.
- **Job descriptions and person specifications.** For the sample of four roles noted above, we confirmed that clear documented job descriptions and person specifications were in place and retained on Sharefile. We confirmed through inspection of candidate shortlisting and interview documentation that selection scoring criteria was aligned to the job descriptions and person specifications.
- **Shortlisting process.** For the sample of four roles, we confirmed that shortlisting scoring matrices had been utilised as part of the shortlisting processes. Scoring was aligned to the job role and person specification. Each matrix clearly indicated the outcome of the shortlisting process and had been retained on Sharefile.
- **Use of external assessors.** For the sample of four recruitments, we confirmed that, in each case, at least one independent external assessor had been involved in the selection process, and had completed a feedback form documenting their observations of that process. We confirmed this documentation was held on Sharefile.
- **Interview process and colleague panels.** We reviewed interview documentation completed by members of the selection panel for each of the recruitments in our sample. We confirmed that the selection panels included an appropriate mix of assessors, including the Head of People in each instance. We confirmed that standardised interview forms were completed which were aligned to the candidate scoring criteria, and that these were signed off by the interviewer in each instance. In addition, the candidate with the highest score was consistently the one appointed.

SUMMARY OF MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

The action priorities are defined as*:

High	Medium	Low
Immediate management attention is necessary.	Timely management attention is necessary.	There is scope for enhancing control or improving efficiency.

Ref	Action	Priority	Responsible Owner	Date
1	We will ensure that any constructive feedback provided to unsuccessful internal candidates is clearly documented and retained on Sharefile along with other recruitment documentation.	Medium	Recruitment Partner	Will be implemented in time for next senior recruitment round

TO: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

FROM: Deputy Chief Fire Officer – Jon Anderson

PRESENTING OFFICER(S): Deputy Chief Fire Officer – Jon Anderson

Telephone 01480 444619
jon.anderson@cambsfire.gov.uk

DATE: 9 October 2024

DRAFT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2023/24

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with a draft Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2023/24 for scrutiny and comment.

2. Recommendations

2.1 In accordance with the current Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority Terms of Reference, the Committee is asked to;

2.1.1 scrutinise the AGS, attached at Appendix 1 and make comment as appropriate,
2.1.2 recommend to the Authority that the AGS is approved 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 Timely, high quality financial reporting and the audit of local bodies is a vital part of our democratic system supporting good decision making and ensuring accountability and transparency. Following the general election our external auditor, Ernst and Young LLP, is awaiting guidance from the Department for Levelling-up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)*, the National Audit Office and CIPFA what the priorities of the new Government and their intentions for local government financial reporting and audit requirements will be.

5.6 An audit planning report for year ending 31 March 2024 was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee by Ernst and Young LLP on 25 July 2024 (Minute 91 refers); the Authority will work closely with the external auditor to ensure compliance with any deadlines once known.

5.7 Significant issues that may affect governance of the Authority are covered in Paragraphs 5 and 6 of Appendix 1.

* DLUHC previously laid a Statutory Instrument (2022 No. 708) detailing 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.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Documents	Location	Contact Officer
Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework 2016 (CIPFA/SOLACE) Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (as amended) CIPFA Financial Management Code 2019 CIPFA Bulletins 13, 14, 16 and 17 Overview and Scrutiny Committee Minutes 25 July 2024	Hinchingbrooke Cottage Brampton Road Huntingdon	Jon Anderson Deputy Chief Fire Officer 01480 444619 jon.anderson@cambsfire.gov.uk

CAMBRIDGESHIRE
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE
Working together to improve community safety

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2023/24

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 /Chief Executive 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 2024 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 Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). The CRMP 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 Strategic Leadership Team and the CRMP 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 (2022).

- 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 the Strategic Leadership Team.

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, Ernst and Young LLP, also 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 Policy and Resources Committee have approved the reviewed strategy and policy.

Our internal auditors have conducted 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 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.

Significant Governance Issues for 2023/24

During the reporting period five assurance assignments were completed by RSM with positive assurance being taken from the reviews of key financial controls (implementation of the new finance system), procurement and medium-term financial planning,

Although RSM did not consider the issues raised within the following two areas were significant, the Service will take action to address the issues raised in their reporting.

- **Contaminants and staff health and safety** – this was an area known to require improvements as, at the start of the reporting period, the Service had not developed a strategy identifying its vision and aims in relation to contaminants and a comprehensive action plan had not been produced identifying the necessary short and medium term actions required to reduce the risk of contaminants. There were also gaps in provided training, assurance mechanisms for policy compliance and processes relating to employee medicals, PPE adjustments and health and safety reporting.

- **Estates utilisation** – although some data is being collated to help determine utilisation overall the Service could improve its data capture and processes to inform and improve the utilisation of the entire estate by both internal and external stakeholders.

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, the Service continued to work with Systel (supplier) and on 12 September 2024 successfully went 'live' with the new mobilising system. At the time of writing the future of the collaboration remains unclear.

- **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'. Cognisant

of adverse publicity about culture elsewhere in the sector we have continued to work hard to promote the right values, ensuring fairness and promoting diversity.

- **Financial Climate** – we will continue to monitor the impact of pay awards and the general landscape updating our Financial Business Continuity Plan accordingly. The Authority has and will continue to lobby government regarding fairer funding formulas.

- **Sector Developments** – in early September 2024, the Panel in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry published its final report into the tragedy; the Service is currently reviewing the findings and will take any appropriate action necessary to ensure public safety. We will also continue to monitor the progress of central government consultations into fire sector reform.

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 will continue to review 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.

Matthew Warren
Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive Officer
Date: 19 December 2024

Councillor E Murphy
Chair Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority
Date: 19 December 2024

TO: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

FROM: Chief Fire Officer - Matthew Warren

PRESENTING OFFICER(S): Assistant Director Communication and Engagement – Hayley Douglas

Telephone 01480 444500
hayley.douglas@cambsfire.gov.uk

DATE: 9 October 2024

DRAFT FIRE AUTHORITY ANNUAL REPORT AND STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE 2023/24

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the draft Annual Report and Statement of Assurance 2023/24 for approval.

2. Recommendation

2.1 The Committee is asked to review and approve the draft Annual Report and Statement of Assurance 2023/24, attached at Appendix 1, subject to the additions highlighted in Paragraph 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 Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 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 2023/24. This version will be published on the Service's website, subject to Authority approval, as it meets the requirements under The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018. A designed, accessible PDF version, containing photos and infographics, will also be published on the website in the coming weeks once this has been completed.

4.3 The report reflects performance against the last year of the Service's 2020/24 integrated

risk management plan. As this is now a web document and not printed, the content has been slimmed down this year as some of the sections that didn't change year on year, such as a summary of the county, have now been made web pages and are linked in the document. An additional section on sustainability has been included this year.

4.4 Some of the audit information in Section 9 (from Page 34) will be updated once we have received the outcome statement from the recent audit.

4.5 In addition to being published on our website, the documents and some of the content will be promoted via our social media channels. The document is no longer printed however if individuals request a hard copy this will be colour printed internally and sent to them.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Documents	**Location**	**Contact Officer**
Fire Authority Planning Documents	Hinchingbrooke Cottage Brampton Road Huntingdon	Hayley Douglas Assistant Director Communication and Engagement 01480 444500 hayley.douglas@cambsfire.gov.uk

Annual Report and Statement of Assurance for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority 2023-2024

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

The report covers the financial year 2023/2024 and summarises our performance over the 12 months, including how we spent public 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. Links to other documents and websites should be clearly identifiable (however these links will be lost if the report is printed).

Contents

1. The year at a glance

Here are some highlights from the year 2023/2024.

April

The Service hosted a school challenge for young people themed around STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics). Groups from schools across the county were given three months to design and build their version of a fire engine, which would deliver water to a model of a house. The teams came together at Huntingdon Fire Station to see who could deliver the most water through their fire engines. They also had to deliver a presentation to a panel about their design. The event also saw the participants take part in a variety of activities including learning about the Service's drone and incident command unit, using a thermal imaging camera to find hidden objects in a training building. They also learnt first aid from the co-responder team at RAF Wittering and received a talk from Cambridgeshire Constabulary.

Two on-call firefighters ran the London Marathon wearing their fire kit, to raise money for The Fire Fighters Charity. Littleport firefighter Tom Bridge-Street and Crew Commander Roland Rimmer from Manea Fire Station tackled the 26-mile run, donning their firefighting personal protective equipment and breathing apparatus, which weighs around 20kg. Together they raised more than £3,000 for the charity.

May

A Cambridgeshire fire officer celebrated four decades of dedicated service to the community. Station Commander Clive Allen reached the incredible milestone of 40 years as an operational firefighter and celebrated with officers and staff at Chatteris Fire Station.

June

As the Service began to look ahead and draft its plan for the next five years, residents and business owners were encouraged to give their views around risk and response to help shape the next Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). A consultation was launched giving people across the county the opportunity to have their say on the future priorities of the Service. More than 1,000 responses were received during the consultation.

A campaign to recruit more wholetime firefighters was launched. Those interested were encouraged to attend information workshops and events to have a go at different firefighting activities, as well as finding out more about the role of a modern-day firefighter.

Messages urging people to take care when charging lithium-ion batteries were promoted following a tragic house fire in Cambridge in which a mother and her two children lost their lives when a charging e-bike battery exploded and caused a fire which spread rapidly.

July

Working with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Vision Zero Partnership, the community fire safety team hosted seminars aimed at Driving for Better Business. The initiative provides tools and resources to help businesses improve their management of work-related road risk and educate their staff about general road safety.

Hundreds of young people were welcomed to fire stations as Safety Zones were held for the first time since the pandemic. More than 300 school children visited St Neots Fire Station over several days, where they were educated on a variety of topics including road safety, CPR, fire safety and staying safe online. A similar event was held in Cambridge a few weeks later.

August

Following an inspection earlier in the year, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) assessed the Service as Outstanding in one of eleven criteria categories. The inspection team gave the Service the highest score possible for how it manages its resources, highlighting innovative practice for its 'comprehensive financial and resourcing plans'. The Service also received six Goods, three Adequates and one Requires Improvement. More information about the inspection can be found on page 39.

September

The Service stepped up its campaign to encourage residents to charge lithium-ion batteries safely by launching a Take Charge and Be Safe campaign to help keep people's homes and families safe from fire. The campaign encouraged people to take some simple safety steps when using electrical devices, especially those with Lithium-Ion batteries, including only charging when awake and alert.

Changes in fire safety legislation were highlighted to local businesses by the Service's Fire Protection team. Officers connected with business owners around the county to explain how the changes to the Fire Safety Order impacted them and what actions they needed to take.

October

Storm Babet hit the county with heavy rain causing a huge spike in 999 calls. The Service's Combined Fire Control received more than 1,500 calls in a 24 hour period across Cambridgeshire and Suffolk, their busiest ever period, which exceeded the summer heatwave of July 2022.

November

Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal officially opened the new Huntingdon Fire Station and Service Training Centre with the unveiling of a plaque. More than 100 people, including colleagues, contractors and local civic dignitaries attended the opening, which included a tour of the facilities and demonstrations by firefighters and training centre instructors showing rope rescue, road traffic collision and large animal rescue techniques.

December

A group of Fenland young people benefitted from fire service training to help develop team working skills, increase self-esteem and confidence, and understanding the consequences of risk-taking decision making as they took part in a Firebreak course. Led by the Service's Community Development Instructors, the group learned first aid skills as well as how to use hose reels, ladders and breathing apparatus, through workshops and drill yard activities. The programme ended with a pass out parade in front of their families, carers and school representatives and well as local councillors and dignitaries.

Cambridge firefighters had a busy Christmas Day as they were called out to several house fires. The crews from red watch responded to a fire in the roof of a house and a fire involving cooking.

January

It was a busy start to the new year with two large house fires in Peterborough and March, both of which needed over 20 firefighters to tackle the fires. Fortunately, there were no casualties involved in either incident.

Excellence and long service were celebrated at the Service's annual awards evening, which took place at the Delta Hotel, Marriott, in Huntingdon. Around 160 people attended and celebrated the achievements of colleagues from across different areas of the Service, highlighting outstanding accomplishments throughout the year.

February

The Service's Training Centre hosted the county's first wholetime firefighter recruits course. The group of six was the first to be trained in the county, saving on travel time and making use of the excellent new facilities at the Training Centre.

More than 50 firefighters from across the county tackled a fire involving solar panels on the roof of a Lidl distribution centre in Peterborough. Thanks to the fast actions of the crews, they not only made sure everyone working on site was kept safe, but also minimised the damage to the building, enabling operations to continue the same day. Lidl was so pleased with the quick and effective actions of the crews, they made a generous donation to The Fire Fighters Charity to show their appreciation.

March

More than 20 firefighters tackled a well-developed fire involving a derelict building in Cambridge. The former Working Men's Club was deliberately set alight, with crews working hard to contain the fire and prevent it from spreading.

2. Forward

Welcome to our annual report and statement of assurance for 2023/2024.

This report looks back over the past financial year, highlighting how we have performed and some of our achievements during that time.

We always enjoy looking back and reflecting on what our employees have achieved across all areas of the Service. We're very proud of the dedicated people we have working for us and it is due to their hard work, continual drive for improvement and commitment to our Service that we continue to be one of the highest-performing fire and rescue services in the country.

Welcoming inspectors from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) at the end of the previous financial year gave us the opportunity to showcase our achievements and continuous improvement journey, and the subsequent report we received in August 2023, is testament to the hard work of everyone who works here. To achieve an 'Outstanding' for the use of resources category was high praise indeed. We are all proud of another positive report and we are already making improvements to the few areas highlighting where we can give more attention and focus to further improve. You can read more about our inspection report on page 39.

A particular highlight of the year for many was welcoming Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal to officially open our new Huntingdon Fire Station and Training Centre in November. It was a fantastic opportunity for everyone who had worked so hard on the project, and those that now work there, to show off the new facilities and some of our equipment and talk about what they do. The visit ended with the unveiling of a plaque by Her Royal Highness to commemorate the occasion. It was a huge honour to receive a royal visit and a fitting reward for everyone involved.

Our new Training Centre has given us greater opportunities to run different courses in-house, saving money in not needing external providers and enabling delegates to stay in county rather than needing to be away from their families for days at a time. For the first time in the Service's 50-year history, we welcomed to the training centre our very first cohort of new wholetime firefighters to receive their initial training course and it was a special moment to watch them pass out on home soil.

Being an emergency service, our crews have to deal with difficult and sometimes tragic incidents. We were all affected by a resident's heartbreaking loss of his wife and their two young children following a house fire in Cambridge in June 2023. The fire was caused by a charging e-bike battery and we have since made the safe charging of lithium-ion batteries a key focus for our community safety messages. The Service also wrote to the coroner too highlight the need for legislation changes, which have been discussed in Parliament and the House of Lords.

As the weather turned in the autumn, our combined fire control colleagues proved yet again that the service they provide is second to none as Storm Babet hit the county. Heavy rain led to a huge increase in 999 calls, with more than 1,500 calls received in a 24-hour period across Cambridgeshire and Suffolk. Once again, our colleagues stood up to the test as they faced their busiest ever period, exceeding the summer heatwave of July 2022.

This year was the last year of our Integrated Risk Management Plan and so a key focus has been data-crunching and researching for a new plan for the next five years. This also involved an engagement exercise with people living and working in Cambridgeshire to help us understand people's expectations with response times, what potential risks concern people more and how much

people know about our services. This information was then used to help inform our final plan. We had over 1,000 responses from the pubic and partner agencies which was a fantastic response and really helpful for us. Our new Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) for 2024-2029 is now published on our website and future annual reports will show how we have progressed against this new plan.

Although this annual report looks back at the financial year 2023/24, it would be remiss of us not to include a special thank you to former chief fire officer Chris Strickland who retired in June this year, while we were compiling this report. Chris had served a commendable 40 years in the fire service and will be sorely missed for his exemplary and inspiring leadership to the Service, driving improvement with courage and empathy during some challenging times. We wish him all the very best for the next chapter of his life.

Thank you to everyone that has supported us over the past year. Whether you've helped by passing us information about a vulnerable resident, sharing a social media post, sent us a thank you message, supported an open day or charity event or made a cup of tea for a hard-working crew at an incident, we are extremely grateful and we really value that support.

We are always looking to celebrate what we do and keep people informed of the great work going on in all parts of the Service. Our social media channels are updated regularly with stories, as well as important safety advice and information. We're across Facebook, X, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok and Nextdoor so follow us to keep up to date with all our latest news and seasonal safety messages.

We hope you enjoy reading this annual report.

Councillor Edna Murphy - Chair of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

Matthew Warren - Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive 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 2023/24 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 13

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 and priorities set out in the new Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).

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 Bryony Goodliffe, John Howard, David Over and Scott Warren during the past year.

We also remember with fondness and respect, Councillor Mac McGuire who sadly passed away in January. Mac had served on the Fire Authority for many years, including as its chair between 1998 and 2007.

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

Councillor	Council	Party	District
Edna Murphy (Chair)	Cambridgeshire County Council	Liberal Democrat	South Cambs
Mike Black	Cambridgeshire County Council	Labour	Cambridge
Andrew Bond	Peterborough City Council	Liberal Democrat	Peterborough
Neil Boyce	Peterborough City Council	Peterborough First	Peterborough
Simon Bywater	Cambridgeshire County Council	Conservative	Huntingdonshire
Douglas Dew	Cambridgeshire County Council	Liberal Democrat	Huntingdonshire
Wayne Fitzgerald	Peterborough City Council	Conservative	Peterborough
Ian Gardener	Cambridgeshire County Council	Conservative	Huntingdonshire
John Gowing	Cambridgeshire County Council	Conservative	Fenland
Ros Hathorn	Cambridgeshire County Council	Liberal Democrat	South Cambs
Mohammed Jamil (Vice Chair)	Peterborough City Council	Labour	Peterborough
Sebastian Kindersley	Cambridgeshire County Council	Liberal Democrat	South Cambs
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

Our structure

Directors:

Name	Role	Responsibilities
Matthew Warren	Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive Officer	Ensuring the Service performs all of its statutory duties, along with: - Communication and Engagement - Executive Support - Finance
Jon Anderson	Deputy Chief Fire Officer (Acting)	- Business Intelligence and Performance - Business Support - Combined Fire Control - Commercial - Democratic Services - Digital Transformation - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - Fleet and Equipment - Health and Safety - Learning and Organisational Development - Legal - Operational Support - People and Recruitment - Programme and Project Management - Safeguarding - Training
Stuart Smith	Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Temporary)	- Application Support Group - Community Fire Safety Prevention - Fire Protection - Information Governance - Occupational Health - Operational Response (wholetime and - on-call) - Payroll - Property - ICT - Resilience - Resource Management

5. How we serve our community

Our Service

We currently operate from 27 fire stations across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Our Service Headquarters is in Huntingdon, hosting our Combined Fire Control, leadership team and many of our support departments.

See a map showing our fire stations.

We employ 250 wholetime firefighters, including up to principal officers (establishment is 241) and 226 on-call firefighters. A total of 37 employees (establishment/full time equivalent is 36) operate our Combined Fire Control, taking emergency calls from Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Suffolk residents. We have 153 colleagues working in professional support roles across different areas of the Service.

We have a fleet of 35 fire engines, two rescue vehicles, two turntable ladder aerial appliances and several other specialist vehicles.

Read more about our vehicles and the equipment we use.

Read more about the make-up of the communities and area we serve.

Everything we do is aligned to our **vision and strategic aims** and the way we deliver our services is reflective of our values – welcoming, respectful and professional.

Our priorities and how we target our resources are set out in our Integrated Risk Management Plan (the plan for April 2024-2029 will be referred to as a Community Risk Management Plan). The annual report describes what we have achieved in the previous financial year against what we said we would do in the IRMP.

Integrated risk management plan (IRMP)

Our IRMP is our corporate plan which focuses on our key aims and how we plan to achieve them. It identifies the key risks to us achieving our strategic aims and the opportunities that may help us get there quicker.

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 directors 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 past 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 period 2023-2024 was the last year of this plan.

Read the plan in full.

Going forward, our new Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), which was launched in April 2024, will be our plan for the next five years. Further information about this can be found on page 39.

Achievements against our IRMP 2020-2024

The next few pages outline what we delivered in 2023/24 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 planned to:

- Continue 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.
- Develop and improve the ways in which we support the mental health and wellbeing of our staff.
- On-going work to improve the diversity of our workforce, including continuing to build long-term relationships with our diverse communities through our community engagement and positive action programmes.
- Expand our programme of development activities to prepare staff for future roles and opportunities, including:

    - collaborative development programmes with other fire services and partner organisations,
    - building leadership and management skills for the future,
    - strengthening opportunities for staff to be responsible for their own learning, balanced with growing managers' accountability for facilitating development of their staff.
- Continue to embed an understanding of the value of quality conversations to enhance personal performance and development.
- Strengthen the ways in which we understand our succession planning needs and identify and match an individual's potential to those needs, including;
    - exploring the introduction of a shadowing programme to help give greater insight into and understanding of more senior roles,
    - considering and evaluating our provision of apprenticeship schemes within the Service, offering greater opportunities for formal qualifications which support the careers of existing staff and promote the different professions available within the Service to those looking to start a career with us.
- 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.

To achieve this in 2023/24:

- We discussed the positive insights from the 2022 employee engagement survey with managers in culture seminars in May and June 2023, in the context of the national picture of culture in the fire and rescue services. The leadership team also held workshops with wholetime colleagues to listen to their views about a variety of topics in the engagement survey and we held a women's development day to further explore some of the outcomes from the survey.
- We completed an equality and inclusion maturity model self-assessment tool, created by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) in partnership with Deloitte, to reflect on our current work and identify next steps. The actions from this became part of our people plan.
- We reviewed the spotlight report on culture that was published by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) at the end of March 2023 and integrated the actions into our people excellence plan. The progress against these actions has been published on our website. We reviewed and completed gap analysis on other fire and rescue services' independent reports on culture and any agreed actions have been built into our people plan.
- We refreshed our values and behaviours in consultation with colleagues and with due consideration to the national code of ethics. Through workshops and surveys, we gathered feedback and modernised and simplified the language whilst keeping the core values that make our service culture positive and inclusive.
- We reviewed the channels in place should colleagues need to raise a concern and in addition to the internal procedures we have in place to support colleagues, we introduced an external independent reporting line and have received positive feedback about its introduction in the event that colleagues may need to use it in the future.
- We completed an annual equality and inclusion benchmarking assessment with the Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion and are proud that we were given a silver award.
- We reviewed our internal engagement channels post-pandemic to ensure that we have the most appropriate channels in place to give all managers and colleagues the opportunity to speak with the leadership team on a regular basis.

- Using feedback from colleagues, we reviewed and relaunched our recognition channels to bring nominations into one simple process, overseen by a new recognition group.
- We appointed a Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner which has enabled the provision of low-level counselling within the Service. This continues to be supplemented by a contract with a provider for specialist counselling where required.
- Online training courses continue to be delivered by The Fire Fighters Charity, which are well received by colleagues.
- Work is ongoing with our medical insurance provider to raise awareness of offerings available to colleagues to support their mental health and wellbeing.
- We have started a project to review our post traumatic incident support for operational colleagues.
- We reviewed how we can further support the wellbeing of colleagues who, due to our shift patterns, have secondary contracts of employment. We put in place an updated policy and procedure to give leaders greater visibility and oversight of total hours worked per person, including internal and external secondary contracts. This has enabled managers to have meaningful, supportive wellbeing conversations.
- We reviewed the latest census data and updated our station community engagement dashboards for watches to focus their engagement activity on all groups in our community.
- We created and launched an online community engagement forum to ask members of the community their views on a variety of topics; we received good interest and feedback through promotion of this on social media. We used this channel, as well as social media, local media and partner networks as part our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2024 to 2029 risk consultation with the community and received feedback from over 1,000 members of the community, from a diverse range of backgrounds. We will use information collected from the CRMP survey to enhance our external communicational channels for future communication about our services and recruitment.
- We reviewed our provision for colleague neurodiversity support and put in place a new provider for specialist coaching and a process to engage further with 'Access to Work' for enhanced advice and support, in addition to the existing neurodiversity support procedure. We reviewed our process to enhance collaboration between occupational health and our people team to provide holistic support. We worked with an external training provider to create a new workshop on managing neurodiversity at work that has been well attended.
- In addition to the menopause workshops and risk assessment that we launched last year, we reviewed our menopause guidance and developed menopause training that is now being rolled out to all colleagues in the organisation. We reviewed our menopause support and introduced period protection provisions in all toilets and portable toilets on appliances for use at longer incidents. We have led the setting up of a national network of menopause champions and secured agreement and support from the NFCC to hold a national 'Menopause in Fire' conference which took place in September 2023 with excellent feedback.
- We developed a face-to-face inclusive leadership training session for all managers with an external provider, the content was based on feedback from managers, our values and current case studies. This has been rolled out to all full-time managers and is now being delivered to on-call managers. We also developed values and inclusion training sessions that are now being rolled out to all employees focused on our inclusive values.
- We reviewed and updated our safeguarding policies and introduced a new eLearning module for all employees and new starters.
- We started a review of our training records system, which included a survey to all employees and meetings with stakeholder teams. This review has led to us starting a project to look at the options of how we improve our training records system, starting with the reporting of operational training.

- We reviewed and relaunched our leadership development programmes including our effective leadership programme with Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire fire and rescue services and the NFCC Supervisory Leadership Development Programme.
- We reviewed our approach to 360 feedback and researched a range of tools available, choosing one that is based on the FACET personality profile that nearly all employees have completed in previous years. The new 360 tool is now being rolled out to all leaders and managers with the purpose of raising self-awareness and enhancing personal development.
- We reviewed our suite of skills workshops, including a survey to all colleagues, to ensure that the topics being covered are current and meeting the needs of those who wish to develop in their current roles or for progression. We relaunched the new suite of workshops; they were well attended and received positive feedback.
- We reviewed the content of our leavers conversation to ensure that it encourages a broad conversation about our culture and service delivery so that we can review the feedback from these conversations and identify any areas for improvement.
- We reviewed the development portfolios we launched last year for wholetime and Combined Fire Control progression from firefighter through to crew commander, watch commander and station commander, based on national operation guidance, our values and leadership attributes. We created the second version, based on feedback from colleagues and relaunched them with the aim of continuing to support progression to meet our succession planning needs.
- We reviewed our approach to talent and succession, including coaching and mentoring and have scoped a project that will commence in the next CRMP year.
- We took the opportunity to bring in three new apprentices across the Service, into fleet and digital learning.
- We have created a new attraction strategy for the Service that includes promoting our good culture and approaches to equality and inclusion. This initiative has now been scoped with stakeholders and the actions will continue into the new CRMP year. The aim is to remove any unnecessary barriers, perceived or process, to people joining the organisation.
- We have created a pool of external assessors who have started to take part on interview panels for senior leadership roles. External assessors are people in our community who are in senior leadership roles outside of our organisation, who can provide an independent view to the internal interview panels which mitigates unconscious bias.
- We also refreshed our pool of community assessors for our wholetime recruitment assessment days. Community assessors come from a range of backgrounds and are given training in assessing so that they can provide an independent view to the internal interview panels which mitigates unconscious bias.
- In our last wholetime campaign, in addition to our general information sessions and “Have a Go” days we also offered women only sessions to the community for positive action.

Case study – Service rolls out inclusive leadership training for managers

To help ensure managers across the Service understand inclusive Leadership and their own pivotal role in further developing our positive culture, a bespoke training package was designed and delivered for us by equality, inclusion and dignity and work specialists, Diversity McKenzies.

The course helps managers understand what an inclusive culture looks like, giving them the tools they need to lead inclusively and manage any behaviour that goes against our values.

Deputy Chief Fire Officer Jon Anderson explained: “We are very proud of the culture we have within our Service and it is something we have been consciously focusing on over the past 15 years when we introduced People Excellence as one of our core strategic aims. We are also proud of the fact we have received a ‘Good’ for the culture and fairness categories of all three of our past HMICFRS

inspections. This hasn't happened by coincidence, when we set our vision back in 2007, we stated that people were at the heart of everything we do and that was both people in our community and the people that work for us. We have since concentrated our effort on embedding our values and a set of expected behaviours to ensure everyone feels safe at work and is treated with dignity and respect by others.

"We are never complacent though and recognise that having a positive culture is a continual journey and we need to maintain focus in this area. The inclusive leadership training we rolled out was designed after speaking with managers about what they felt they needed to help them deal more confidently with any behaviour that falls short of our expectations, whether that be intentional or misguided."

Jon concluded: "Every manager has attended the training and it has had excellent feedback. Next year's focus will be delivering sessions around values and behaviours to everyone in the Service, as a reminder about the responsibility everyone has in ensuring our workplace is a welcoming and inclusive place for everyone. These will be run together with a mandatory menopause awareness training sessions to build on the work we have already done in this area to become a menopause friendly employer."

Community safety

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

- Further collaboration with health, social care and other partners to refine ways to identify and reach those most at risk of fire.
- Develop our Fire Break 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 2023/24 we have:

- Continued to refine the use of partner data sets to target prevention activities to the most vulnerable in our community. Data sharing agreements with Anglian Water and NSR (hospital bed data) are allowing us to better target vulnerable people. Last year 84% of all Safe and Well visits were to our higher risk groups. More intelligent use of data has also increased the times our crews are getting across the doorstep, up to 76.4% from 70.2% the previous year. Last year we delivered safe and well visits to over 6,445 vulnerable households compared with 6,244 the previous year. We continue to improve the referral pathways used by our partners using our online home fire safety tool.
- Continued to deliver and evaluate our Fire Break offering to vulnerable young people. The introduction of the Serious Violence Duty, in which fire services are a specified duty holder,

has led to us delivering two Fire Break courses using Home Office funding. These are specifically targeted at vulnerable young people at risk of knife crime and has involved us establishing fruitful new networks with diversionary teams in Peterborough. We have also included knife awareness in the continuous professional development training received by our instructors delivering Fire Break. This allows them to better support young people in this vulnerable group.

- We continue to focus our early intervention efforts on Fire Break and Firesetters. We also promote the NFCC 'Stay Wise' programme. To reach reception and key stage 1 children, we have developed a character called Jet the Dragon. Jet has been designed specifically to deliver safety messages to early learners. To date, there have been four stories from Jet, covering general fire safety, inland water safety, coastal water safety and Halloween safety. Jet the Dragon also features on the 'Stay Wise' virtual resource available nationally. We have also re-introduced 'Safety Zone' which brings local schools and partners together to educate young children on subjects including emergency first aid, road, water and fire safety.
- We have continued to engage with businesses through seminars and webinars as well as targeting businesses that are more likely to have a fire in a non-domestic premises. The attendance at these events has not been as successful as in previous years. Therefore, listening to feedback, moving forward we are looking to create digital videos and infographics to help support businesses with fire safety matters.
- Days of action across the county have taken place regularly throughout the year to ensure non-domestic premises are compliant with the fire safety order. We will continue to work with the local authority building control and partners to ensure the built environment is safe for the public who may live, work or visit, as well as the newly formed building safety regulator (BSR) that will oversee new planning applications and current tall buildings across the county. We also sit on the Police Serious Organised Crime group (SOC Fusion) which involves sharing risk information and joint visits to disrupt criminal activities.
- We continue to engage with developers and local authorities to recommend the fitting of sprinklers where legislation does not require it. The plan is to deliver a sprinkler conference in 2024/25. With the introduction of new legislation and the forming of regional multi-disciplinary teams (who work for the BSR) there will be far better consultation when buildings are being planned and designed allowing us to have a greater voice at an early stage of planning.
- We have recruited a dedicated community road safety officer. This role is hosted by us and funded by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). This partnership approach ensures the police and fire and rescue service are aligned with the community casualty reduction focus set out by the OPCC, through the Vision Zero Road Safety Partnership. Our road and water safety team have delivered several initiatives to the public, successfully delivering 20 Biker Down sessions to 200 members of the public and Be Water Aware sessions to approximately 4,500 students in schools throughout Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, specifically to key stage 2 and 3 students.
- Last year we supported the NFCC in the development of its home fire safety visit (HFSV) and competency framework. Our intention in our new CRMP is to rebrand our existing safe and well visits to HFSVs and update the training all colleagues receive to align with the new offering.
- We continue to use expertise from across the Service to help understand and reduce risk to our communities. The community risk awareness group (CRAG) continues to act as a conduit for managing complex risk information and ensures the correct actions are taken when existing risk sites are updated or new ones are identified. We have also established a Battery Energy Storage Group (BESS). This is in recognition of the growing risk of sites within our county that are identified as using energy storage systems.

- We continue to play an active role in partnership groups such as community safety partnerships, county safety advisory groups and the new high harm board. These include our role in the local resilience forum where we have been working with partners and communities to build resilience through the use of the new **www.cpprepared.org.uk** website.

Case study – Partnership with ambulance service introduces community wellbeing officers

A new pilot has been launched which introduces new community wellbeing officers working across Cambridgeshire responding to calls from people who have fallen.

The 12-month pilot is a collaboration between regional fire and rescue services and the East of England Ambulance Service Trust (EEAST). Our two community wellbeing officers completed a three-week emergency responder training with EEAST to learn the skills required for their role and started responding to calls in February this year.

Falls can account for up to 20% of the ambulance service's calls and although some patients will require hospital treatment, many simply need to be helped to their feet and checked over to make sure they are safe to be left at home.

Currently, if a person falls at home and has no injuries, they could have a long wait for an ambulance to become available. The new partnership aims to get help quicker to people who have fallen and free up ambulance crews to attend the most seriously ill people in Cambridgeshire. The new initiative aims to have a community wellbeing officer to someone who has fallen within an hour of the call. The officers are employed by CFRS but funded by EEAST. When not attending calls, the community wellbeing officers complete safe and well visits to identified vulnerable people.

CFRS Station Commander Scott Fretwell, Community Risk Manager, said: "We are excited to be working in partnership with the ambulance service to introduce community wellbeing officers.

"The collaboration will enable a quicker response to people who have had a fall in their home, help to save lives, enhance patient experience and subsequently improve community welfare. Having extra capacity to deliver more safe and well visits to vulnerable people who we know are at greater risk from fire is also enabling us to keep more people safe in their homes. We are looking forward to seeing the positive impact of this new partnership over the coming months."

Tom Barker, EEAST Community Response Manager said: "We're delighted to be part of this collaboration with Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service which aims to improve the speed of response and increase support for people who have fallen in their homes. I am confident that this programme will see real benefits for everyone involved."

Operational Excellence

Working with everyone in the Service, we aimed to ensure the highest standards of operational response by:

- Aligning operational resources to our risk and demand, understanding our response model options and the number of resources required to achieve them.
- Developing the use of our on-call crews to improve our operational service to the public.
- Exploring and implementing improvements to support the working experience for our on-call employees.
- Reviewing the structure and resourcing in our Combined Fire Control to ensure the continual provision of a high quality, sustainable control function.
- Ensuring our emergency vehicles and equipment meet our identified risks.

- Aligning service procedures with national operational guidance to improve firefighter safety and our ability to work with other fire and rescue services.
- Developing our central training facility to support the delivery of risk critical operational training.
- Reviewing current arrangements for operational training to ensure they meet the needs of operational staff.
- Developing 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 2023/24 we have:

- Continued the Operational Risk Review Project, which is in its final stages and delivered outcomes and recommendations that will help us to better understand our resourcing requirements across the county, to ensure we are as productive and efficient as we can be and therefore, providing the best possible level of service to the public.
- Negotiated and consulted on two new trials across the on-call duty system. This will see two additional fire engines available on a Saturday and Sunday, as well as giving some flexibility and better renumeration back into the on-call duty system.
- Improved our 4x4 response by purchasing two new vehicles, as well as enhancing our specialist skill sets across the county to help mitigate the need for our city fire engines from having to attend calls in rural areas, leaving them available to cover the risks in the city more often.
- Consulted on a new way of working across weekends. This will see two on-call fire engines on a Saturday and Sunday become wholetime status (available fulltime) across those days from 8am until 6pm, providing flexible fire cover across the county whilst also delivering prevention and protection activities.
- Continued responding with crews of three, which has provided approximately 1,100 additional hours of fire engine availability per month and seen an increase in mobilisations for most on-call stations. We have also seen a quicker average attendance time to rural incidents over the last reporting period. We will continue to strive to ensure we have fire engines that are mobilised with crews of four or more, but where we can't, crews of three will be utilised.
- Continued to offer additional training sessions and exercises at our new training facility in Huntingdon to allow on-call colleagues an opportunity for better realistic training scenarios.
- Continued to work hard developing our new mobilising system, which will improve our resilience and efficiency managing 999 calls.
- Completed and updated our strategy to include sustainability within our identification and procurement of vehicles and equipment, alongside maximising lifespans to support financial efficiencies.
- Seven new fire engines with the latest technology and specialist rescue equipment have been brought into the Service with three more coming in the next financial year. We have procured and are developing with our manufacturer a concept fire engine to meet our future needs, reduce contamination risk for firefighters and that aligns to our sustainability strategy.
- Continued to work through our plan to fully adopt and align to the National Operational Guidance (NOG). This sees us working collaboratively with all fire services within the eastern region to share resources and peer review the information being provided to ensure, where appropriate, standardisation in response.
- Continued to proactively review the current arrangements for operational training. The new shift system we have implemented for our training instructor team ensures a seven day and evening provision to meet the needs of our wholetime and on-call firefighters. We have introduced two posts for an initial period of two years to support additional training delivery

for our on-call colleagues and provide oversight and support of our new wholetime firefighters from recruitment to the end of their probationary period.

- Delivered a flexible bridging course programme to best recognise the skills and attributes of our on-call firefighters who have moved into the wholetime service through our recruitment programme. We have also created and delivered our first internal wholetime firefighter training course, which saves money on external venues and instructors, and enables our recruits to stay in county rather than be away from their families for weeks at a time.
- Put in place a programme to provide external verification and learning of our operational skills. This supports ongoing assurance of our operational training and development. We work within a newly established regional operational assurance group to benchmark against others in the sector. A key area of this is incident command where, through external verification, we can ensure robust assurance of our commanders. We continue to use our operational assurance programme at incidents to collect and share operational learning information nationally and internally. We have launched a project to review and deliver an improved training and competence recording system which will improve the management and oversight.

Case study – Service's training centre hosts first wholetime recruits course

For the first time in its history, Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service has been able to host its own wholetime (full time) firefighter initial training course thanks to our new training centre in Huntingdon.

The group of six firefighters began training in January and completed all their course modules at the new facility. To celebrate their achievement, the new recruits were able to invite their families to see them in action, showcasing their new skills in a pass out parade, having successfully finished the course.

Among the areas the group covered on the training programme were water rescue, working at height, animal rescue and road traffic collision handling. They were also able to learn and practice tackling fires and rescues in the various purpose-built buildings, with controlled live fire burns now being possible.

Previously, wholetime firefighters attended other training venues around the country for their initial training, as the former training centre site was not a suitable venue, nor did it have all the necessary facilities.

The training centre moved to the new site on Percy Road in 2022, when the fire station relocated. The multi-million-pound investment in facilities includes multi-level buildings and containers for live fire burns to give firefighters a wholly realistic training experience. There is also a large road traffic collision compound and facilities to replicate water filled ditches for practicing rescues. The site was officially opened by Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal in November last year.

Deputy Chief Executive Matthew Warren said: "This is a fantastic milestone for our training team and the Service as a whole. In our 50th year, we are very proud to celebrate our first in-house trained cohort of wholetime firefighters.

"The investment in our state-of-the-art facility allows us to spend more time with our recruits, as we save many hours travelling out of county. Not only does this allow the recruits to spend more time on the incident ground practicing their techniques, but it also means they are not away from their families for weeks at a time. The expansive site provides far more opportunity to provide the necessary training to ensure all our firefighters are competent in the variety of skills needed for the role and the many different incidents they could be called to."

Following the ceremony, the group got together with some of their instructors to take on a charity challenge to raise money for The Fire Fighters Charity. Donning full firefighting PPE and breathing apparatus, they walked the 12-kilometer Kinder Scout route of the Peak District, raising more than £900.

Matthew concluded: "It was a proud moment to attend a pass out parade at our own venue. The new recruits did an excellent job on the day demonstrating everything they had learned and it was fantastic to see that teamwork extend to a charity walk they organised themselves to mark the end of their time together as a cohort before joining their new watches. I congratulate them on that achievement as well as passing their initial training and I wish them a very successful career with us."

Value for money

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

- Introduce the replacement national emergency service communication system.
- Deliver new emergency mobilising technologies into operational service as well as review existing technologies to deliver enhancements to these.
- Deliver efficiencies by the automation and improvement of business processes, reducing manual intervention and freeing up resources from administrative tasks to focus on value adding activities.
- Ensure technology delivers opportunities for more efficient and effective ways of working, with a particular emphasis on ensuring our software provides value for money while enabling better mobile working and joint working opportunities.
- 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 efficiency and effectiveness.
- Ensure that the digital drivers across the Service are understood, scoped and prioritised, reviewing digital capacity to ensure that they are sufficient to meet our needs.
- Ensure that the Service has sustainability strategies in place and mechanisms by which to measure and evaluate these.

To achieve this in 2023/24 we have:

- Made positive progress and working towards an end of summer 2024 'go live' for the new mobilising system.
- Introduced an automated system to process payments for on-call firefighters.
- Completed collating the requirements for the health and safety accident and near miss reporting and investigation processes. This will replace an existing Microsoft form. The proposed solution will involve development of new database integrations to improve data movement between third party systems, support data reuse and centralise internal and external reporting on the information gathered.
- Additional tools have been implemented to enhance our cyber security.
- Work is continuing to complete the rollout of the new mobile data terminals (MDTs) to improve the accessibility of information on the fireground.
- Implemented a new finance system, which allows the team to interrogate spend data to assist with procurement planning and enabling contracts, eventually leading to supplier rationalisation. With the new procurement act expected in the autumn, this should support the transparency requirements. The new system has also enabled the Service to improve financial controls and streamline several processes.

- Continued to provide insight and valuable information in relation to our spend data across the Authority, highlighting collaboration opportunities.
- Ensured our sustainable procurement strategy is an integral part of our procurement and tendering process along with modern slavery checks, social value requirements and ethical procurement.
- Continued financial awareness training has been provided throughout 2023/24 and is included in the onboarding of new heads of departments. A high-level session has also been provided to the middle management group so they can support their managers in managing their financial resources.
- Encouraged managers to identify any in-year savings which can be put into a tactical reserve which was established at the beginning of 2022/23 so that any in-year budget pressures can then be covered by this reserve.
- Carried out a zero-based budgeting approach to build the 2024/25 budget meaning that budget holders were encouraged to do a detailed review of their current spend and expected future spend.
- Built resilience in the digital teams by sharing skills and knowledge and removed single points of failure.
- Continued to develop and work towards our sustainability goals with key strands in place to support the strategy. We utilise the review of the key areas by the Carbon Trust with an action plan being developed to drive areas of good practice, and deliver the improvements identified. We are actively working in collaboration with other partners to further explore areas of shared improvement such as the sharing of hydrogenated vegetable oil or HVO fuel. This will support our drive to net zero by 2030.

Case study – Updated finance system helps improve efficiency

Following a two-year project, a new finance system was recently introduced bringing benefits to the Service and to colleagues needing to use the new system.

The introduction of the Connected Intelligence Anywhere (CIA) system followed an announcement by the previous software supplier that they were withdrawing support for their product at the end of 2023.

The project, involving the finance and commercial teams, had to move quickly to get a new system in place within the required timescales. It began with pre-market engagement and gathering user stories to help set out the Service's requirements. Working to an extremely tight deadline, the system was procured from TechnologyOne. Then came the significant task of cleansing and reviewing data in the legacy system to make sure only the relevant information was transferred across.

The new CIA system was introduced in two phases over the last year. The first began in March 2023, which included addressing the core financial applications previously held in the old system, and involved many workshops, configurations, training, testing and data migration. This was completed in November.

The second phase required more of the same intense designing and testing and included:

- Purchase card management
- Inventory, fixed asset accounting and budgeting
- Modules previously not held directly within the old system but in various other systems and spreadsheets.

This went live at the end of March 2024, with colleagues now using the system and seeing the benefits of it, including mobile functionality and a user-friendly interface.

The other key benefits of the CIA system include:

- Reduced printing requirements
- Automated email alerts for tasks to perform
- Automatic sending of documents direct from the system
- Reduced number of different systems, making the finance function more effective and efficient.

Assistant Director for Finance, Ursula Bird, who led the project, explained: "It has been months of hard work but we're really pleased with the new system and already reaping the benefits. This had the potential to be a significant cost to the Service as many other organisations would buy in a project manager or even a team to do the work to design, configure and test the new system and move the data over, however we saved thousands of pounds by completing this in-house.

"It is a vital system for us in managing our budget and understanding where money is spent and so maintaining control at all stages of the project to ensure it was going to work in the best way for our Service was important for us. As budget pressures increase it is important that we know how much we spend on everything and can continually monitor and challenge what we do to ensure we offer the best value for money as a fire and rescue service."

Our performance

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 in previous years, prolonged periods of rain 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 2023/24

Attendance times

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 7.48 minutes, which is 72 seconds quicker than our performance measure of 9 minutes.

Rural attendance times have exceeded our measure of 12 minutes by 4 seconds. This however is an improvement of 14 seconds from the previous year.

We have had a fire engine arrive at an incident within 18 minutes on 95.6 per cent of occasions, which meets our performance measure and shows an improvement on last year.

Number of incidents

There was a significant decrease in the number of fires over this call year compared to the previous year as well as a decrease in the number of primary fires and a significant decrease in the number of secondary fires. Outdoor fires, which make up a large proportion of secondary fires, has seen a decreased too. The reduced numbers of fires in these areas is most likely due to more persistent wet weather during this period and not experiencing the same hot, dry summer we saw the previous year (in which the number of fires rose).

There has been an 11 per cent decrease in the number of accidental non-domestic fires over the rolling five years.

- Total fires 2022-23 – 2273
- Total fires 2023-24 – 1685
- Total primary fires 2022-23 – 1008
- Total primary fires 2023-24 - 899
- Total secondary fires 2022-23 - 1227
- Total secondary fires 2023-24 - 745
- Total non-domestic fire 2022-23 – 131
- Total non-domestic fire 2023-24 – 98

Sadly, we have had 10 fire deaths this year. These occurred in seven separate incidents; three in Peterborough, two in Cambridge, one in Fenland and one in Huntingdonshire.

There has been no significant change in the profile of people affected over the past five years. People aged 65 years and over remain most at risk of not surviving if there is a fire in their home.

There were 78 fire casualties in the past 12 months. The majority of these occurred in Peterborough with the main injury type reported as requiring hospital treatment for minor injuries. We have seen the number of people sent to hospital increase over the past five years.

There has been a 1 per cent increase in the number of road traffic collisions that we have attended compared to the previous year (from 421 last year to 427). However, over the past five years figures show a decrease of 2 per cent.

We have seen a 39 per cent increase in special services over the past five years (1459 this year compared with 1047 five years ago). In the last quarter of 2023/24 releasing objects from people, road traffic collisions and effecting entry/exit were the largest growth areas in special service incidents.

Our workforce diversity

Of those applying for a role with Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service, 8.5 per cent of applicants were from black and minority ethnic communities, an increase of 2 per cent over five years. This has resulted in 3.8 per cent of our workforce being from these communities, an increase of 0.7 per cent.

From the total of all applicants, 27.3 per cent were female and 11.8 per cent of applicants for firefighter roles were female.

Our workforce diversity has increased in all areas except for religion or belief. However, this has only seen a minor decrease.

The national average for operational women is 8.2 per cent, ours has increased by just over a percentage point to 8 per cent. The national average for women in fire control is 77 per cent, with ours being 78.9 per cent. Exactly half of our professional support colleagues are women compared to the national average of 54 per cent.

6. 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 which are incorporated into our Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) and the action plan that sits behind it (rather than having a separate plan).

Our achievements against these objectives have been included in the People and Community Safety sections of this annual report, found on pages 13 and 17.

Equality impact assessments

We continued to complete Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA) in 2023/24. This 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 several benefits. They help us ensure that our decisions impact in a fair way, to make decisions based on evidence, to make decision-making more transparent and provide a platform for collaboration with the community and partners.

In this period, we improved the format and training of EQIAs to make them easier to complete and better understood.

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

- Implementation of 4x4 vehicles
- Recruitment of community champions
- Neurodiversity process and support
- Working time regulations policy
- Transporting casualties policy
- Estates strategy
- Hoarding intervention
- Effective leadership programme
- Creation of the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP)
- Managers guide to managing suicide risk in the workplace
- Phase one wholetime training delivery in-house
- Potential on-call rostering system.

Read our annual Equality Compliance Report 2023/24.

7. Sustainability

We are committed to embracing the broader sustainability challenges and seek to reduce our carbon footprint, with the ambition of achieving a net zero position by 2030. This is an extremely challenging aim and is underpinned by our sustainability strategy. This focuses on five key areas:

- People - we will focus on changing our behaviours and attitudes toward sustainability through communicating our intentions with our people.
- Transport - we will continue to reduce the emissions of our vehicles through the fleet replacement programme. This will be supported by the fleet strategy that will focus on how we use our vehicles, the size of our fleet, the fuel used within our vehicles and the move toward electric vehicles. From a wider transport perspective, we will seek to reduce the frequency of non-essential journeys.
- Property - we will focus on how we use the buildings we need. Technology will be essential in reducing data g our carbon footprint, with appropriate investment in these new technologies properly planned through the property capital programme.
- Offsetting - we will look at offsetting as a means for reducing our carbon footprint, where other solutions for reducing do not exist or are not effective.
- Procurement - our procurement process will consider the sustainability of the supply chain and consider procurement options should offset be an alternative contractual offer that is financially viable.

As a Service we are seeking to reduce our carbon footprint, with the ambition of achieving a net zero position by 2030. The Carbon Trust was brought into the Service in 2022 to evaluate and determine our carbon emissions and to support the development of our sustainability strategy.

What are our carbon emissions?

We provided data to The Carbon Trust to analyse to calculate our emission sources, hotspots and focus areas. Our top five sources of carbon emissions were found to be:

- Purchased goods – 29 per cent
- Capital assets – 23 per cent
- Fleet – 14 per cent
- Electricity – 12 per cent
- Natural gas – 12 per cent.

These account for 90 per cent of our total emissions.

How are we decarbonising?

Behind each strategic area, we have developed a detailed plan to identify a route map for carbon reduction. The carbon emissions against each of our strategic areas are:

- People – 7 per cent
- Procurement – 53 per cent
- Buildings – 26 per cent
- Fleet – 14 per cent.

What are we doing?

People

We recognise that our greatest impact on reducing out carbon footprint is through our people.

- Ideas sought to reduce our carbon footprint. We will engage with colleagues at fire stations who can help us develop new ideas to help us on our sustainable journey.
- Hydration at incidents - operational colleagues were recently invited to compete a 'hydration at incidents' survey asking for feedback and suggestions to reduce our use of single use plastics. As a result, a business case has now been approved with several solutions allowing us to remove single use water bottles.

Transport

Reducing our carbon footprint with our fleet has centred on trials using HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil) in fire engines and replacing petrol vehicles with hybrid models.

- Peterborough area - the HVO fuel trial in the Peterborough area continues and has been certified for use in a substantial portion of our fleet of fire engines.
- Huntingdon area - the HVO trial in Huntingdon and surrounding area has been extended and is in partnership with Huntingdon District Council (HDC) and Cambridgeshire Police. Our fire engines and other vehicles have access to an HVO fuelling station based at HDC's depot.
- Hybrid vehicles - in addition to the electric vehicles we already have, we have taken delivery of the first batch of hybrid cars for officers who respond to incidents. These are a Hyundai Tucson model and replace the current fleet of Volkswagen Passats. They have a longer lifespan – a minimum of four years - at which point they will be reviewed.

Property

Improvements across the CFRS estate continue to be introduced to reduce carbon emissions and save money.

- Building Management Systems (BMS) are now being used to manage heating systems in our newer fire stations. Automatically controlling heating systems will be more efficient and cost effective, particularly when a large number of fire stations are not used 24/7. We will soon be able to manage these systems remotely from a laptop.
- Building insulation - our mission to improve building insulation continues with doors, windows and walls being upgraded.
- Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points - EV charging points have been installed with more planned.
- Air source heat pump - these will reduce heating costs. One has been installed and a second is planned.
- Solar panels - surveys are planned for the installation of solar panels.
- St Neots refurbishment – the refurbishment of St Neots Fire Station in 2024/25 will result in our first truly 'green' fire station.

Offsetting

We are actively looking at solutions to reduce our carbon footprint first before offsetting.

Procurement

As part of our strategy to reduce single use plastics across the service, we have introduced initiatives that cut down on plastic waste created by cleaning products. These include:

- Recycle and refill - we are purchasing larger quantities of certain cleaning products and introducing bottles that can be refilled.

- Zero waste cleaning products - going forward, we will be purchasing many essential cleaning products from a supplier with a product range based on refillable bottles and sachets of dissolvable cleaning products.

8. 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

Working in partnership with Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service, we became the first fire and rescue service to prove that the concept of a combined control room works, which has proven to be successful for the past 12 years. 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. 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

Fire crews 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. We have also introduced new Community Wellbeing Officers in partnership with the ambulance service, which you can read more about on page 19.

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. The partnership generated more than 100 referrals leading to safe and well visits to the most vulnerable residents in the county.

9. 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.

Where our money comes from and how much we spent

The Fire Authority's total net expenditure was £35,600,000. This is made up of £40,030,000 (expenditure) less £4,430,000 (other income). £25,242,600 was collected from council tax payers, which amounted to £82.26 a year for a Band D council tax household. This equates to £1.58 a week – a similar cost to a four-pint carton of milk.

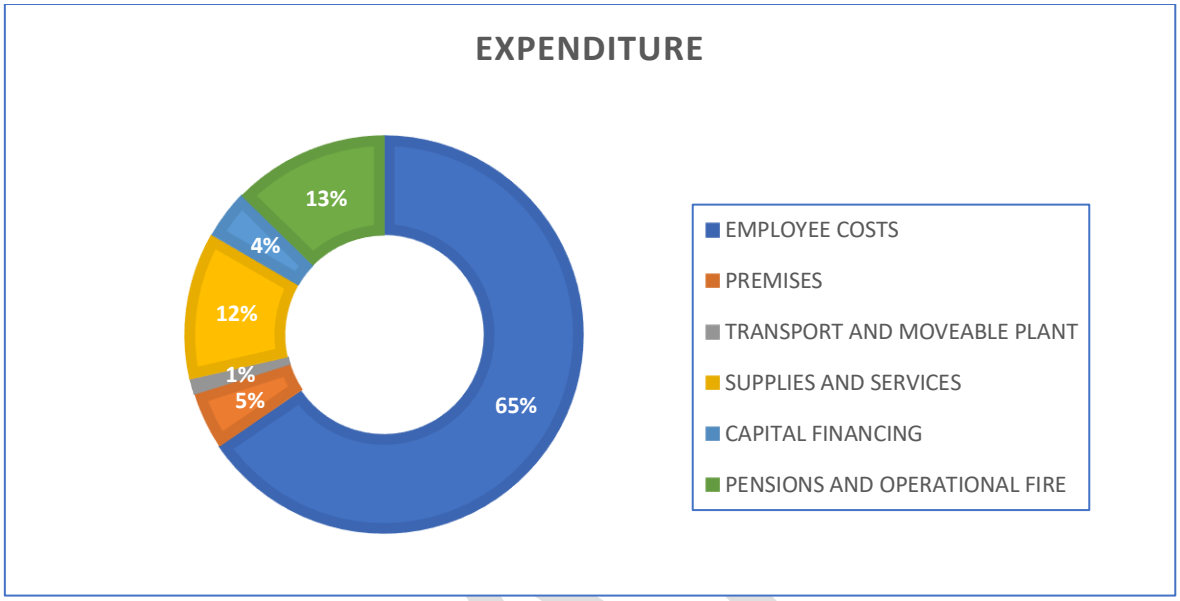
The table below shows the breakdown of where our funding comes from and how we spent it.

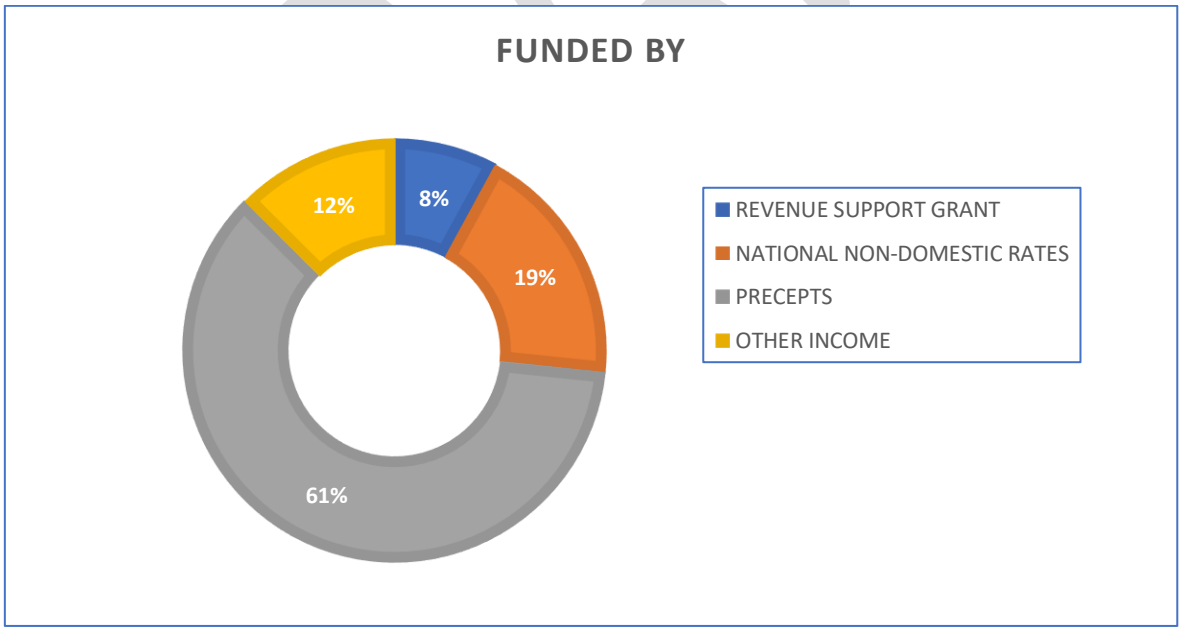
Please note these are DRAFT ACCOUNTS as our independent audit has not yet taken place.

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
EMPLOYEE COSTS	**24,116**	**23,835**	**(281)**	**-1**
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
PREMISES	**1,633**	**1,656**	**23**	**1**
Car and cycle allowances	38	37	(1)	-3
Vehicle running expenses	180	247	67	37
Vehicle insurance	158	173	15	9
TRANSPORT AND MOVEABLE PLANT	**376**	**457**	**81**	**22**
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
SUPPLIES AND SERVICES	**5,359**	**4,325**	**(1,034)**	**-19**
Debt charges	1,378	1,452	74	5
External interest	(90)	(176)	(86)	96
CAPITAL FINANCING	**1,288**	**1,276**	**(12)**	**-1**
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
CONTROLLABLE INCOME	**(3,978)**	**(4,418)**	**(440)**	**11**
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
SAFETY-NETTED EXPENDITURE	**4,272**	**4,612**	**340**	**8**
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	
CONTRIBUTIONS	**(33,066)**	**(31,750)**	**1,316**	
CONTRIBUTION TO GENERAL RESERVE	-	**7**	**7**	

This information is also shown below in two pie graphs:





Key Budget points

The Service has managed to add £575,000 to its reserves in 2023/24, which will help support our medium-term capital programme and potential medium-term financial pressures.

What we own

Our assets include (as of March 2024):

Buildings

1. Fire headquarters and operational buildings	28 (1 held for sale)
2. Staff houses	4 (all for sale)
o Total	32

Vehicles and Plant

1. Fire engines	35
2. Aerial appliances	2
3. Rescue vehicles	2
4. Other special appliances	7
5. Reserve and training appliances	8
6. Other vehicles	116
o Total	170

Capital Spending

The Service has purchased three new fire engines, along with battery operated rescue equipment and 11 silver fleet vehicles, costing £960,000 in total.

Improvements have been carried out to existing properties, including enhancements to buildings, costing £1,486,000. Additionally other plant and equipment have been purchased costing £128,000.

Investment has been made to the ICT network infrastructure and software, totalling £554,000. This includes a new finance system.

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.

Read our accounts.

External audit

The Fire Authority has external auditors appointed by central government to assess its financial standing. The Authority's appointed auditor, Ernst and Young 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 audits from the past three financial years have not yet taken place.

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.

10. 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.

The table below shows an estimate of how much each fire and rescue service costs to operate per head of population over the past financial year. Note not all services are included in the table. The figures are provided by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). It shows that we are the second lowest cost fire authority at £37.02 per head of population.

Authority	**2023-24**
Northamptonshire	£29.93
Cambridgeshire	**£37.02**
Staffordshire	£37.27
Merseyside	£38.03
West Sussex	£38.43
Dorset and Wiltshire	£39.95
West Midlands	£39.96
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	£40.15
North Yorkshire	£40.90
West Yorkshire	£40.93
Berkshire	£41.09
Lancashire	£41.52
Avon	£41.69
Derbyshire	£42.00
Nottinghamshire	£42.59
Cumbria	£43.25
Leicestershire	£43.83
Greater Manchester	£44.00
South Yorkshire	£44.88
Cheshire	£45.21
Cornwall	£45.90
Essex	£45.98
Kent	£46.35
Devon and Somerset	£46.43
Bedfordshire	£46.57
Cleveland	£48.55
Durham	£49.22
London (LFC)	£50.35
Tyne and Wear	£50.74
Northumberland	£51.33
Humberside	£52.60
East Sussex	£54.27
South Wales	£55.32
Mid and West Wales	£65.33
Shropshire	£76.06

11. Our inspection results

We were inspected by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in Spring 2023, with our report being published in August 2023.

We were assessed in 11 categories, all of which are scored separately. We received one Outstanding, six Goods, three Adequates, one Requires Improvement (no 'Inadequate'). This is shown in the diagram 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			

In addition, innovative and promising practice was identified with our sustainability strategy, involvement of external assessors in recruitment of wholetime firefighters, our fitness equipment for firefighters and menopause and maternity provisions. We were also highlighted for being a neurodiversity friendly employer and having a 'positive working culture where staff feel valued and listened to'.

Read our full report and response.

12. Planning and future priorities

In April 2024 the Service launched its Community Risk Management Plan for 2024-2029. This provides our strategic direction and how we are planning for the next five years.

The draft plan was consulted on in the summer of 2023, with more than 1,000 responses received from people across the county. The plan was presented to the Fire Authority in February 2024 and approved.

Next year's annual report will summarise our performance against the first year of this plan.

Read our Community Risk Management Plan and corporate priorities for 2024-2029.

13. 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 people and the service we provide makes to others.

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 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

14. 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 Service HQ

Hinchingbrooke Cottage

Brampton Road

Huntingdon

Cambs

PE29 2NA

Alternatively, you can share your thoughts via email at 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.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

MEETINGS 2024/25

Date	Meeting Time	Venue
2024		
Wednesday 9 October	1400 hours	New Shire Hall
2025		
Wednesday 15 January	1400 hours	SHQ
Wednesday 26 March	1400 hours	SHQ

WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25

Wednesday 9 October			
Time	**Agenda Item**	**Member/Officer**	
	Minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting 25 July 2024		
	Action Log		
	Overview CRMP Performance Measures	ACFO/Assistant Director Service Transformation	
	Annual Review - CPFA Compliance with Local Government Transparency Code 2015	Assistant Director Communication and Engagement	
	Audit Internal Audit Progress Report	RSM	
	Scrutiny Draft Annual Governance Statement 2022/23	Deputy Chief Fire Officer	Annual before presentation to Fire Authority
	Draft Fire Authority Annual Report and Statement of Assurance 2023/24	Assistant Director Communication and Engagement	Annual
	Member-Led Reviews Update	Lead Councillors Scrutiny and Assurance Manager	Verbal
	Work Programme 2024/25	Chair	
2025			

Wednesday 15 January			
Time	**Agenda Item**	**Member/Officer**	
	Minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting 9 October 2024		
	Action Log		
	Overview CRMP Performance Measures	ACFO/Assistant Director Service Transformation	
	Audit Internal Audit Progress Report	RSM	
	External Audit (Results) Report	Ernst and Young LLP	Minute 95 of 25 July 2024 Committee meeting refers
	Scrutiny Draft Budget 2024/25	Assistant Director Finance	
	Member-Led Reviews Update	Lead Councillors Scrutiny and Assurance Manager	
	Work Programme 2024/25	Chair	
Wednesday 26 March			
Time	**Agenda Item**	**Member/Officer**	
	Minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting 15 January 2025		
	Action Log		
	Overview CRMP Performance Measures	ACFO/Assistant Director Service Transformation	
	Post Trial Report on Collaboration with EEAST (provision of Community Welfare Officers)	ACFO	Minute 79 of 22 April 2024 Committee meeting refers
	Audit Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25	RSM	
	Internal Audit Plan 2025/26	RSM	
	Internal Audit Progress Report	RSM	
	Scrutiny CPFA Scrutiny Function and Areas for Future Scrutiny Consideration	Scrutiny and Assurance Manager	Minute 84 of 22 April 2024 Committee meeting refers
	Member-Led Reviews Update	Lead Councillors Scrutiny and Assurance Manager	
	Work Programme 2024/25	Chair	

Provisional Committee Dates 2025/26

2025 - 2 July, 8 October 2026 - 14 January, 25 March, 1 July