

TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Item No 8

MEETING: 15th March 2021

**SUBJECT: PROPOSED INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN (IRMP)
2021 -2024**

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

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2017 – 2020 was due for updating during 2020/2021. Work has been ongoing on this and as the coronavirus pandemic began to take hold in the UK, this delayed progress as the focus was on the immediate response to the health emergency.
- 1.2 The proposed IRMP 2021-2024 has now been prepared and is submitted for Fire Authority (FA) consideration and approval prior to a full public consultation on the proposals. If approved, the IRMP 2021-2024 would result in 40 new Firefighter jobs being created within Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A FA member's IRMP workshop was held following the February 2021 meeting of the Fire Authority to engage members on working proposals and seek feedback and comment. This was a productive workshop during which members sought further details on a number of matters related to data and analysis supporting some of the options.
- 2.2 The feedback from FA members at the IRMP workshop has been considered by the Chief Fire Officer and the IRMP 2021-2024 proposals are now submitted for FA consideration and approval to take to public consultation.
- 2.3 Alongside the key IRMP proposals presented will be a requirement for the Service to review the day crewing close call (DCCC) working pattern at both Rainton Bridge and Birtley fire stations as a result of a legal ruling from a case raised in South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service. The ruling that the DCCC does not meet the Working Time Regulations resulted in a direction from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) that unless a local collective agreement could be secured with relevant trade unions, it must be changed. To date, no local collective agreement has been reached.

The DCCC options are being considered and will come before FA for consideration in an FA, Part II paper in the first instance given that some of the details and options affect a small number of staff (22) and as they may be easily identifiable. Given this, the matter will be considered ahead of any publicly available options being presented. Therefore the DCCC is not a formal aspect of the IRMP 2021-2024 proposals but will have a potential implication on options under IRMP depending upon the outcome.

- 2.4 With the impending local elections and period of purdah, the next meeting of the FA is in June 2021. It is not considered good or best practice to conduct a public consultation on the IRMP, during the period of time in which the local the elections and purdah period are taking place and it is therefore proposed that public consultation would be open for eight weeks following the elections.
- 2.5 The National Fire and Rescue Service Framework for England (2018) sets out a requirement that each Fire Authority must produce an IRMP that covers at least a three-year time span and is reviewed and revised as often as it is necessary to ensure that the Fire Authority is able to deliver the requirements set out in the Framework.
- 2.6 The proposals within the draft IRMP would be funded from existing financial provision within TWFRS as no new money has been provided to support this. The prudent, effective and efficient budgetary control and management over a number of years by the Fire Authority has enabled this investment to be brought forward for consideration.

3 DATA AND RISK ANALYSIS

- 3.1 As part of the preparations for the IRMP 2021-2024, a review of the workload modelling data for the 3 fiscal years 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20 was undertaken. The full analysis undertaken is available to all FA members, Local Authorities, communities and publicly circulated as part of this report. During 2020 the coronavirus pandemic has significantly changed the way in which the public and communities have acted and the way society has had to change to the dangers faced by the pandemic. As the data used was up to the end of March 2020, the data set has not been affected by the potential significant change to society during lockdown and the restrictions on the public at large.
- 3.2 Workload modelling uses the resources provided in the various scenarios to simulate an emergency appliance turnout response to incidents that have occurred historically over three years (2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20). These scenarios are then compared to a Base Case to establish the emergency appliance turnout response using the current resources. The Workload Modeller uses the Ordnance Survey (OS) Integrated Transport Network (ITN) road network and speeds assigned to those roads to determine the time taken to travel to each incident using the nearest available and appropriate resource.
- 3.3 The analysis of IRMP proposals for change was compared against a base case which reflects the way and disposition of how the stations, appliances and crew/

shift patterns are currently arranged. Within the response model, emergency incidents are categorised into four risk levels as outlined below.

Level 1: Incidents which pose an immediate threat to human life or pose a risk of severe human injury

Level 2: Incidents which pose a Serious Hazard & high risk threat to life, the environment, society, property or heritage

Level 3: Incidents which pose a potential serious hazard to human life, the environment, society, property or heritage.

Level 4: Incidents which pose a potential hazard to human life, the environment, society, property or heritage.

Risk level 1 incidents are those that present the greatest risk to life with the risk to life reducing through levels 2, 3, 4.

- 3.4 Speed and weight of response from fire and rescue services in response to emergencies are significant in the preservation and protection of life. The quicker that firefighters can attend an emergency with the number of firefighters required to safely undertake immediate interventions, the greater the opportunity to save life and reduce harm and damage. TWFRS has over many years consistently been reported in national statistics as one of the fastest and in many cases, the fastest Fire and Rescue Service in England to fires, often by a significant time difference when considered against the national averages. This data and details has been reported regularly to FA in meetings regularly.

4 IRMP PROPOSALS 2021-2024

- 4.1 The IRMP 2021-2024 proposals not only ensure that speed and weight of response is maintained to ensure that TWFRS remain as one of or in many cases the fastest FRS in England to the most serious fires, but seek to enhance this and are evidenced based. The proposals, if accepted would result in the creation of 40 new Firefighter posts in the Service and in addition to improving operational resilience would support the Services aim to diversify the workforce through recruitment.
- 4.2 There are two key proposals presented for FA consideration and in due course public consultation.
- 1) Introduce an additional fire appliance at West Denton fire station (station Alpha) into the response fleet on a permanent basis.
 - 2) Primary crew both of the Aerial Ladder Platforms (ALP) within the service.
- 4.3 Proposal 1, has been operating as a pilot since 1 November 2020 following FA approval in the October 2020 FA meeting. Key benefits have included improving the speed and weight of response to emergencies with an additional fire crew available to deploy. TWFRS's state of the art command unit is located

at West Denton and is currently dual crewed with the single appliance (A01) at that station. In practice what this means is that when A01 is deployed, should the command unit be required, the appliance and crew must return to the station to swap to that vehicle. This takes a fire appliance out of use and can result in delays in the availability of the command unit or if already deployed, a fire appliance.

- 4.4 Additionally, when the command unit is required, the appliance from Gosforth (E01) are often required to support the command unit crew as they have been trained in its use. What this can result in is a need to move appliances around the service area to ensure no gaps in fire cover as a result of the deployment of the command unit.

There was up until 2017-2020 IRMP a second fire appliance at West Denton and this was removed as part of a need to balance the budget and meet the challenge of the financial situation at the time. The FA have requested in previous FA meetings and IRMP discussions that should opportunities arise that provide the option to revisit any of the difficult decisions they have made previously they would wish these to be brought forward. The addition of a further appliance (A02) aligns with this request.

The addition of a second fire appliance at West Denton would provide a number of benefits which are supported by evidence and data. A second appliance at West Denton would ensure that should the command unit be deployed there is less chance of a delay due to availability of appliances. It would also reduce the number of times that the appliance from Gosforth station would be required to provide fire appliance cover in the West Denton area.

During the pilot that is currently running, where appliance A02 has been available on a permanent basis, it has been deployed on 258 occasions as of 1st March 2021.

The Response Review Team maintain that a priority for the IRMP is that we maintain a speed and weight of attack based on risk and demand. Our average response time is 5 minutes 50 seconds – the fourth fastest service in the country in responding to primary fires and the fastest metropolitan fire service in the country to dwelling fires.

Our current response model is built around risk level 1 to 4 and all IRMP's are designed to maximise our speed and weight of attack.

The table below indicates that TWFRS speed of response is improving every year. This is a result of previous IRMP's which have ensured our resources are in the right place at the right time. This is due to a deliberate change in which TWFRS dynamically mobilise resources in relation to risk and demand.



Attendance Time of Incidents							
Risk Levels	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Difference between	
	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Year 1 & Year 5	
1	00:07:01	00:06:58	00:05:12	00:05:16	00:05:08	↓	00:01:53
2	00:07:06	00:06:22	00:05:39	00:05:49	00:05:36	↓	00:01:30
3	00:05:52	00:05:58	00:05:23	00:05:27	00:05:13	↓	00:00:39
4	00:07:10	00:07:52	00:07:28	00:07:25	00:06:46	↓	00:00:24
Average	00:06:47	00:06:48	00:05:55	00:05:59	00:05:41	↓	00:01:06

Table: TWFRS's speed of response from 2015/2016 – 2019/20

The average attendance time for all incident risk levels (between 2015/16 – 2019/20) has reduced by 1 minute 6 seconds.

- 4.5 Proposal 2 has been supported by a pilot of primary crewing of one of the ALPs since the 4 November 2020 following FA approval. This proposal would see both of the Services ALPs being crewed by a dedicated crew at all material times. The Service has been operating with three ALPs although the FA approved during the 2017-2020 IRMP that the service would require two ALPs and this is now being implemented as one of the ALPs reaches the end of its working life. The two ALPs would have dedicated crews which would ensure that they are available at all times without the need to remove an appliance from the response fleet to accommodate this. Incidents such as the tragic Grenfell Tower fire and others events since then have highlighted the potential role and speed of response of height appliances when required. Additionally, by primary crewing of ALPs would support the availability of fire appliances as there would not be a need to reduce the number of fire appliances to crew the ALPs. This is operationally important as often at a fire where an ALP is required also requires a high level of appliance availability. One further opportunity that would be taken is to consider how ALP crew may crew a Targeted Response Vehicle (TRV) in times of increased demand for Level 4 incidents such as grass fires or around bonfire time. This would again, reduce the need to remove an appliance from the response fleet when a TRV is required. There would always be an ALP and crew available regardless of the option to deploy a TRV. Previously the FA were faced with significant budget pressures and dual crewing of ALPs was introduced at that time as part of previous IRMP's, balancing the budget and maintaining operational response. This is a further matter that FA requested was brought back to FA should circumstances change in the future.

- 4.6 Summary of IRMP proposals
The two proposals that FA are asked to consider would improve the speed and weight of response to fire and other emergencies and is evidenced based. If agreed, the proposals would result in the need to create 40 new Firefighter post and offer a significant contribution to the response model and opportunity to continue to seek to diversify the workforce and create 40 high value jobs for the North East economy.

The additional appliance and primary crewing of the ALPs will provide greater operational efficiency and effectiveness and ensure that the resilience of the Service is maintained and enhanced.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Together, the two options will result in the creation of 40 new Firefighter jobs within the Service and local economy.

Option	Proposal 1 Description	Change to FTE	Annual Ongoing Cost
		Number	£
B	Introduce an additional fire appliance at West Denton fire station (station Alpha) into the response fleet on a permanent basis.	16	760,700

Option	Proposal 2 Description	Change to FTE	Annual Ongoing Cost
		Number	£
B	Primary crew the Aerial Ladder Platform (ALP) at Marley Park Community Fire Station and Gosforth Community Fire Station.	24	1,151,008

- 5.2 Proposal 1 and the primary crewing of the ALP at Marley Park CFS in Proposal 2 were both approved as 1 year pilots by Members at the Authority meeting held in October 2020. As such, the costs of these were provided for within the revenue budget for 2020/21 and up until the end of October 2021 for the 2021/22 revenue budget.

- 5.3 The remaining additional cost of these proposals beyond the end of the current pilots can be met from Strategic Contingencies included within the 2021/22 revenue budget.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 A risk assessment has been undertaken to ensure that the risk to the Authority has been minimised as far as practicable. The assessment has considered an appropriate balance between risk and control, the realisation of efficiencies, the most appropriate use of limited resources and a review of the benefits.

7 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 If accepted the proposals would provide the opportunity through recruitment to seek to diversify the workforce and target currently underrepresented groups to apply for a career min TWFRS.

8 HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no health and safety implications in respect of the IRMP report and proposals. When changes are brought forward to FA on the DCCC working pattern this will require consideration alongside the IRMP proposals.

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The Authority is recommended to:
- a) Note the formal draft IRMP 2021 -2024 proposals and offer comment and feedback.
 - b) Note that the proposals if agreed would result in the creation of 40 new Firefighter jobs within the Service.
 - c) Agree the two proposals within the IRMP 2021 – 2024 to;
 - Introduce an additional fire appliance at West Denton fire station (station Alpha) into the response fleet on a permanent basis.
 - Primary crew both of the Aerial Ladder Platforms (ALP) within the service.
 - d) Agree an eight week public consultation period as set out in the report
 - e) Receive further reports as appropriate following public consultation

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Workload modelling used to inform the proposals can be found in appendix G in the main report.

**Tyne and Wear Fire
and Rescue Authority**
Creating the Safest Community



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