



REPORT TITLE: UPDATE ON GFRS CORPORATE STRATEGY

Scrutiny meeting	Fire and Rescue Scrutiny Committee Friday 19 July 2024 at 10.00 am Cabinet Suite - Shire Hall, Gloucester
Chair	Cllr Jeremy Hilton
Presenting Officer	Mark Preece: Chief Fire Officer, GFRS
Item Type	Scrutiny
Purpose of Report	To consider an update on the GFRS Corporate Strategy at the end of 2023-24.
Recommendations/ Action sought	None
Forthcoming Decisions	None
Background Documents	None.
Appendices	None
Contact Information	Mark Preece, Chief Fire Officer, GFRS Adam Waller, Planning and Performance Manager, GFRS

1. GCC Strategy, Ambition, and Key Objectives

1.1. Gloucestershire County Council's strategy 2022-26, 'Building back better in Gloucestershire' establishes 'A county council run Fire and Rescue Service that provides the highest standards of community safety and emergency response services to the communities of Gloucestershire' as a key ambition.

2. Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service (GFRS) Strategy

2.1. GFRS has created a Strategy for the Service covering the period 2022-26 within which we set out 3 strategic priorities to support delivery of that ambition. Our vision is to: "Create a positive workplace culture that empowers and supports our people to provide exceptional community safety and emergency response services to the communities of Gloucestershire" Below are a selection of examples of progress made across all 3 strategic priorities.

3. Achievements in 2023-24

3.1. Below are some of the key achievements during the year 2023-24 aligned to the three strategic priorities that focus our approach and resources.

Building the strongest foundations

We have continued to build trust, pride, and confidence through proactive and transparent communication with the public, partners, and our staff through a range of engagement activities. These have included:

- the GCC/GFRS staff survey, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) survey as part of the third inspection of GFRS.
- The recently closed consultation of the review of proposed response shift pattern changes with public and staff through a variety of face to face and online mechanisms
- Frequent 'have a go days' held at stations, and support and presence at community events such as Gloucestershire Pride and
- Internal staff groups providing our colleagues with the opportunity to have their voices heard

The Service has continued to be transformed through continuous improvement, examples of this include:

- Discharging three of the HMICFRS recommendations from the Round 2 inspection
- Worked with HMICFRS to complete our latest inspection
- Initial review and adoption of good practices set out in the Fire Standards Board's evolving suite of Fire standards

Unlocking the power of Digital, Data & Technology seen a number of successes, including:

- Unlocking the potential of M365 software rolled-out in 2022-23, through development and use of SharePoint, Lists, and PowerBI dashboards to add co-ordination and accessibility to core Service information

Ensure innovation through effective collaboration

- A new 'collaboration framework' has been developed that creates structure and guidance that drives clear communication, shared expectations, smooth workflows, and positive creative teamwork between partners

Keeping our communities safe

Over the year we have continued to ensure efficiency and effectiveness through our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) by delivering a number of projects, including:

- A review of our existing arrangements to ensure we have the required number of resources, with the right people and equipment, at the right time, in the right location. Successful analysis and modelling of data through quarters two and three enabled us

Keeping our communities safe

to arrive at a set of options to evolve our response provision on which we consulted widely with the public, staff and stakeholders during quarter 4 of 2023-24.

We have provided an effective, efficient, resilient and prompt response to emergencies over the year:

- The average response time to dwelling fires at March 2024 was slightly off target, but showed an improvement on the time at March 2023

Enable people to start, live and age 'Safe & Well' through targeted prevention activity:

- The rate of safe and well visits per 1,000 of the population in the county at March 2024 was better than the target set and improved on the figure at March 2023

Enable safer buildings, businesses and places through targeted protection activity

- Performance in this has been below expectations, recent successful recruitment will help to drive performance back towards targets set

Leading a sustainable and thriving Service

We ensure our people are well trained, properly supported & reflective of our communities:

- Three quarters of Fire Service staff have had an appraisal discussion with their manager in the last 12 months, 351 out of 469 roles, an improvement on the same figure 12 months ago meaning performance is more closely aligned with GCC overall.
- The 'Positive Action Education Programme' was designed and phase 1 was launched in quarter four of 2023-24. This education programme is delivered in association with the Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA) and is delivering 16 workshops to 209 staff members.
- The 'Career development pathway' initiative was launched for staff, designed to equip our people with the skills and knowledge required to optimise performance and provide consistent, fair, and transparent access to development across the Service
- We have successfully recruited across a range of roles and an effective promotions process has enabled increasing diversity at management levels

Ensure best value for money through effective financial planning through;

- The successful move of HQ staff from Waterwells to Quayside House. resulting in revenue savings

We have been successful in providing the best value facilities, fleet, and equipment through, for example:

- Scoping and starting to procure ten, 16 tonne fire appliances
- New GFRS uniform consultation and design completed with strong staff engagement with anticipated roll out in spring/summer 2024
- With GCC colleagues, work continues around developing a business case for a new training centre. If approved, this would need to be delivered in time for the closure of our Severn Park PFI training centre in April 2028.

Continual and sustained improvements in performance enable us to benchmark well against our peer group, some highlights include:

- The diversity of our workforce is largely positive
- The number of firefighters injured was similar to the peer group average
- Just over half of performance measures were in the upper middle or top quartiles
- We are doing less prevention work than our peer group in terms of Safe and Well visits, but the majority is targeted at high-risk groups
- We have a higher overall incident rate and dwelling fire incident rate are greater than our peer group
- Our response times to incidents were not as fast as those achieved by comparator Fire and Rescue Services in 2022/23, but our performance is good in relation to maintaining low levels of casualties and fatalities resulting from fire incidents
- We have a low level of Fire Safety audits identified as unsatisfactory

4. Looking ahead into 2024-25

4.1. Looking forward at the year ahead we have challenging targets for performance and a number of priority areas for delivery, as set out in the Annual Service Plan for 2024-25, these include:

- Delivery of revised HMI Improvement Plan in response to new HMI inspection
- Continued delivery of the People Plan (Cultural Improvement)
- New uniform roll-out
- Delivery of Fire Standards improvement plans and embedding self-assessment process
- Implementation of National Operational Guidance
- Development of CRMP 2026+
- Delivery of year three of CRMP 22-26 covering:
 - Severn Park Training Centre Review
 - Response Review Consultation
 - Predictive analysis and modelling implementation
 - Specialist PPE
 - Emergency Service Network Programme
 - Front line appliance review
 - Incident Command Unit Review
 - Arial appliance review
 - PowerBI data improvements

Delivery of these targets and actions will be monitored and scrutinised by GFRS SLT on at least a quarterly basis before relevant information is passed on into GCC governance structures for further oversight and scrutiny.