

REPORT TITLE: To seek Cabinet approval to carry out public consultation on GFRS’ resource configuration within the Community Risk Management Plan.

Cabinet Date	31 st January 2024.
Cabinet Member	Cllr. Dave Norman, Cabinet Member for Fire, Community Safety and Libraries.
Key Decision	Yes.
Purpose of Report	To seek Cabinet approval to carry out a public consultation in respect of the preferred option outlined in this paper with regard to the configuration of the Fire and Rescue Service in order to meet the priorities of the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2022-2026.
Recommendations	That Cabinet gives its approval to carry out a public consultation on its preferred option for enhancing the ability of the Fire and Rescue Service to deliver the outcomes set out in the Community Risk Management Plan, as set out in this report.
Reasons for Recommendations	<p>The findings from the proposed public consultation exercise will support the County Council in deciding whether to proceed to implement the changes proposed by the preferred option.</p> <p>Implementation of the preferred option will assist GFRS in delivering an enhanced level of Response, Protection and Prevention activities in line with the GFRS CRMP 2022-2026 strategic objectives. These align to Gloucestershire County Council’s (GCC) Building Back Better strategic ambition “<i>Transforming Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service</i>” and wider commitments to the community of Gloucestershire.</p> <p><i>“Working together we will provide the highest standard of community safety and emergency response services to the communities of Gloucestershire”.</i></p>
Resource Implications	<p>The proposed consultation exercise would be managed by existing GFRS teams with support from GCC’s Communications Team; including a comprehensive communications strategy.</p> <p>Any additional support to manage consultation activity will be met from within existing GFRS budgets</p> <p>The options have the following potential financial implications (financial year 2025/26 onwards):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option 1 - £155k capital and £214k revenue • Option 2 - £155k capital and £1.57m revenue

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option 3 - £120k capital and £788k revenue • Option 4 - Nil
Background Documents	<p>Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service Community Risk Management Plan 2022- 2026.</p> <p>Gloucestershire County Council 'Building Back Better in Gloucestershire' 2022 – 2026.</p> <p>Grey book – National Joint Council For Local Authorities' Fire and Rescue Services, Scheme of conditions of service (Sixth edition).</p> <p>Managing shift work – Health and Safety Guidance HSE.</p> <p>His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire, and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Strategy 2023-2027.</p> <p>Fire Standards – Community Risk Management Planning 2021</p>
Statutory Authority	<p>Statutory Duties and Responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. • Civil Contingencies Act 2004. • Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. • Fire and Rescue Service (Emergencies) (England) Order 2007. • Policing and Crime Act 2017. • Crime and Disorder Act 1998. • Buildings Safety Act 2022. • Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018.
Divisional Councillor(s)	All.
Officer	<p>Name: Mark Preece</p> <p>Email: mark.preece@glosfire.gov.uk</p>
Timeline	<p>Public consultation: 12 Weeks.</p> <p>Trade Union engagement: Throughout the consultation period.</p> <p>Initial paper to Cabinet: 31st January 2024.</p> <p>Final proposal to Cabinet: 4th December 2024.</p> <p>Implementation: 1st April 2025.</p>

Background

1. Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service (GFRS) and Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) are committed to providing the best services to the communities we serve. GFRS Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2023 - 2026 has clear strategic objective to perform scenario modelling in reference to the current and future fire cover provision entitled "Response Arrangements". This objective will ensure the Service has the required number of resources, with the right people and equipment, at the right time, in the right location thereby mitigating risk and managing demand.
2. To do this GFRS consistently assesses its ability to deliver an effective and efficient service, to ensure it fulfils the requirements set out in Section 4.6 of the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018 and meets the requirements of its CRMP.
3. On this occasion GFRS launched an independent review into its use of resources to be conducted by an external specialist company, namely Operational Research in Health (ORH). Work commenced in November 2022 leading ORH to provide the Service with detailed analysis and modelling options that could potentially deliver a more effective and efficient Fire and Rescue Service.
4. In addition, GFRS conducts regular reviews of its emergency response cover arrangements through risk analysis of previous incidents, fire safety audits, safe and well visits, and the assessment of future risks that could lead to emergency incidents in the future. The risk information comes from a number of sources and helps the Service to develop its Community Risk Profile (CRP), these include:
 - Fatalities, reflecting the number of people killed at an incident.
 - Casualties, covering those requiring medical intervention resulting from an incident and mental health casualties.
 - Evacuation and shelter from hazardous events.
 - Behaviour, public perception and anxiety.
 - Economy, to include property damage, heritage loss and business disruption.
 - Disruption to essential services including transport, utilities, finance, communications and other Emergency Services.
 - Environmental risks including all types of pollution to the environment.
5. One of the key objectives of the review work carried out by ORH was to model a series of options to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of emergency response cover considering a whole range of factors such as; quantifying and analysing risks, matching our resources to risk and identifying optimal resource locations, responding efficiently and optimising our day to day management and contingency planning.
6. Gloucestershire is a diverse county covering 1,024 square miles and hosting a population of approximately 640,000. The county is divided into six districts; the City of Gloucester, Cheltenham, the Forest of Dean, Tewkesbury, the Cotswolds and Stroud.

GFRS has 32 fire appliances with a further 15 specialist vehicles that ensure we provide a high standard emergency response to all incidents in all areas. These vehicles are crewed by On-call and Wholetime Firefighters.

The Service borders six other Fire and Rescue Services (South Wales, Hereford and Worcester, Warwickshire, Dorset and Wiltshire, Oxfordshire and Avon), providing mutual cross border support to one another if and when required.

7. GFRS currently operates 10 wholetime shifts per week, comprising a day shift and a night shift at each of its five wholetime locations. (Stroud, Gloucester North, Gloucester South, Cheltenham West and Cheltenham East).
8. The GFRS operational emergency response model utilises both Wholetime Firefighting provision and On-call firefighters to discharge its primary function of responding to operational incidents. An On-call firefighter is a paid person employed by a fire and rescue service who is “On- call” to respond to a range of emergencies and to engage with their community. They have everyday lives and jobs, until their pager sounds - then they become operational firefighters.

On-call firefighters are a vital part of today’s modern Fire and Rescue Service. They provide an effective, efficient service that gives emergency cover to more than 90% of the United Kingdom. GFRS actively recruit people from our communities who can respond on an On-call basis.

GFRS operates an On-call model across 16 of its 21 stations across the County, equating to approximately 246 Firefighters (Firefighter to Watch Manager roles). However, locally and nationally there are significant recruitment and retention challenges caused by modern living. This paper seeks to address some of these challenges, providing additional emergency cover options that deliver an improved response footprint across Gloucestershire. This also supports our Protection and Prevention agenda and our wider commitment to the communities we serve.

GFRS continues to explore a wide range of options to support our recruitment and retention challenges and closely monitors our On-call station availability. Unfortunately, due to the current challenges across the Fire Sector caused by modern living it is becoming more apparent that a guaranteed response from our On-call teams is reducing.

9. In 2017, the then Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) took on inspections of England’s Fire and Rescue Services. This is now known as His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS). The Inspectorate independently assess and reports on the effectiveness and efficiency of Constabulary’s and Fire and Rescue Services – in the public interest. This paper supports GFRS in evidencing the discharge of the expectation in HMICFRS reports, whilst delivering clear benefits to the communities we serve.
10. GFRS currently operates the following shift patterns for Wholetime crews located at its five wholetime stations ensuring continuous operational availability 24/7:
 - 2-day shifts starting at 0900 and finishing at 1800 = 9 hours and
 - 2 night shifts starting at 1800 and finishing at 0900 = 15 hours.

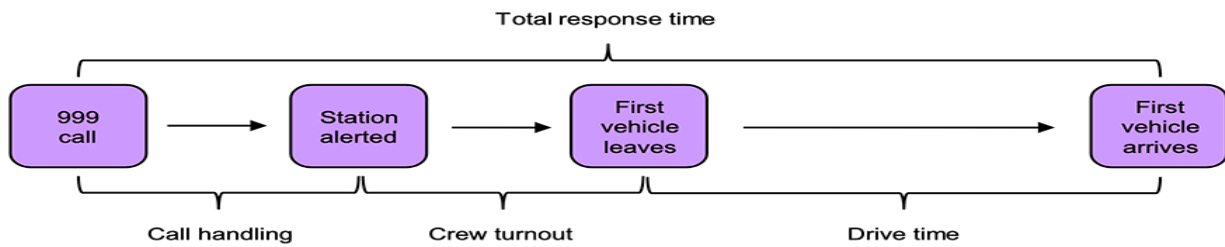
11. The following response standards have been agreed by the Fire Authority for primary fires:

Fires in buildings, vehicles and outdoor structures are known as primary fires as they are most likely to involve a risk to life. To measure performance GFRS breaks this down into the following categories:

- Dwelling fires - We will attend dwelling fires based on an average response time of 9 minutes or under.
- Commercial fires primary - We will attend commercial fires based on an average response time of 10 minutes or under.
- All primary fires - We will attend primary fires based on an average response time of 10 minutes or under.
- Currently (October 2023) the measured average response to dwelling fires across the county is 9 minutes 17 seconds.
- Average response to primary fires is 10 minutes 58 seconds.
- Average response to Commercial properties is 11 minutes 8 seconds.

The response time consists of three elements: -

The 'total response time' measures the **minutes and seconds 00:00** taken from time of call to time of arrival at the scene of the first fire appliance. This can be broken down into three component parts:



- Call handling (time of call coming into Fire Control, to the time when the nearest fire station is alerted).
- Crew turnout time (time of alert received by the nearest fire station, to the time that the fire appliance is mobile to the incident).
- Drive time (time that the fire appliance is mobile, to the time that the fire appliance arrives on scene).

12. ORH modelled the impact on response performance from removing each of the 10 shifts in turn, to assess which shift(s) could be removed with the smallest impact on response performance. Modelling then proceeded to test moving these night shifts to alternative locations as a day shift. This effectively creates two day-shift stations in place of one 24/7 station. The model created by ORH was used to test the redeployment of resources in a methodical way to understand how best to place the resources to be moved, ensuring that the Service maximises availability and capacity.

13. Modelling was also carried out to understand the impact on response performance if no existing stations were changed to a day shift model. Additional modelling suggested benefits in line with principles discussed in this report. The modelling indicated principles for two new day shift stations that could be established at Cirencester and Cinderford.

14. In order to maximise opportunities for GFRS and GCC Prevention and Protection commitments whilst ensuring the health, safety and welfare of our Firefighters, ORH modelled the options presented in this paper on a 12 hours day and night shift basis. (The benefits and opportunities of a 12-hour model is detailed in the 12-hour option section of this paper).

15. The benefits to our Prevention objectives will be an enhanced capacity to deliver a suite of person and community centred activities. These can be delivered at the right place with the right skills strengthening our offer, ability and capacity to deliver increased community engagement in rural areas e.g. school visits, safety campaigns, partnership events.

16. Protection (Business Fire Safety) benefits will be an enhanced targeting resources through an effective intelligence led, Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP). This will make the built environment across Gloucestershire safer by improving compliance with fire safety legislation across the business sector in Gloucestershire.

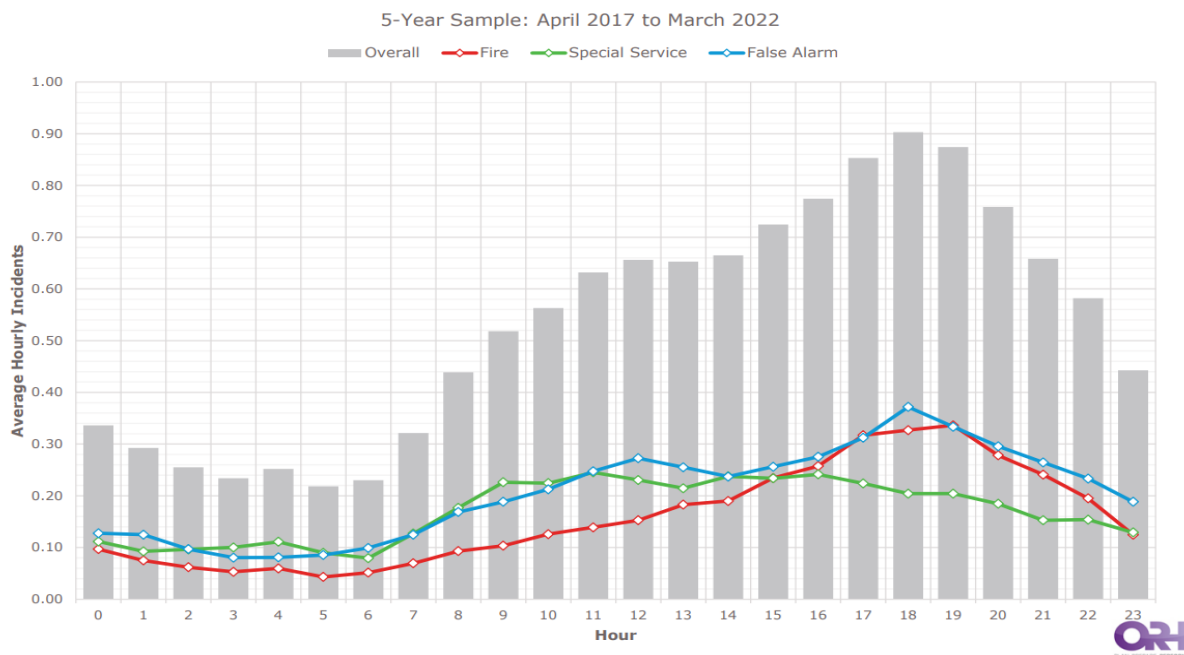
As a consequence, there will be improved the health, safety, and wellbeing of our communities and Firefighters whilst reducing the risk of economic and psychological loss to business owners.

17. There is clear evidence showing a link between social deprivation and the occurrence of fire, and as such our prevention and protection work, as well as our emergency response has to be tailored to the differing needs of each community that we serve.

To ensure that we meet the needs of Gloucestershire’s local communities, it is essential that we make sure that we have the right people, with the right equipment, in the right place and at the right time

18. For all options presented by ORH, modelling was also completed to assess whether the Wholetime shifts should operate from 0700-1900 hrs, 0800-2000 hrs or 0900- 2100 hrs. In all four options, the 0900-2100 hrs gave the best response time impacts. This can be seen in the demand by hour analysis shown below.

Demand By Hour



19. For clarity reference response times presented in the options for consideration, a reduction is a positive benefit and therefore delivers an improvement to the communities of Gloucestershire, response times are based on risk and the principles of fire survivability*.

*There is currently no agreed National Standards reference response standards.

Options

Four options were analysed by ORH in order to understand their likely impact.

Option 1: To move the Wholetime night shifts from Cheltenham West and Stroud to Cinderford and Cirencester as Wholetime day shifts.

20. Positive impacts and social value benefits

*All times are shown in minutes and seconds (00:00)

- The mean GFRS-wide emergency response time would improve (00:09* quicker for 1st fire appliance and 00:17 quicker for 2nd fire appliance).
- The mean emergency response time for the Cotswolds district would significantly reduce (01:00 quicker for 1st fire appliance and 01:20 quicker for 2nd fire appliance).
- The mean emergency response time for the Forest of Dean district would significantly reduce (01:21 quicker for 1st fire appliance and 01:40 quicker for 2nd fire appliance).

- The mean emergency response time would become more consistent across the six districts. The difference between the longest and shortest response time reduces from 05:38 to 04:58.
- The new day shifts at Cinderford and Cirencester stations would be able to carry out community focused services in the local area to reduce risk and increase safety (e.g. safe and well visits, hydrant inspections, 7.2.d risk visit inspections, National Fire Chief Council campaigns and business safe and well). For example, the number of safe and well visits carried out in Cinderford and Cirencester would increase.
- Creating four new day shifts utilising the staff from the two previously night shifts would bring an increase of 49 productive hours per week at each of the two new stations (x10 crew = 490 hours) due to the removal of the need for stand down hours. This could further increase the amount of fire prevention activities in the community.

21. Negative impacts and risks

- There would be a degradation in the mean emergency response time for Stroud district (00:31 slower for 1st fire appliance and 00:12 slower for 2nd fire appliance).
- There would be a degradation in the mean emergency response time for Cheltenham district (00:16 slower for 1st fire appliance and 00:25 slower for 2nd fire appliance).
- There would be a degradation in the mean emergency response time for Tewkesbury district (00:14 slower for 1st fire appliance and 00:22 slower for 2nd fire appliance).
- Associated capital and revenue costs (detailed below).

22. Financial impacts

This option would require an estimated £155,000 in capital investment and an estimated uplift of £214,617 in revenue expenditure. Below is a breakdown of the additional costs and savings.

- An additional four Watch Managers at a cost of £63,764, including annual Continued Professional Development (CPD) payment per post. Total cost of £255,056 (Including CPD). NB: This cost could be mitigated by the relocation of current Watch Managers if capacity allows.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and uniform for the four additional Watch Managers - £9,524
- Refurbishment to Cinderford and Cirencester station and facilities to accommodate the duty day staff – estimated £155,000 (Based on itemised Quantity Surveyor (QS) report for the renovation of Stroud station, provided by Asset Management and Property Services (AMPS). These estimated costs could be lower than predicted due to current work streams in other project areas).
- Cost saving generated by the new Cinderford and Cirencester Wholetime day shift attending incidents instead of Cinderford and Cirencester On-call staff – estimate £62,218*.
- Cost saving generated by the new Cinderford and Cirencester Wholetime day shift completing Community Safety Advisor work instead of Cinderford and Cirencester On-call staff – estimated £4,128*.
- Additional cost of Stroud On-call mobilising to incidents during night time hours – estimated £16,383*.

* Figures based on four years historical data.

Option 2: To retain staffing levels at all existing stations and establish two new day shift stations at Cirencester and Cinderford.

23. This would require an increase of an additional four Watch Managers, four Crew Managers and 20 Firefighters.

24. Positive impacts and social value benefits

- The mean GFRS county wide emergency response time would improve (00:19 quicker for 1st fire appliance and 00:16 quicker for 2nd fire appliance).
- The mean emergency response time for the Cotswolds district would significantly reduce (0:58 quicker for 1st fire appliance and 00:13 quicker for 2nd fire appliance).
- The mean emergency response time for the Forest of Dean district significantly reduces (01:21 quicker for 1st fire appliance and 01:40 quicker for 2nd fire appliance).
- The mean emergency response time becomes more consistent across the six districts. The difference between the longest and shortest response time reduces from 05:38 to 04:58.
- The new day shifts at Cinderford and Cirencester stations would be able to carry out community focused services in the local area to reduce risk and increase safety (e.g., Safe and well visits, hydrant inspections, 7.2.d risk visit inspections, NFCC campaigns and business safe and well).
- Increased emergency response cover for incidents and support for our On-call Firefighters.
- Increase Business Continuity and resilience arrangements.
- Increased geographic cover and distribution of local, regional and national assets including specialist resources.
- Alternative crewing model would allow for a more diverse workforce where additional reasonable adjustments could be made such as no night shift working.
- Increased potential for future Wholetime employment opportunities with increased diversity benefits.
- There is no degradation in the mean emergency response time due to all existing stations retaining their current staffing levels.

25. Negative impacts and risks

- Associated capital and revenue costs (detailed below).
- Perception challenge around efficiency and effectiveness due to other viable models being available such as Option 1.

26. Financial impacts

This option would require an estimated £155,000 in capital investment and an estimated uplift of £1,571,148 in revenue expenditure. Below is a breakdown of the additional costs and savings.

- Additional four Watch Managers, four Crew Managers and 20 Firefighters. Total cost £1,495,943 (including annual CPD payment).
- PPE and uniform for the additional staff - £66,668.
- Initial training for the additional staff - £58,500 (assuming 15 new staff and 13 transferees from other services or On-call).
- Refurbishment to Cinderford and Cirencester station and facilities to accommodate the duty day staff – estimated £155,000 (Based on itemised QS report for the renovation of Stroud station, provided by AMPS. These estimated costs could be lower than predicted due to current workstreams in other project areas).
- Cost saving generated by the new Cinderford and Cirencester Wholetime day shift attending incidents instead of Cinderford and Cirencester on call staff – estimate £62,218*.
- Cost saving generated by the new Cinderford and Cirencester Wholetime day shift completing CSA work instead of Cinderford and Cirencester on call staff – estimated £4,128*.
- Additional cost of Stroud on call mobilising to incidents during night time hours – estimated £16,383 average*.

*Figures based on four years historical data.

Option 3: (Preferred option) To retain staffing levels at all existing stations and establish a new day shift station at Cinderford only.

27. This would require an increase of an additional two Watch Managers, two Crew Managers and 10 firefighters to establish a new day shift at Cinderford only.

28. Positive impacts and social value benefits

- The mean emergency response time for the Forest of Dean district significantly reduces (01:21 quicker for 1st fire appliance and 01:40 quicker for 2nd fire appliance).
- The mean emergency response time becomes more consistent across the six districts. The difference between the longest and shortest response time reduces from 05:38 to 04:58.
- The new day shift at Cinderford station will be able to carry out community focused services in the local area to reduce risk and increase safety (e.g., Safe and well visits, hydrant inspections, NFCC campaigns and business safe and well).
- Increased emergency response cover for incidents and support for our On-call Firefighters.
- Increase Business Continuity and resilience arrangements.
- Increased geographic cover and distribution of local, regional and national assets including specialist resources.
- Alternative crewing model to allow for a more diversify workforce where additional reasonable adjustments could be made such as no night shift working.
- Increased potential for future Wholetime employment opportunities.
- There is no degradation in the mean emergency response time due to all existing stations retaining their current staffing levels.

Negative impacts and risks

- Associated capital and revenue costs (detailed below).
- Perception challenge around efficiency and effectiveness due to other viable models being available such as Option 1.
- Trade union and staff challenge around the associated interdependencies of a 12-hour shift pattern.

29. Financial impacts

This option would require an estimated £120,000 in capital investment and an estimated uplift of £788,440 in revenue expenditure. Below is a breakdown of the additional costs and savings.

- An additional two Watch Managers, two Crew Managers and 10 Firefighters at a cost of £741,622(including annual CPD payment). This cost could be mitigated by the relocation of current Watch Managers if capacity allows.
- PPE and uniform for the additional staff - £33,334.
- Initial training for the additional staff - £31,200 (Assuming a mixture of eight new starters and six trained transferees).
- Refurbishment to Cinderford station and facilities to accommodate the duty day staff – estimated £120,000 (Based on itemised QS report for the renovation of Stroud station, provided by AMPS. These estimated costs could be lower than predicted due to current workstreams in other project areas).
- Cost saving generated by the new Cinderford wholetime day shift attending incidents instead of Cinderford on call staff – estimate £15,560.
- Cost saving generated by the new Cinderford wholetime day shift completing CSA work instead of Cinderford on call staff – estimated £2,156.

30. It is important to note that all revenue costs associated with personnel i.e. Firefighters, will be ongoing costs and will be subjected to increases in line with associated annual pay rises and other financial commitments such as pensions.

Option 4: To do nothing.

31. This option would open the Service up for scrutiny by key external stakeholders such as the HMICFRS and would need to be supported by clear rational as the HMICFRS have clear expectations around efficiency, effectiveness and resource modelling aligned to risk which is informed by the commissioned ORH modelling work in line with the Services, the Fire Authority (GCC) legal, moral and ethical commitments as detailed in the CRMP 2022 -2026, Building back better in Gloucestershire' 2022 – 2026 – *“Transforming the Fire Service”*.

We also have a responsibility to deliver against the clear expectations of the public to deliver effective and efficient services to the communities of Gloucestershire.

12 Hour Shift (Interdependency / Option)

32. As previously stated in this report to maximise the benefits as outlined in Options 1, 2 or 3, and in line with the ORH modelling and wider GFRS Protection and Prevention agendas, it is strongly recommended that either of these options would be delivered in conjunction with a change to the current Wholetime duty shift system.

NB: Across the 44 Fire and Rescue Services (England) there are a range of duty systems that are determined by individual risk profiles and community needs, this report seeks to align and match Gloucestershire's resource to risk, community needs and operational demand.

33. GRFS currently operate a 9-hour day shift and a 15-hour night shift at each of its wholetime fire stations as previously outlined in this report.

The Service has a clear duty to periodically monitor, review and assess the effectiveness of its operating model as well a legal duty to ensure the Health Safety and Wellbeing of its employees.

The main principle of the Health Safety at Work (HSW) Act 1974 is that those who create risk from work activity are responsible for the protection of workers and the public from any consequences.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) 'Managing shift work HSG256' make clear and strong recommendations that shifts should not be planned to be longer than 12 hours.

As people are at the heart of what we do, we will continue to assess and manage the risks associated with shift work, improving the health and safety of workers by reducing the risks they are exposed to.

In direct relation to shift patterns, research has shown that there can be undesirable consequences for those working shifts outside standard daytime hours.

Shift work may result in:

- In disruption of the internal body clock.
- Fatigue.
- Sleeping difficulties.
- Disturbed appetite and digestion.
- Social and domestic problems.

Which in turn can affect performance, increase the likelihood of errors and accidents at work and might have a negative effect on health.

Additional benefits linked to shorter night shifts include:

- Lowering sickness and absenteeism.
- Reducing the risk of fatigue-related accidents.
- Increasing work efficiency and productivity.
- Improving product quality (service delivery).
- Reducing staff turnover.

Therefore, it is important for the Service to control, mitigate, minimise risks effectively and prevent harm to its people and any unintended consequences to the communities we serve by monitoring, reviewing and assessing.

It is important to note that any suggested changes are in line with the “Grey Book” and no fundamental changes are being proposed to terms and conditions outside of the current duty system. The Service is committed to proactive and meaningful engagement with the Trade Union bodies and our workforce on such matters.

Positive impacts and social value benefits

34. Increased Productivity - moving from a 9-hour day shift to a 12-hour day shift enables additional time, therefore realising additional capacity for the delivery of core GFRS function focused around Protection (Business fire safety) and Prevention (Community safety). In addition, it will enable further development of individuals and teams by affording additional time to train, exercise, undertake personal development (study) and increased opportunities to improve Mental Health (e.g. mindfulness and greater opportunities to undertake physical exercise).

As detailed previously, the ORH modelling suggest 0900 – 2100hrs delivers the most efficient operating model.

However, through engagement, Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA) and staff feedback the Service acknowledges that this is an area that can be explored further in terms of start and finish times aligned to the current risk and demand profile as detailed by ORH whilst considering the opportunities around Protection, Prevention and community activities.

In addition, 12-hour shifts enable a greater level of support to the On-call element of the Service and helps to mitigate some of the current challenges faced by the On-call duty system caused by modern living as previously mentioned.

NB: The Service recognises that change can cause a range of reactions. As a change in current work practices will result in a wide range of perceived positive or negative impacts on individual circumstances the Service will ensure all reasonable adjustment are considered in line with the EqIA and further engagement throughout any consultation period.

Public Consultation in respect of GFRS’s CRMP

35. GCC and GFRS’s approach to consultation would be guided by the Local Government Association’s (LGA) new Conversation Guide.

Consultation with key stakeholders will help GCC and GFRS to make informed decisions, manage expectations and improve relationships, creates a stronger two-way relationship between the Service and its communities and creates a better understand of the impact of proposed plans whilst inviting other ideas.

Public consultation will gather feedback from those who live, work and travel in the region about the future provision of our Fire and Rescue Services in Gloucestershire. Consultation will take place with members of the public, our staff and representative bodies, County Councillors, partners, and local groups, including those representing and working with vulnerable people. The GFRS team will proactively engage across the county. GCC Property and Financial Services will also be required to be involved as we will be consulting on a number of options.

The proposed consultation exercise will be carried out over a 12-week period running from the start of March 2024. This consultation will include the following internal and external elements:

Internal

- Meeting with all Firefighter Trade Unions (FBU, FRSA and FOA).
- Face to face events for all staff groups (Station based staff at Gloucester, Cheltenham, Cirencester and Cinderford, Middle managers and above, HQ staff).
- Neighbouring On-Call locations within the county.
- An intranet page that contains relevant information and FAQ's.
- GFRS 'Ever Forward' internal newsletter.
- Articles in Members Matter and the members' weekly bulletin.
- Articles in Talksmart and on Staffnet.

External

- Emails and letters to key stakeholders.
- Community social media releases.
- Social media to publicise the Fire Cover Review and its consultation.
- Facebook paid advertising.
- Posters for libraries and Fire Stations.
- Gov delivery bulletins.
- GCC and GFRS websites.
- Article in Councils Connected e-newsletters.
- Public Consultation Events at Cheltenham, Gloucester, Stroud, Cinderford, Cirencester.

GCC Communications Team will support the consultation with proactive communications activity to encourage involvement of all key stakeholders. It is proposed that feedback from the consultation will be analysed and findings delivered to Cabinet for consideration in December 2024.

Recommended Option and Rationale.

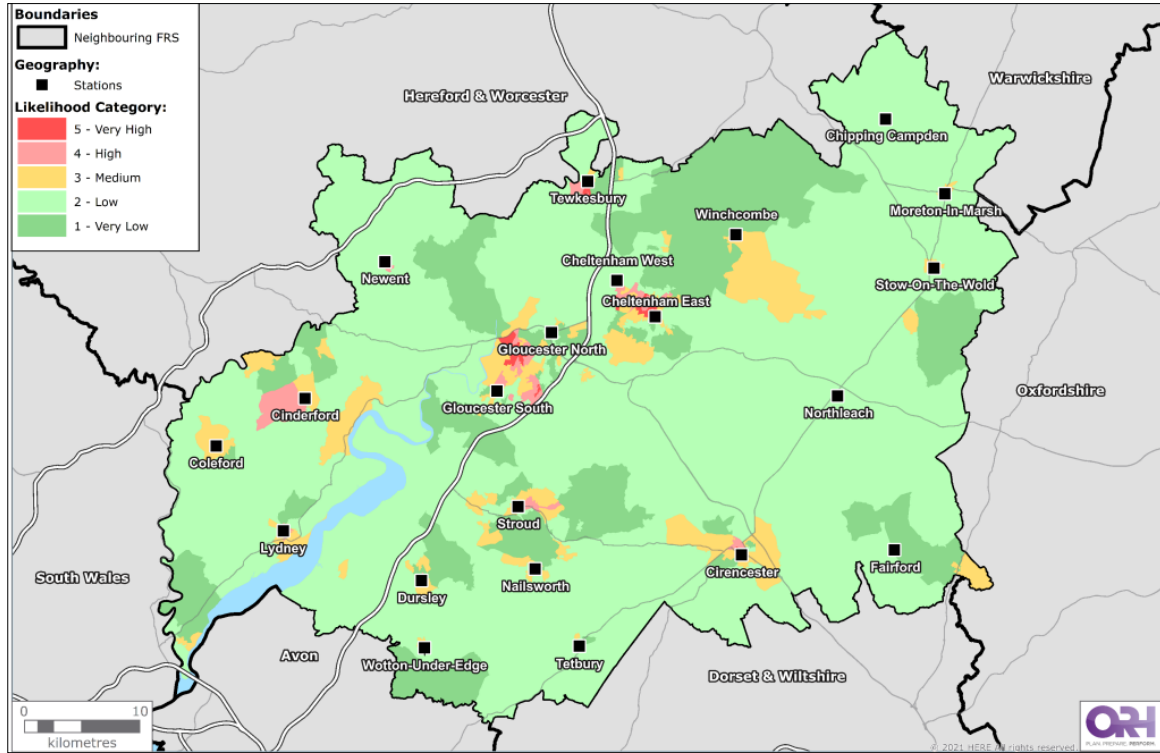
36. Following extensive research and analysis this paper recommends that Option 3 be taken forward for consultation as the preferred option, alongside the implementation of the 12-hour Wholetime shift pattern as detailed in this report.

NB: This option has been selected as offering the best opportunity to enhance the Service's capacity for Response, Protection and Prevention activates in line with the CRMP. Factors influencing this include:

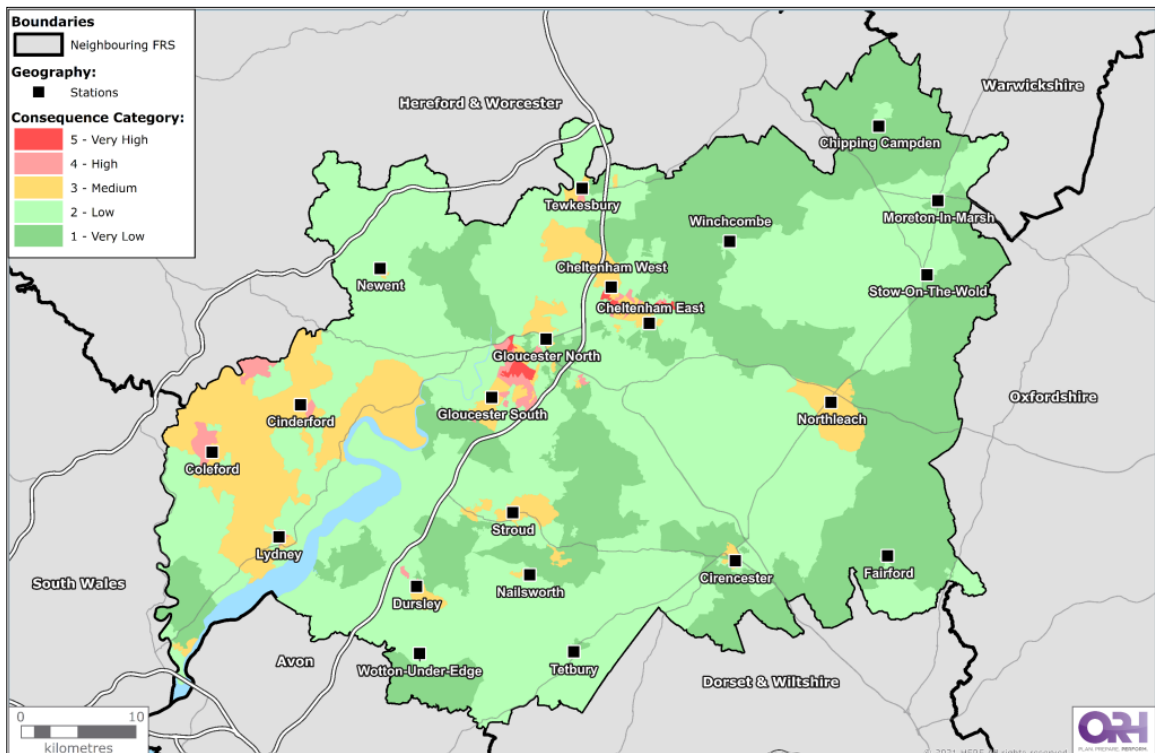
- The ORH modelling data shows that upgrading Cinderford to a day staffed station results in the greatest improvement of attendance times out of all the modelled scenarios. (01:21 quicker for 1st fire appliance and 01:40 quicker for 2nd fire appliance)
- Of the two modelled options for upgrading on call stations to day staffed stations (Cinderford and Cirencester), there are a greater number of fire incidents in the Cinderford area, both in number and per 1000 population (based on 3 years data).
- The ORH modelling data shows that of the two modelled options for upgrading on call stations to day staffed stations (Cinderford and Cirencester), Cinderford has the lower 1st pump and 2nd pump availability meaning it is at greatest risk if it remains unchanged.
- 2022/23 data indicates that Cinderford carry out 25% less Safe and Well visits to the local community and this would be improved with the preferred option.
- The risk mapping provided by ORH shows Cinderford has one of the County's largest high-risk areas. This is based on likelihood factors including; health, transport, employment and housing. Other contributing factors are Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and Crime Data. Cinderford also has the majority of 'medium and above' risk rating areas for consequence. This reinforces the need for greater community safety activity within the local area. See the following maps for Risk Likelihood and Risk Consequence by Lower Super Output Area (LSOA).

NB: Lower Super Output Areas are geographical areas comprising between 400 and 1200 households and usually have a resident population between 1000 and 3000 persons.

Risk likelihood by LSOA



Risk consequence by LSOA



In summary, the proposals set out in Option 3 would also enable an enhanced level of resilience and supports GFRS's ability to provide a wide range of Services across the county and common shift times enable future agility of workforce distribution.

This option will require an increased level of investment and this would be seen as a positive step in terms of committing to Community and Firefighter Safety.

The Service recognises the current local, regional and national fiscal landscape balancing this with our commitment to enhance, improve and deliver in line with our legal, moral, economic commitments and feel the return on investment is warranted. The social and economic value of this option delivers value for money for the public and communities of Gloucestershire.

Whilst considering the options it was important to recognise the current recruitment and retention challenges the Fire Sector is facing with its On-call. The preferred option supports the drive for a more diverse workforce with the right skills and core values to serve in a modern service.

Therefore, in the current climate GFRS recommend a balanced approach of introducing one Wholetime station in Cinderford to deliver increased services, whilst maximising availability and capacity across the County as detailed through this report and supported by the evidence in the ORH report.

This would allow other elements of the report, the proposal to move to a 12-hour Wholetime shifts, to be embedded allowing for improved workforce mobility in the future. In addition, the Service would manage its staff's expectations and the associated change management journey that would ensure support for the Services wider strategies around:

- Initiatives for improving recruitment and retention.
- Equality Diversity and Inclusion and Positive Action in recruitment.
- Putting people at the heart of everything we do.
- Delivering an agile Service that is resourced to risk (CRMP).
- Driving results and learning lessons.
- Supporting an ageing population.

Climate change implications

37. With all options there is a stronger commitment to considering the carbon implications, this will be enhanced further alongside the consultation of the preferred option.

Ecological implications

38. Since there are no planned construction or development activities on the existing sites, there is no necessity to contemplate any ecological implications in connection with any of the options presented in this document.

Equality implications

39. Equality Impact Assessment's (EqIA's) are carried out to identify the effect on underrepresented groups.

The survey contains equality monitoring questions. This equalities information is captured to ensure we take the views and needs of differing people into consideration. The equalities questions are not a mandatory part of the survey and cannot be used to identify any respondents.

The equality monitoring reports can be run regularly during the consultation period to identify any gaps within underrepresented groups.

A stakeholder list is held by the Communications Team which includes a large number of community organisations and groups.

The Senior Consultation Officer would work with officers in relation to specific engagement and consultation requirements to identify specific stakeholders relevant to a specific piece of work.

We can use external organisations to help engage with specific client groups.

Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) implications

40. We use 'Bang the Table Engagement HQ' software which provides all the features the council needs to comply with the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). <https://helpdesk.bangthetable.com/en/articles/1931875-gdpr-compliant-community-engagement-with-engagementhq>.

Further information on the Council's data protection policies is available at www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/data-protection

Social value implications

41. Options 1 to 3 would increase the amount of community focused services which could be provided in the local area. For example, the existing level of safe and well visits could significantly increase in the communities of Cinderford and Cirencester, whilst maintaining the current output from Cheltenham West and Stroud. Data from the NFCC Return on Investment (ROI) calculator will be available when released from NFCC to evidence the economic and social value of making this change.

Consultation feedback

42. GCC's consultation platform will be used to capture and analyse all survey responses and provide qualitative and quantitative data reports to help inform decision making.

Performance management/follow-up

43. Progress will be tracked, monitored and supported through the Portfolio Management Board comprising a selection of County Council Directors and GFRS Heads of Service.

44. The Fire and Rescue Scrutiny Committee will scrutinise progress bi-monthly

45. His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) will scrutinise progress during their inspections of the Service.