

Fire and Rescue Service – Context and Strategic Direction

The strategic direction of the Service is determined by the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2022-26. This is a statutory document outlining how we will match our resources to risks within the county through key objectives:

People and Social Responsibility: Further improve our inclusive culture to ensure that we attract, retain, support and develop a diverse workforce, which is truly representative of our communities.

Workforce ‘Fit for the future’: Develop and shape our Workforce to be ‘fit for the future’, strengthening health and wellbeing and ensuring that our people are equipped with the knowledge, skills and experience to continue building a safe, effective and resilient service to the people of Gloucestershire.

Prevention: Deliver tailored prevention activities that effectively and efficiently improve the safety, health and wellbeing of the diverse people who live, work in or visit Gloucestershire.

Protection: Deliver protection activities, to include inspections, audits, education and enforcement, which continue to reduce the likelihood and impact of fire in commercial buildings across Gloucestershire and reduce the risk to both the public and firefighters.

Response Arrangements: Review our existing arrangements to ensure that we have the required number of resources, with the right people and equipment, at the right time, in the right location.

Response Standards: Implement National Operational Guidance and approved National Fire Standards to assure and support operational competence, learning and preparedness.

Collaboration: Collaboration is important in every organisation. We will collaborate by communicating with partners and building on ideas to innovate or do something differently in the public’s interest.

Asset Management: Continue to provide best value facilities, vehicles, equipment and personal protective equipment (PPE), enabling us to deliver a professional service to our communities.

Digital, Data and Technology: Increase the use of data and business intelligence tools to ensure that we understand our risks and maximise the use of technology to respond appropriately to those risks.

His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) reported Areas for Improvement across the Service which are being managed through its Portfolio Management Office (PMO). These are a broad spectrum of improvements across the three pillars of effectiveness, efficiency and people. The PMO assists to

oversee and manage change across the Service, ensuring that projects are adequately resourced, delivered on time and in scope.

There has been an increased focus on the two causes of concern identified by HMICFRS during their inspection in November 2021. This stated that the Service:

- Hasn't done enough since the last inspection to embed its values and associated behaviours, and promote a positive workplace culture.
- Hasn't done enough since the last inspection to improve understanding of the importance of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and remove barriers to establishing EDI in the service.

In order to monitor progress, the GFRS Improvement Board has been established to gain support of the wider County Council. The Improvement board acts as a critical friend as the Service continues its improvement journey to:

- Maintain oversight to ensure that all the required improvements and quality assurances associated with the improvement journey by the Management Team are achieved in a timely manner.
- Add scrutiny and rigour towards achieving the required outcomes.
- Support the Management Team by removing barriers where progress is hampered by elements outside of its control.
- Review the evidence, by way of Status (Ratification) Reports which demonstrates that improvements are embedded within the organisation by the implementation of robust systems, processes, policies and procedures.

The Service is also ensuring the safety and wellbeing of its staff and the communities by embedding the Fire Professional Standards. These are overseen by the Fire Standards Board that has been set up to administer the identification, organisation, development and maintenance of professional Standards for Fire and Rescue Services in England. There are currently 12 Fire Professional Standards that cover subjects such as emergency response driving, fire investigation and emergency preparedness and resilience.

Fire and Rescue Service – Needs Analysis

GFRS identifies risks via Community Risk Profiles (CRP) which analyse previous incidents, fire safety audits and safe and well visits and future risks that could lead to emergency incidents in the future.

The CRP's inform our decision making regarding the most suitable prevention, protection and emergency response arrangements to manage risk to an acceptable level. The risks we consider include:

- Fatalities, reflecting the number of people killed at an incident.
- Casualties, covering those requiring medical intervention resulting from an incident and mental health casualty.
- Evacuation and shelter from hazardous events.
- Behaviour, public perception and anxiety.
- Economic, to include property damage, heritage loss and business disruption.
- Disruption to essential services including transport, utilities, finance, communications and other Emergency Services.
- Environmental, including all types of pollution to the environment

The county is divided into six districts, City of Gloucester, Cheltenham, Forest of Dean, Tewkesbury, Cotswold and Stroud with the main urban centres being Gloucester and Cheltenham where approximately 40% of the county's population live.

Over the last 10 years, population growth has been concentrated in the urban areas although there is now a growing tendency towards residential development in more rural locations. It is for this reason that there is an objective concerning our response arrangements within our CRMP to review our existing arrangements to ensure that we have the required number of resources, with the right people and equipment, at the right time, in the right location. To achieve this an independent modelling company has been commissioned to model our future response arrangements based on historical data and what we know the future is likely to bring in terms of risk.

The Fire Sector has seen dramatic change in the function and services it provides over the last 40 years. The incident types that Firefighters attend in 2021 are very different to those in the 1980's and much more broad ranging. The specialist functions our On-call Firefighters support, both locally and nationally, have increased with a need for further training in areas such as co-responding, terrorism, rope rescue, water rescue and hazardous materials. Changes in roles can be linked to our governance through the Fire Services Act 2004 and the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, which set our statutory duties. A number of changes have also been made through the ongoing Government drive for the Fire Service reform agenda. Our On-call Firefighters regularly support other partners and healthcare professionals in the delivery of their functions.

In order to provide the level of service determined by our CRMP and HMICFRS, GFRS needs to increase available resource supporting frontline services. This will allow the Service to improve overall and embed the new and emerging Fire Professional Standards.

Revenue Funding

The Fire and Rescue net revenue budget requirement for 2023/24 totals £20.804m. This includes £1.289m for pay inflation costs and £1.547m of budget growth to aid delivery of the CRMP objectives and improvements required by HMICRFS.

The provisional revenue budget is set as follows:

Department	Budget	%
Command (Senior Leadership, Community Safety PFI, Finance & Pensions)	£2.542m	12%
Transformation & Organisational Development (inc. Severn Park Training Centre)	£2.305m	11%
Business Planning & Performance	£0.845m	4%
Response & Resilience (inc. control, wholetime Stations & On-Call)	£11.178m	54%
ICT	£0.967m	5%
Logistics & Resources	£1.140m	5%
Prevention & Protection (inc Business Fire Safety & SkillZONE)	£1.827m	9%

Capital Funding

The CRMP highlights the importance of asset management and investment in facilities, vehicles and equipment enabling us to deliver a professional service to our communities. In support of this, new capital schemes, totalling £785k, include:

- Stroud Community Fire & Rescue Station access £416k
- Provision of treadmills for fitness testing £86k
- Fleet charging system £155k
- Equipment to support alignment with the National Operational Guidance programme £128k

Fire and Rescue Service – Outcomes & Priorities for 23/24

Our commissioning intentions for 2023/24 are to:

- Deliver of the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2022 – 2025 to reduce the risk of fire and other emergencies within the county.
- Respond to the outcomes of the HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) report.
- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of our staff and the communities we serve by embedding the Fire Professional Standards.

Specific planned activities for 2023/24 include:

- Implementation of the Cultural Change Plan
- Implementation of National Operational Guidance

- Development of a Collaboration Framework
- Fire safety risk review
- Delivery of the Emergency Service Network Programme
- Procurement and roll-out of specialist PPE