



**TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**Item No 6**

**FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING: 24 JULY 2023**

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**SUBJECT: INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN (IRMP) 2021-2024  
PROPOSAL 3; BIRTLEY FIRE STATION RECOMMENDED  
AMMENDMENT**

**JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER/CHIEF EXECUTIVE (THE CLERK  
TO THE AUTHORITY), THE FINANCE DIRECTOR AND THE PERSONNEL  
ADVISOR TO THE AUTHORITY**

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 At the Fire Authority meeting of 13 September 2021, the outcomes of the draft Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2021-2024 and four proposals put to public consultation was presented.
- 1.2 IRMP Proposal 3; *to introduce a day crewing working pattern at Birtley fire station*, was not approved. The Chief Fire Officer was requested to revisit the proposal of introducing a day crewing provision and present a further paper to Fire Authority where the fire cover proposals included the hours of 2000 hrs through to 0800 hrs was reconsidered.
- 1.3 This paper returns IRMP 2021-2024, proposal 3 back to the Fire Authority following completion of the action requested in paragraph 1.2 above.

## **2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Fire Authority is required, as set out in the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018, to produce an IRMP covering at least a three year period. During 2020-2021, a review was undertaken to identify a series of proposals for inclusion in the IRMP 2021-24, to identify improvement actions to enable the most effective and efficient response model.
- 2.2 The IRMP process has been used for more than 15 years to shape and change the Service; reducing costs, driving continuous improvement, and enabling the Service to manage community risk by efficient use of resources. In 2022, the IRMP 2021-24 document was updated to become the Authority's Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2022-24, aligned to the new Fire Standard.



The four IRMP actions approved by Fire Authority in September 2021 and October 2021 remain unchanged in the CRMP document.

- 2.3 Four proposed IRMP 2021-2024 actions were presented to Fire Authority in September 2021, to ensure maintenance of the speed and weight of operational response, and to ensure that TWFRS remain one of the fastest FRS in England to the most serious fires, whilst addressing the changing community risk.
- 2.4 Proposals were developed by an IRMP Review Team, and involved the detailed analysis of comprehensive risk and incident data, engagement with staff and representative bodies, with a focus on reinvestment of resources in the front line, and with consideration to the recent challenge legal decision (and subsequent HSE direction) on day crewing close call shift arrangements. The four proposals were consulted on for an eight week period over summer 2021, and then initially presented to FA for approval in September 2021.
- 2.5 One of these proposed IRMP actions (IRMP 2021-24 Action 3) presented to Members, based on data analysis and professional assessment of risk, was:
- Introduce a day crewing working pattern at Birtley fire station.
- 2.6 Following consideration of the consultation results, and feedback from Members, an amendment was made to this proposal, and taken back to Fire Authority on 11 October 2021, where Members gave approval to TWFRS to implement:
- the original day crewing proposal between 0800 hrs and 2000 hrs each day with an on call provision between 2000 hrs and 0800 hrs each day.
- 2.7 The Service updated Members on 13 February 2023 that all four IRMP 2021-24 actions had been fully implemented, and that these actions resulted in the creation of 54 new Firefighter roles within the Service, representing a significant investment by the Fire Authority to public and firefighter safety.
- 2.8 The Service is committed to providing Members with continuous updates on the impact of IRMP actions, to ensure efficiency and effectiveness at all times.
- 2.9 This report provides this update on IRMP 2021-24 Action 3.

### **3 CONSIDERATIONS OF PROPOSAL 3; DAY CREWING AT BIRTLEY COMMUNITY FIRE STATION.**

- 3.1 All IRMP actions continue to be monitored by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and used to inform strategic decisions relating to operational provision.



- 3.2 Since the introduction of the on call element from 2000 hrs to 0800 hrs, the number of times the on call appliance at Birtley Community Fire Station (W01) has been mobilised to an incident is: zero.
- 3.3 In addition, workload modelling confirms that the removal of the on-call element will result in the same level of emergency cover to incidents in Birtley and the surrounding area.
- 3.4 The cost to the Authority of providing an on-call element during night-time hours at Birtley Community Fire Station is £70,000 per annum.
- 3.5 The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England Fire requires all fire and rescue authorities 'must manage their budgets and spend money properly and appropriately, and ensure the efficient and effective use of their resources'.
- 3.6 To ensure the Authority is providing value for money to the public, and fulfilling its responsibility under the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, this IRMP action required review and amendment.
- 3.7 Consequently, based on the data provided, a recommendation is being made to Fire Authority that the night time on-call shift arrangement at Birtley Community Fire Station is discontinued from October 2023.
- 3.8 Members should be assured that this amendment will result in no impact to the speed and weight of current response to incidents in the Birtley area, and no loss of jobs in the Service.
- 3.9 This recommendation will achieve an efficiency saving of c. £70,000 per annum, which will be reinvested in operational response / front line delivery.
- 3.10 This IRMP action has already been subject to full public consultation, and the proposed amendment does not have an impact on operational response to the community of Birtley. As operational matters are the delegated responsibility of the CFO it was felt this decision could have been taken independently, however the Service acknowledges that staff and the public will have an interest in this proposal, therefore will carry out a consultation exercise to gather views.
- 3.11 Formal consultation on this amendment, targeting stakeholders, staff, and the public, will commence on 24 July, immediately after Fire Authority, and end on 21 August 2023. A range of consultation methods will be used, and will be proportionate and targeted, in accordance with HM Government's 2018 Consultation Guidance.
- 3.12 All feedback will be analysed and used to inform the final proposal presented to Fire Authority in September 2023.



## **4 RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 4.1 Risks associated with options presented within this paper have been fully considered within the original data analysis and are considered as low risk in terms of organisational, operational and community risk. A new risk, relating to the impact of not using resources efficiently, is posed, if this IRMP action is not amended.

## **5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The cost reduction is achieved by the removal of the 8% on call allowance for the overnight period and the cost of attending an assumed number of call outs estimated at the time when the revised arrangements took effect.
- 5.2 The half year saving in 2023/24 is therefore £35,000 with an on-going annual saving of £70,000 in future years.
- 5.3 This saving will be earmarked to relieve cost pressures elsewhere in our response model costs.

## **6 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Any new duty system will be subject to an initial and ongoing assessment where if it is not part of a nationally recognised working pattern. This will be progressed alongside any proposal agreed by the Fire Authority. By removing the on call element, it is recognised that this is a more family friendly duty system.

## **7 HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no additional or significant health and safety implications in respect of this report.

## **8 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 The Fire Authority is recommended to;
- Agree to remove the on call element at Birtley Fire Station.

## **9 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 9.1 Proposed Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2021-2024, March 2021 Fire Authority, Part I tem 8



- 9.2 Review of Day Crewing Closed Call Options (DCCC), 15 March 2021 Fire Authority, Part II Item 9
- 9.3 Draft IRMP 2021-24 Public Consultation Outcomes, 13 September 2021 Fire Authority, Part I Item 8
- 9.4 Amended IRMP proposal 2021-24 11 October 2021 Item 5

**Tyne and Wear Fire  
and Rescue Authority**

