



**Tyne and Wear Fire
and Rescue Authority**

Creating the Safest Community



Strategic Community Safety Plan

(Interim)

2020-2021

Contents

This Plan is designed to be an electronic document and as such relies on hyperlinks for more detailed information. If you are unable to access these hyperlinks and require further information, please do not hesitate to contact us as detailed on page 32.

The 2020 refresh of this plan reflects:

- The appointment of a new Fire Authority Chair
- Inspection by HMICFRS
- Updated performance and data information
- COVID -19 pandemic
- New imagery.

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Foreword



Councillor Tony Taylor
*Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue
Authority Chair*

As the Chair of the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority, it is an honour to be introducing our Strategic Community Safety Plan.

TWFRS' are committed and work hard to deliver our vision of 'creating the safest community' – which is outlined in this plan.

We are fortunate to have highly dedicated, professional and well-trained employees whose clear motivation is the protection and safety of our communities across Tyne and Wear. But even as a high performing fire and rescue service, rated by Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) as Good in all three areas inspected, we want to continually improve our service to you, and we are committed to implementing changes that will help us to achieve this goal.

We welcome feedback and thoughts on our Plan. The details on how you can do this are available at the end of this document.



Chris Lowther
*Chief Fire Officer
and Chief Executive*

The Fire and Rescue Service has faced many challenges in recent years, not least in 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic has tested all areas of the Service, and I believe we have met this challenge with resilience, professionalism, and leadership.

Our Plan sets out our commitment to the continued delivery of a first class fire and rescue service and our intention of how we will continue to improve, whatever the challenge. Our clear vision and strategic priorities set direction for the Service, help us to measure performance, and ensure we deliver value for money to the public.

The Plan has been developed using intelligence, insight, and an understanding of current and future risks, both in Tyne and Wear and nationally. We will continue to be adaptable and innovative to address the changing needs we face, and work with our valued partners and the community, to achieve our vision and deliver a Service we are proud of.

About us

Introduction

Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) is the publicly accountable body that oversees the policy and delivery of fire and rescue services on behalf of the community. Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) successfully leads the operational delivery of fire and rescue services such as fire and other emergency prevention, fire protection, operational response and resilience.

The Authority and the Service work closely together to help create the safest community within Tyne and Wear.

Nationally, the UK fire and rescue services have experienced a downward trend in fire incidents and fatalities over the last decade. In addition, buildings are now safer and communities more secure which enables greater capacity for fire and rescue services to focus efforts on those with a high degree of vulnerability or with significant challenges caused by deprivation.

We remain one of the fastest responding fire services in the country, which is important to us in protecting our communities. Our prevention activity has continued to see investment as we aim to stop fires and other emergencies from occurring. Our highly successful preventative work and fast response means that in the past ten years we have reduced the number of injuries from accidental dwelling fires.

There are both opportunities and challenges ahead, but we are not complacent. It is through this Strategic Community Safety Plan that we will remain focussed on the right things, the most effective things, to deliver our vision of ‘creating the safest community’.

The Policing and Crime Act 2017 brought in a statutory duty for fire, police and emergency ambulance services to collaborate. Through our joint working over a number of years we have already achieved better outcomes for the communities of Tyne and Wear and we will undoubtedly strengthen all our emergency services further, over the life of this plan.

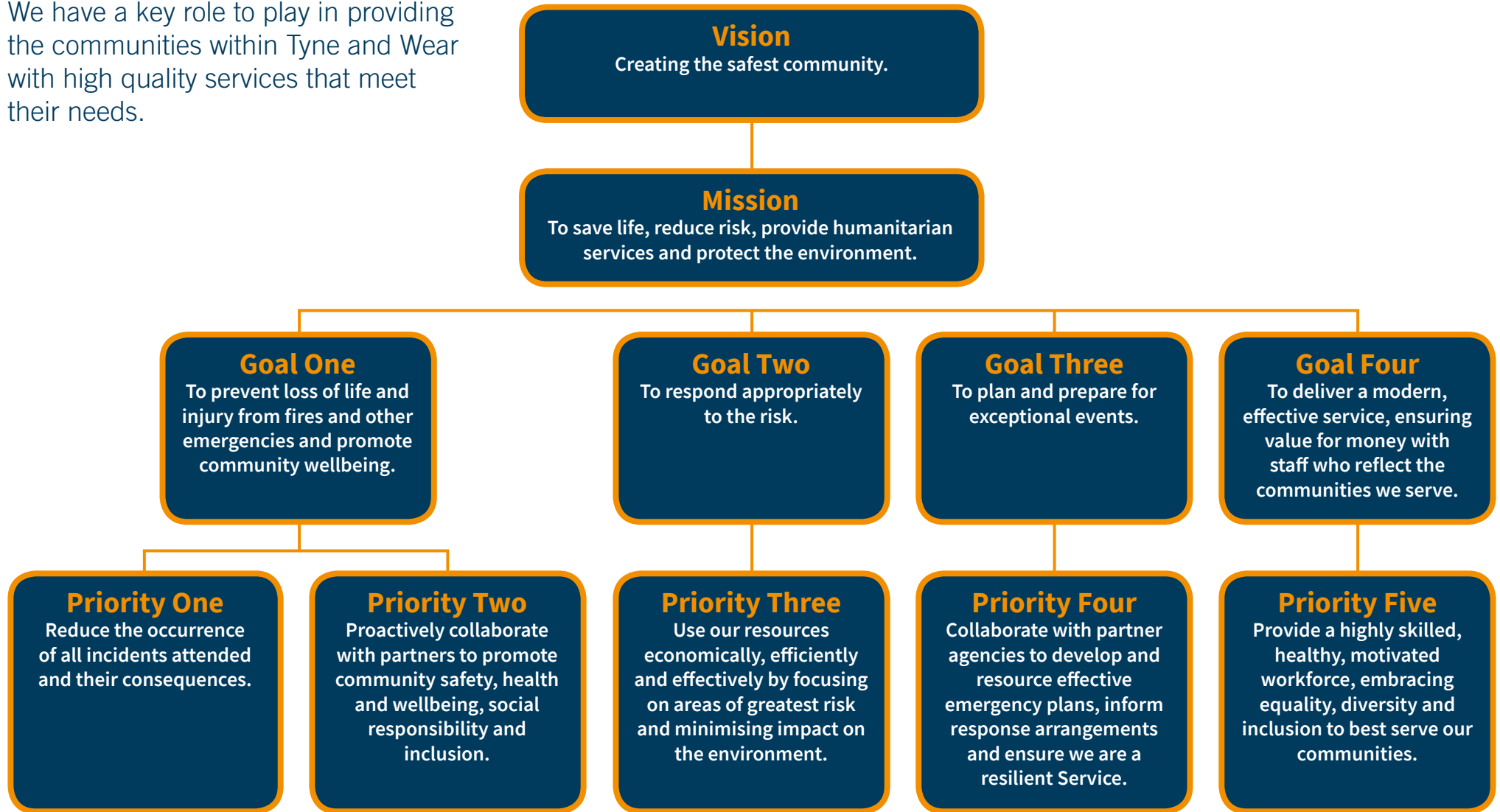
Like many public services, we will continue to face financial challenges. Our Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP), which drives continuous improvement and innovation, will ensure the savings we make are achieved in a safe way, balancing risk and resources.

This plan will guide our approach as we continue to strive for the highest performance. The investment in our staff, their skills and resources, together with our strong partnership approach, will ensure we remain one of the safest, most inclusive and highest performing public services.

This is an interim Plan and the 2020 - 2025 Plan is currently in development and due to be published in 2021.

Vision

We have a key role to play in providing the communities within Tyne and Wear with high quality services that meet their needs.



Our vision of **‘creating the safest community’** is delivered through our shared mission ‘to save life, reduce risk, provide humanitarian service and protect the environment’ and reflects the primary focus of our Service.

To do this effectively we must know and understand the communities we protect. We use local knowledge and shared information to help us identify the areas of most risk and the most vulnerable in our society. This analysis enables us to target our services effectively. Our Community Risk Profile provides more detail.

Our organisation goals set out our direction and our priorities and have evolved to reflect the complex and changing community we serve. Public service reform, financial austerity, an ageing and diverse population and the increasing risk of terrorism are just some of the challenges the Service faces.

Our strategic ambition to manage such challenges extends beyond the three years of this plan to encompass longer term outcomes, we are currently developing a five year plan for 2020-25, to help achieve this.



Values

A strong values driven culture supports our strategic priorities and corporate objectives and is key to our success.

Our leadership bond sets out our culture and leadership behaviours that bring this to life.

In achieving our vision we ensure that our services are effectively led and managed as we strive for excellence and seek opportunities through collaboration with partners and our community.

We provide an effective management structure to ensure our people, finances, assets, resources, estates and facilities are efficiently and effectively deployed.

This supports the continuous improvement for our services to the public, in a professional, sustainable and legislatively compliant manner.

Everyone within the Authority needs to have an understanding of our core values which support our long term success:



We value service to the community by:

- working with all groups to reduce risk
- treating everyone fairly and with respect
- being answerable to those we serve
- striving for excellence.



We value all our employees by practising and promoting:

- fairness and respect
- recognition of merit
- honesty, integrity and mutual trust
- personal development
- co-operative and inclusive working.



We value diversity in the Service and community by:

- treating everyone fairly and with respect
- providing varying solutions for different needs and expectations
- promoting equal opportunities in employment within the Service
- challenging prejudice and discrimination.



We value improvement at all levels of the Service by:

- accepting responsibility for our performance
- being open minded
- considering criticism thoughtfully
- learning from our experience
- consulting others.



Tyne and Wear Profile

Tyne and Wear consists of the five local authority areas of Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, South Tyneside and Sunderland. It borders Northumberland County to the North and Durham County to the South.

It is a densely populated metropolitan area with 1.1 million residents covering 538km². Whilst only representing 6% of the region's land, it is home to 43% of the region's population with over 500,000 households. The population is growing, ageing and becoming more diverse, presenting further challenges for service provision.

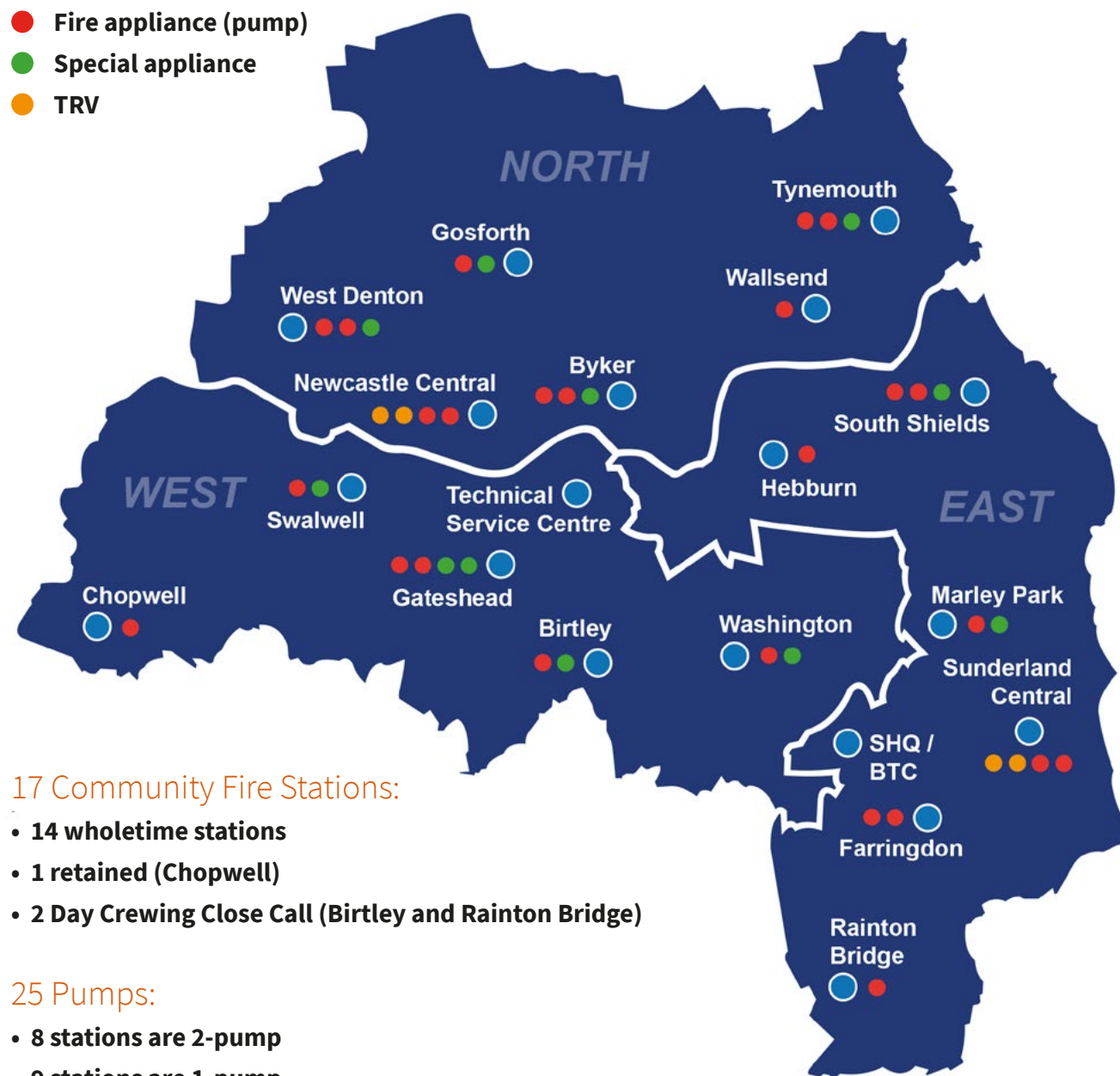


Further information about the demographic makeup of the community is detailed in the Community Risk Profile, highlighted on page 17.

Our stations, staff and appliances are strategically placed across Tyne and Wear to ensure efficient and effective response to fires and other emergencies.

Appliances work across station areas and can be mobilised whilst away from their home station. We also have robust arrangements with neighbouring services to enable additional support during major emergencies.

We have 17 community fire stations operating a variety of duty / shift systems. Operational resources are reviewed constantly using community risk and incident data to inform our deployment strategies.



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Our Strategy

Strategic Planning and Governance

This Plan sits at the heart of our strategic planning framework. We recognise that good corporate governance is essential to ensure that the Service is properly directed, controlled and held to account. Effective governance provides a blend of value for money and accountability and transparent decision making.

Our corporate governance is underpinned by effective planning and performance, management of risk, environmental responsibility and good communication and engagement. It complies with the Fire and Rescue National Framework issued in 2018.

The Fire Authority are responsible for ensuring that we conduct our business in accordance with legal and regulatory standards, and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for and used appropriately. For further information regarding our Fire Authority, please visit our website.

Our Corporate Governance Framework is reviewed regularly to ensure we continue to do the right things, in the right way, for the right people, in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner.

Organisational Strategy

The SCSP is supported by a range of organisational policy, plans and procedures.

Our three Strategies include;

- **Organisational Development Strategy** – sets out how we can all work together to lead our people and promote continuous improvement of the Service and improve outcomes for our staff and Communities.
- **Medium Term Financial Strategy** – details the financial position of the Service over the medium term and establishes the approach to direct resources to achieve value for money.

- **Community Safety Strategy** – sets a clear vision for Prevention, Protection, Response and Resilience activities and explains how we will shape services and target resources to achieve better outcomes for the community.

These three strategies are communicated to staff through departmental policies and procedures, to ensure the strategic goals and priorities of the Service are understood by staff, promoting leadership and accountability by all.



*SCSP - Strategic Community Safety Plan incorporating IRMP

Finance

We continue to face a period of considerable change with significant financial uncertainty because of the potential adverse impact that the COVID -19 pandemic may have on the national economy and the implications this may have on public sector resources which will not be known until the government release details in their proposed three year Comprehensive Spending Review 2020 (CSR20) in late autumn.

This along with other major factors such as the unknown impact of Brexit which will take place 31st December 2020 and the further delayed implementation of the proposed new funding arrangements now due in 2021/22 mean that the improved funding position the Authority received for 2020/21 may not be sustainable and could in the worst case scenario see a return to austerity for the fire service.

Our financial planning approach continues to be robust despite these uncertainties and although the reported Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) in February 2020 shows a fully funded revenue budget position from 2020/21 to 2023/24, this was based on the Government assertion austerity had ended and that the devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic had not yet struck the country. The MTFS will be revised once the detail of the CSR20 is released by Government but the aim of our MTFS remains unchanged in that it keeps efficiency and value for money at the heart of all our plans for the service.

The [Medium Term Financial Strategy \(MTFS\)](#) provides an analysis of the financial position likely to face the Authority over the next four years. It establishes approaches which direct resources to address the strategic priorities of the Authority, achieve value for money in the use of those resources and assist the budget planning framework for the preparation of the [Revenue Budget](#) and [Capital Programme](#).

The External Auditors present the Annual Audit Letter to the Authority every autumn. This audit examines our Statement of Accounts and gives an opinion on both the Service's financial health and their views and conclusion on how the Authority achieves value for money.

The Authority embraces national joint collaborative procurement initiatives with other emergency services to ensure we get the best equipment, uniform and services at the best price.

Revenue Budget

Balancing risk and resources will continue to be challenging given the ongoing significant uncertainty surrounding Government spending when so much is presently unknown of the impact on the economy of both the COVID-19 pandemic and Brexit. As a result, the Service faces a period of uncertainty and is expecting to continue to face significant challenges throughout the life span of this plan.

We have just completed the final year (2019/20) of the agreed [4 year funding settlement](#) with Government covering the period 2016/17 to 2019/20. We published our [efficiency plan](#) covering this period and we achieved significant savings in this time of £9.287m which was £1.039m in excess of those originally planned. This position however unfortunately did not bolster our reserves as the additional savings of just over £1m were actually needed to meet additional budget cost pressures faced by the Authority that it had no control over.

A revised MTFS has been issued for 2020/21 to 2023/24, however this was based on an improved one year financial settlement for 2020/21 where the Government indicated austerity had ended but before the pandemic had hit the country. We were projecting a sustainable budget position up to the end of 2023/24 however this position is expected to change materially once the outcome of the CSR20 is known. If this is the case then a revised MTFS will be published.

The current position setting out a fully sustained budget over the medium term meant that the Authority's Integrated Risk Management Plan could continue to identify efficiencies but these could then be reinvested in service priorities rather than help meet a budget resource shortfall, which was the case under austerity. This position will need to be reviewed once we know the outcome of the CRS20 on the Authority.

Capital Programme

Since 2015/16 the Authority does not receive any Government funding to pay for capital expenditure, which covers the cost of replacing fire vehicles, specialised appliances, modernising community fire stations and acquiring essential fire equipment.

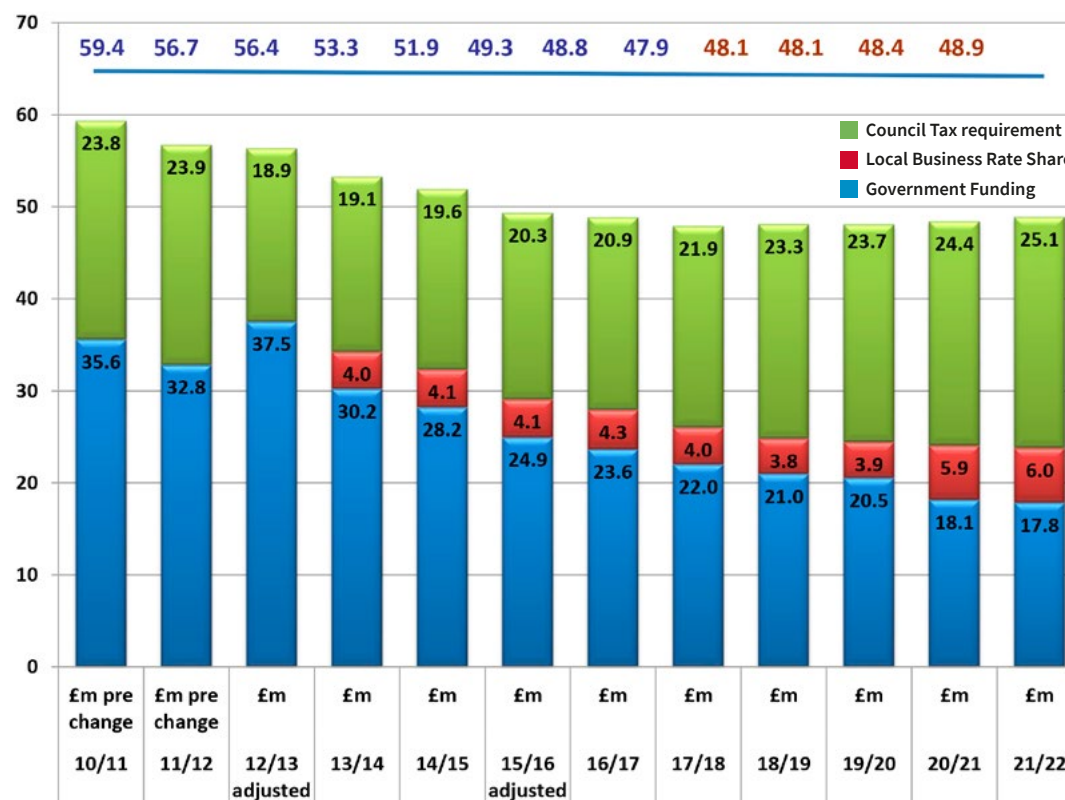
We are exploring ways to cover these significant costs, but with limited revenue funding likely, the Authority will have little option but to use its limited reserves at the very time they could be needed to help protect its future revenue budget.

Business Rates Retention

The Government was reviewing the way that business rates are currently distributed with the aim of implementing a revised funding system for April 2020, however external factors including Brexit and the pandemic have resulted in delays until April 2021.

We will continue to work with Government on these proposed changes to our funding arrangements to ensure we can continue to deliver effective and efficient fire and rescue services, but this adds yet another layer of uncertainty to those already identified.

Cumulative impact of cuts 2010 to 2022 (current MTFS February 2018)



Total reduction £10.5m (17%)

2017/18 to 2021/22 includes the Authority's more prudent assessments for both Council Tax and Business Rates. Based on these figures the pace of reductions slow and there is an increase in Core Spending Power (CSP) from 2019. However, the cut to CSP over the 4 year settlement to 2019/20 is -2.0%; the worst of all fire authorities.

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Our Performance

Overview of Key Performance

Our performance is monitored, managed and analysed at both Service and local authority area level, to enable us to identify issues and implement improvement action where required. This approach also allows us to identify successes, so we can build on these and promote good practice across the Service.

The data captured in our performance reports is scrutinised quarterly with local operational intelligence incorporated with statistical analysis.

All data is compared to the same time period for the previous year.

To enable the Service to demonstrate the 'golden thread' of performance management effectively, each area produces an annual plan highlighting performance, current targets and local priorities.

The plans provide the public, our partners and Councillors with an overview of the initiatives and projects that are to be delivered in their communities.

Our Statement of Assurance / Annual Report provides an accessible way for our stakeholders to see how we are achieving our strategic goals and review our corporate achievements.

Our significant performance achievements over the last ten years include:

- **Zero accidental dwelling fire deaths recorded twice in seven years; 2012/13 and 2015/16**
- **Consistently one of the fastest fire and rescue services in England in response to dwelling fires (currently the fastest)**

- **46% reduction in injuries in accidental fires**
- **Over 26,000 Home Safety Checks (HSC) delivered each year.**

The number of incidents attended nationally by the fire and rescue services has reduced significantly in the last ten years. This applies equally to TWFRS and we attribute these excellent reductions in incidents to our successful prevention and protection work.

We strive to continuously improve all that we do. All services are monitored and scrutinised, and projects evaluated to ensure we continue to learn.

Improvement opportunities also arise as a result of HMICFRS inspection, internal reviews, consultation activities and external accreditations. Resulting improvement actions are captured in a Service wide Improvement Plan which is monitored and reported regularly.

Achievements

External Review



Over the last year, the Service has been successful in achieving several awards and accreditations. These include:

- Investors In People (IIP) Gold award 2019
- ISO 9001 Quality Management Assessment
- Disability Confident Leader 2019 – 2022
- Stonewall Diversity Champion 2020
- Inclusive Top 50 award
- White Ribbon Accreditation 2019 – 2020
- Council for Learning outside the classroom (LOtC) quality badge awarded to Safetyworks in September 2019
- The RoSPA Awards scheme - We achieved Gold in the internationally renowned RoSPA Health and Safety Awards in 2019.
- Gold Award - Better health at Work September 2020

TWFRS has registered for the RoSPA Achievement Award in 2020. The award requires a self-assessment submission including statistics relating to the previous year's personal injury and vehicle accidents.

In May 2020, the Prince's Trust team achieved Matrix Accreditation. Matrix is the international quality standard for organisations that deliver information, advice and / or guidance (IAG). The Matrix Standard is the Department for Education's (DfE) standard for ensuring the quality of the delivery of high-quality information, advice and guidance.

TWFRS has been awarded a Gold Award in the Better Health at Work Awards, a regional scheme to encourage employers to improve the health and wellbeing of their workforce.

The award also recognises the achievements of the organisation in managing health at work and helps support organisations in developing and implementing high quality health promotion to employees.

We proactively support the Mind Blue Light programme. We are committed to raising awareness of mental health across the Service, complementing the work of our award winning Trauma Support Team who provide early intervention to our operational workforce following attendance at traumatic incidents.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services



Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) carried out the first inspection of TWFRS in 2018/19. The Service received the following judgements:

- **Effectiveness** – an assessment of how effective the Service is at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other emergencies. HMICFRS judgement: **GOOD**
- **Efficiency** – an assessment of how efficiently the Service uses its resources and manages risk. HMICFRS judgement: **GOOD**
- **People** – an assessment of how well the Service looks after its people. HMICFRS judgement: **GOOD**

To ensure continuous development the Service produced a Post Inspection Improvement Plan, detailing timescales and areas for improvement, which has been monitored and progressed over the last year.

HMICFRS carried out a thematic inspection of TWFRS in September 2020 assessing how the Service is responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Findings will be published in early 2021.



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Integrated Risk Management Plan

Our IRMP is how we drive continuous improvement and innovation in our Service, ensuring that services are planned, designed and delivered in a way that balances efficiency and community risk. We use the IRMP process to improve community outcomes, strengthen prevention, reduce costs, reduce incidents and manage the risk in our communities.

Community Risk

Our role as a fire and rescue service is to mitigate risk in the community to reduce the likelihood of fires, and other emergencies. If they do occur, we work to reduce the impact on individuals and the community.

The Community Risk Profile (CRP) is an overview of our assessment and analysis of risk. It is derived from detailed incident data, census data, geographical and environmental datasets and information from our partners. This information is analysed to create a picture of risk in Tyne and Wear to enable us to strategically target our resources effectively.

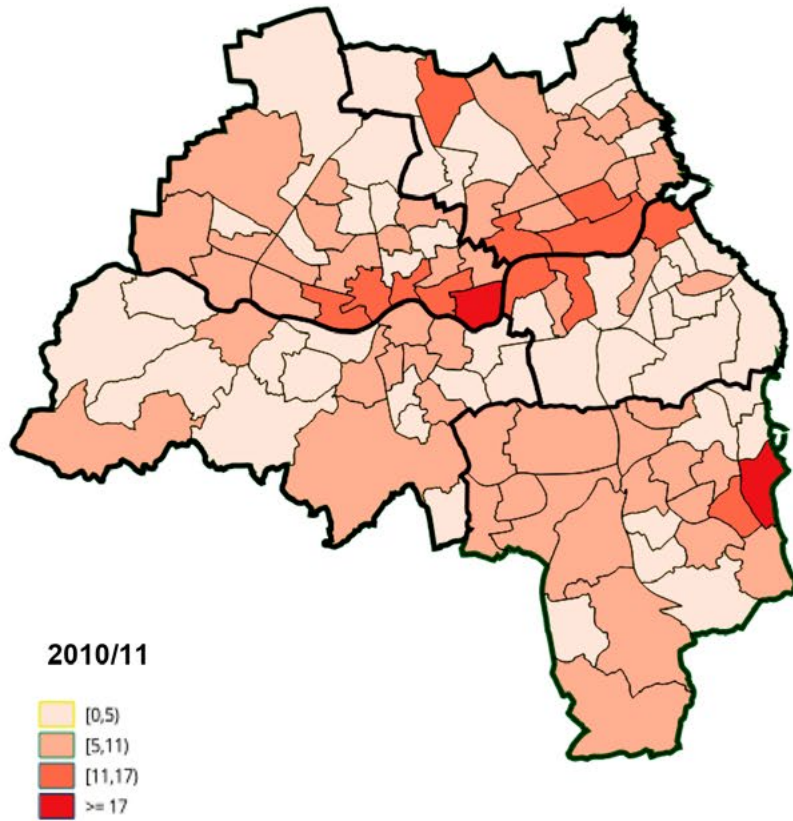
The Office of National Statistics (ONS) produce Indices of Deprivation every five years. These show that, based on average indices of multiple deprivation rank, residents of Tyne and Wear suffer levels of deprivation that are amongst the highest in the country. Evidence shows that there is a correlation between deprivation in an area and fire risk; household makeup, tenure and length of residence all have an influence on fire risk which is reflected in the incidents that occur. For example, analysis of accidental dwelling fires indicates that such fires are more likely to occur in rented accommodation. In addition, deliberate (anti-social behaviour) fires are also linked to the level of deprivation in an area.

These maps demonstrate the reduction in distribution of risk in relation to accidental dwelling fires between 2010/11 to 2019/20. We have achieved a reduction of 13.5% in the number of deliberate fires in the same period.

In accordance with the changing risks, we constantly monitor the allocation and location of our resources to ensure that we are able to respond appropriately. The latest Home Office response time data shows we are the fastest fire and rescue service in responding to dwelling fires.

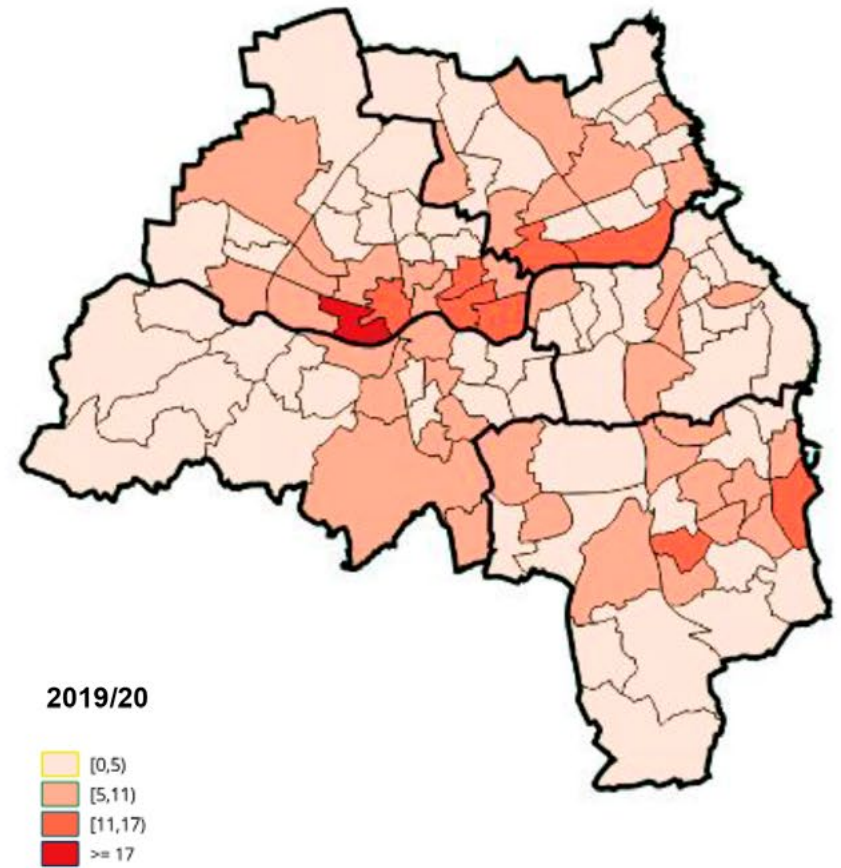


Accidental Dwelling Fires by Ward 2010/11



© Crown copyright and database rights [2018] Ordnance Survey [100018986]

Accidental Dwelling Fires by Ward 2019/20



© Crown copyright and database rights [2018] Ordnance Survey [100018986]

Tyne and Wear, like the country in general, is encountering an increasingly diverse and ageing population. Although over 90% of the Tyne and Wear population declare themselves to be of white British origin, evidence shows that we are becoming a more diverse community with an increasing population seen across nearly all ethnic groups.

Attendance at special service incidents are an important part of our work, road traffic collisions (RTCs) account for the majority of them. Flooding related incidents also factor highly in the number of special service incidents we attend. Along with partners in the Northumbria Local Resilience Forum (LRF), the Service makes extensive use of risk data from the Environment Agency in developing plans and procedures to prepare for extreme weather conditions.

Tyne and Wear has a relatively low number of sites registered under Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) regulations 2015, however by their nature they pose a more significant risk to the local community than other industrial sites. Risks at these sites are well managed through the Northumbria LRF.

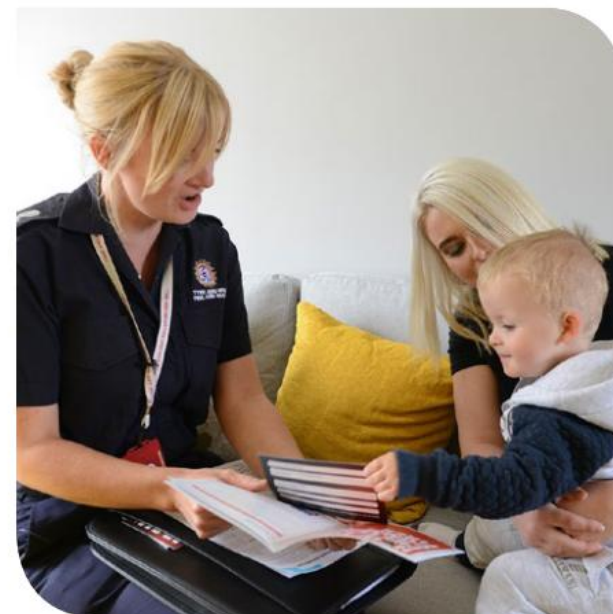
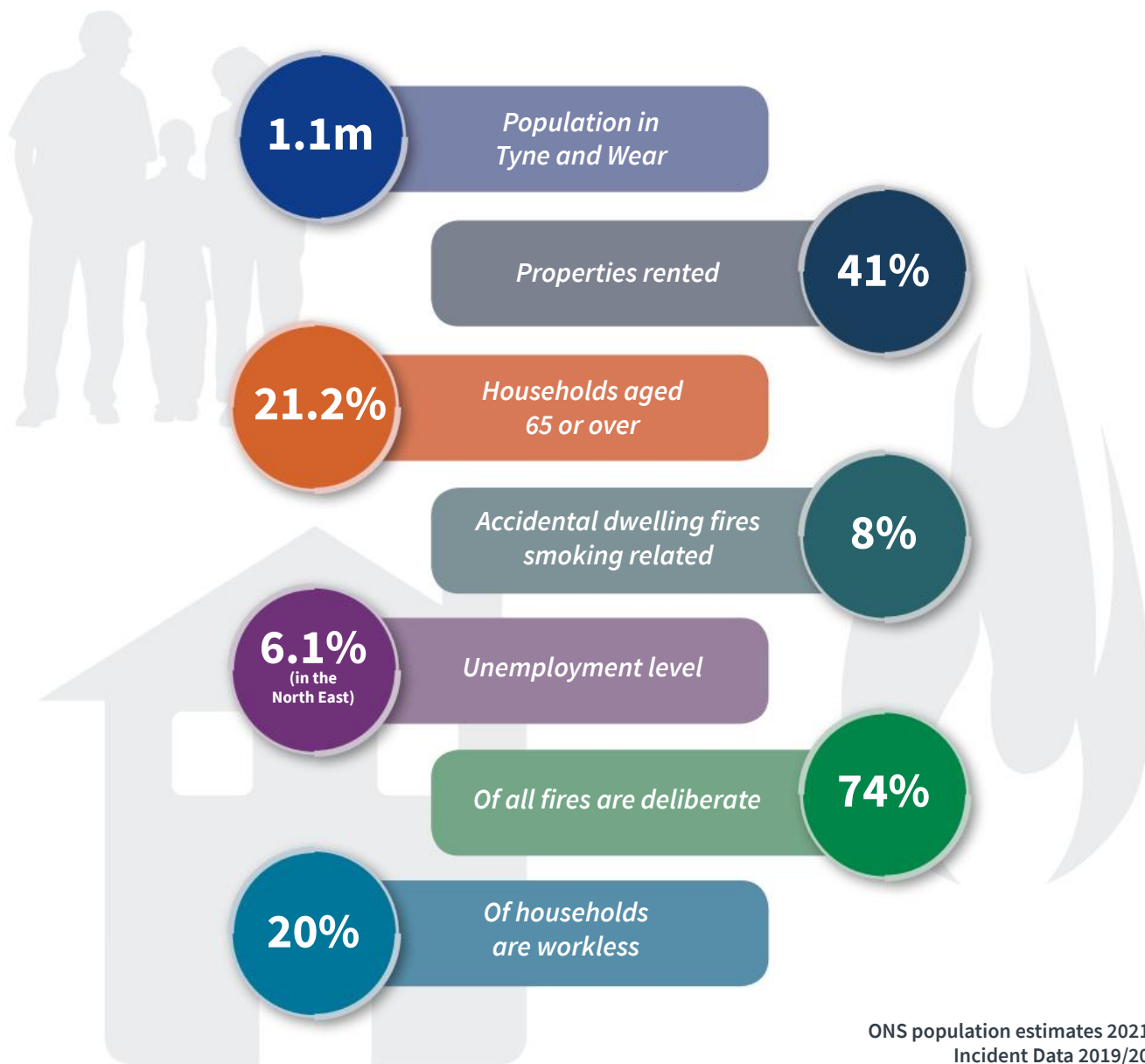
In addition, the LRF Community Risk Register lists a number of pollution or contamination risks as high, including pollution of controlled waters and accidents involving the spillage of fuel or explosives.

The Service has a key role in preventing / mitigating such incidents, including exercise of regulatory powers and use of mass decontamination assets.

The LRF Community Risk Register lists Building Collapse as a high risk and notes the Fire and Rescue Service's role in mitigation through Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) capability, working alongside partners.

Although it is not possible to totally remove all risk of fires and other incidents, the CRP, along with data systems, demographic profiling tools and workload modelling software help us to make connections between the risk and the incidents. This enables us to target our resources at the greatest risk – whether this means the positioning of fire stations and appliances or the targeting of our programme of Home Safety Checks (HSCs) or Risk Based Inspections of business premises.





Our Services

Prevention

Supporting safer, healthier, more inclusive communities.

Prevention is at the forefront of our proactive approach to prevent incidents from happening, through education, advice and intervention. Our preventative work is informed by understanding our community and through collaborative working with partners to identify those who are most at risk.

We work to educate our community about what they can do to keep themselves safe from fire, as well as reducing the risk of a wide range of other emergencies. We do this by:

- **Delivering over 26,000 Home Safety Checks (HSC) a year**
- **Providing free smoke alarms and safety devices for the vulnerable in our society**
- **Delivering Safe and Well visits to vulnerable people**
- **Delivering Schools Education Programmes**

- **Working with partners to promote the installation of domestic sprinkler systems. Over 1,965 domestic properties are now protected. This is amongst the highest level nationally.**

- **Delivering targeted fire safety campaigns**

- **Delivering a range of other safety campaigns, including water safety and road safety.**

We work with a range of partners to ensure the safety of our community. This includes working closely with the health service and the police, who are similarly seeking to address social and health inequality to improve community outcomes.

Our dedicated Prevention & Education teams provide a valuable link with hard to reach people ensuring that, as a Service, we can help all communities in the Tyne and Wear area and provide support to particularly vulnerable groups.

Our highly skilled staff and volunteers successfully use an intelligence led approach to deliver our community engagement activities to those who need it most.

Our volunteers come from a variety of backgrounds and bring a wide range of skills and experience to the organisation. All our volunteers are valued because they give their time and skills freely to assist people in various community safety activities.

We deliver a range of activities to engage with young people across the five local authority areas of Tyne and Wear. These include:

- **Prince's Trust Programme**
- **Fire Cadets**
- **Phoenix Project**
- **Juvenile Firesetters Education Programme**

SafetyWorks! is an interactive safety centre based in Newcastle managed by the Service working in partnership with Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), Northumbria Police, Nexus, RNLI, St John's Ambulance and Sainsburys. It provides realistic, interactive educational experiences for young people, as well as other groups, to gain knowledge about a wide range of safety focused learning activities to make communities safer. By delivering this wide range of activities in a targeted way, we are able to help make people safer, in their homes and within their communities.

Early Intervention Activities

Sunderland and Newcastle Community Hub

Working in Partnership with the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Violence Reduction Unit, a new Newcastle Community Hub (NCH) at West Denton Fire Station will soon be opening.

Due the successful launch of the Sunderland Community Hub (SCH) in 2019, based at Sunderland Central Fire Station, the Newcastle Community Hub will work in partnership with the PCC Violence Reduction Unit, Northumbria Police and the local authority with a view to provide early intervention through sport.

Project 'Knuckle Down'

In partnership with Northumbria Police, and the support of England Boxing, the Project 'Knuckle Down' campaign will educate ten young people on the Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) within the Sunderland area, giving them a stronger voice on issues which affect their lives and create a more positive perception of young people in society.

The project is designed to highlight a range of anti-social behaviour issues (including knife crime) and demonstrate that by the 'Knuckle Down' approach, success can be achieved inside and outside the boxing ring. By using positive community role models (firefighters and police officers) candidates will be shown that by taking the correct pathway, ASB can be avoided.



Protection

Supporting economic growth through intelligence led proportionate regulation

Our protection work aims to reduce the risk and impact of fire on the business community, and safeguards our firefighters. We are focussed on reducing the regulatory burden on compliant businesses through promoting the principles “Better Business for All”, but we will not shy away from enforcement action where it is in the interest of public safety.

To prevent the loss of life, injuries and reduce economic and social costs caused by fire, during 2019/20 we:

- support over 31,000 commercial business sites with fire safety advice
- carry out around 2,000 audits of commercial premises a year, with only a few progressing to enforcement
- deliver over 4,100 other activities including Building Regulation Consultations, Licencing reviews, cause for concerns, Operational Health Check referrals

- provide 2,400 operational health checks of commercial buildings each year.
- work with 11 Primary Authority Partnerships, supporting over 13,500 business premises

We also work collaboratively with other agencies supporting:

- Building Regulations submissions; this includes complex fire strategies for the built environment and supporting innovative design concepts including fire engineered solutions
- Consultations under the Licensing Act 2003, for the Licensing objective of Public Safety
- Engagement and enforcement under the Petroleum (Consolidation) Regulations 2014 and the Explosive Regulations 2014
- Promoting firefighter safety by collecting risk information whilst carrying out fire safety activities
- Reducing the number of unwanted fire signals by 54% over 10 years within the commercial sector across Tyne and Wear
- Maintaining a highly skilled and knowledgeable Department qualified to the standard of Level 4 Diploma in Fire Safety

Our targeted risk based inspection programme, is continually monitored and reviewed annually to ensure effective use of resources without overburdening businesses with unnecessary regulation. By prioritising premises based on risk, premises type and history of compliance, we ensure that our activities are conducted in a way that helps to support business.

We operate an intelligence led approach to our engagement activities by identifying trends in non-domestic fires and areas of poor compliance; for example our successful campaign in targeting commercial premises with anti-arson advice where a suspicious fire has occurred nearby and supporting NFCC campaigns such as the Business Safety Week, Sprinkler Safety Week, Fire Door Safety Week.

The Primary Authority Scheme has allowed us to form a number of partnerships with businesses throughout the UK, providing consistent advice and guidance, leading to reduced bureaucracy and a safer business community.

We fully support and promote economic growth through better regulation. However, we will not hesitate to take enforcement action where necessary to ensure the safety of the public and our staff. The Authority will continue to prosecute in cases where serious breaches pose significant risk to life.

Response

Protecting 1.1 million people each and every day

Making a timely and appropriate response to fire and rescue incidents is one of our top priorities. We are currently the fastest metropolitan service in the country in responding to dwelling fires. Doing this means we reduce loss of life, injuries and damage to property.

To better protect our communities we respond to incidents with; the right people, with the right training, with the right resources and at the right time. Our community fire stations across Tyne and Wear enable us to deliver excellent services to the public each and every day.

The following response activity gives a picture of how we make Tyne and Wear a safer place to live, work, and to do business:

Helping to make our communities safer – our recent responses

- We have successfully reduced the number of accidental fires in people's homes

- During 2019/20, we received over 28,000 emergency calls and attended over 16,000 incidents
- 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
- By sending smaller, specialised vehicles to over 1,900 lower risk incidents, we ensured that our fire engines were available for the high-risk emergencies
- Our highly trained swift water rescue teams respond to water related incidents and the increased risk of flooding resulting from climate change
- We respond more effectively to incidents in high buildings with our new aerial ladder platform supporting operational response
- We continue to reduce the risk of injury to our firefighters by introducing new technology e.g. Body Worn Video Cameras
- We invest in equipment which provides improved safety and reduced exposure for casualties and members of the public

- We have reduced the risk of injury to our firefighters by introducing new technology to suppress fires without needing to enter unstable buildings
- We rescue people faster from road traffic accidents and other incidents with modernised cutting equipment available on all fire engines
- Highly trained, skilled and specialised control room staff coordinate the response to all incidents, as well as providing expert advice and guidance to the public in times of emergency.

Our record demonstrates the excellence of our past responses to community fire and rescue incidents but we are always focused on how we improve in the future.



Helping to make our communities safer – improving our future response

- The introduction and embedding of remote-controlled drone technology helps us to learn more about how and why fire and rescue incidents occur, and can search inaccessible or difficult areas.
- Following the Grenfell Tower tragedy and subsequent inquiry we have developed a comprehensive action plan to address recommendations.
- We manage major incidents effectively. We have a national role in responding to the Kerslake Report (2017) following the tragic events at the Manchester Arena. Any findings of the review will inform our future service provision.

COVID-19 Operational Response

The Service made an early decision to protect and maintain its response model to ensure we could provide a proportionate and resilient response to incidents on the basis of risk and demand, at a local, regional and national level. We recognised the potential of the virus to affect a number of locations (stations) and needed to ensure we were able to maintain our ability to provide an effective level of response to the public.



Resilience

Ready to tackle, with confidence, threats to everyday life in our communities

By collaborating with partners, we have strengthened our capacity and capability to respond effectively to and speed recovery from incidents or threats that can cause major disruptions in our communities.

Our resilience arrangements cover major events such as:

- Chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear or explosives incidents
- Major industrial accidents and transport incidents
- Collapse of large structures
- Terrorism-related incidents
- Natural disasters, such as flooding.

These are exceptional events but, if they happen, they can be highly disruptive for our communities. We, and our partners, must have a high degree of preparedness to react quickly and effectively to reduce the impacts, locally, regionally and nationally.

Our specialised resilience department leads our coordination and co-operation with partners. Working together, we continue to identify risks and share resources to ensure we have robust and effective plans and responses to ever changing threats.

We have specific responsibilities under the National Resilience Programme (NRP). This programme is central to the Government's plan to increase resilience to exceptional incidents that threaten our national infrastructure. We host a number of national assets that enhance our ability to respond to major incidents on a local, regional and national scale. Assets include Urban Search and Rescue (USAR), Mass Decontamination and response to Marauding Terrorist Firearms Attacks (MTFA).

We also respond to incidents involving hazardous materials, with rapid identification of substances involved. We participate in the National Counter-terrorism Programme and testing joint responses to potential major incidents in collaboration with other emergency services, the armed services, Government departments and others.

Locally, we are a key member of the Northumbria Local Resilience Forum. This is a statutory partnership of emergency services, local authorities, clinical commissioning groups, hospital trusts and other organisations. Participation in the Forum helps us to build a community risk register, which identifies the significant local risks and sets out how we and our partners will respond to such incidents. We have highly trained tactical advisors who are able to offer expert support and information at these complex incidents.

We will continue to support partners and peers to ensure that all national guidance is up to date and share experience to help drive improvements in our approach.



IRMP Actions 2017-2020

The IRMP supports our journey for innovation and continuous improvement. It is an important part of how we manage the impact of funding reductions, along with continued good financial management and ongoing work to improve efficiency, procurement and effective use of assets and other resources.



In recent years the Service has undertaken the following reviews:

- **Review of Operational Response Model**
- **Control Review**
- **Feasibility of a Trading Company**
- **An Organisation and Management Review (OMR);**
- **Collaboration – to explore further joint working with other emergency services and key partners.**

Following implementation on 1 April, the majority of actions approved in the Operational Response Model have been completed. This action saved the Authority £749k from 2019/20.

Approval was granted in July 2020 by Fire Authority, to authorise the Chief Fire Officer to further consider some of the Operational Response proposals in the forthcoming IRMP 2020-2023. This will allow for new ways of working to be considered and lessons learnt from the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic.

The new IRMP 2020 - 2023 will be developed with reference to budgetary savings to direct resources to priority areas going forward.

If the public sector resource position should change because of the impact of COVID-19 on the economy then the IRMP will be adapted and amended accordingly.

Control room staffing

The potential action from the current IRMP (2017-20) to reduce the number of staff in our control room will not be carried forward to IRMP 2020-23.

This comes after a period of review as requested by the Fire Authority and having done so, it's clear that for resilience we should retain our current staffing level of 28 people.

ALP primary staffing

We will soon begin to pilot primary staffing of M03, the aerial ladder platform (ALP) based at Marley Park Community Fire Station. ALPs are currently dual-crewed, which means that a pumping appliance crew also has to crew the ALP. This could potentially result in delays in deploying to fires in tall buildings. Outcomes, recommendations and lessons from serious fires in tall buildings have been a factor in bringing forward this proposal.

Additional fire appliance

We will pilot the introduction of a second pumping appliance at West Denton Community Fire Station to strengthen our capability, capacity and resilience. A02 will also provide opportunities to support deployment of our incident command unit and provide additional coverage north of the Tyne. This in turn will provide greater resilience for incidents that call for the ALP based at Gosforth Community Fire Station. We will draw on our existing staffing resources to facilitate the pilots and intend to start them imminently. The pilots will inform our full proposals for IRMP 2020-23, which we intend to develop by the end of this financial year.

Overview of 2017-2020 actions

Action 1: Review how we respond relative to risk

Examine the operational response delivered by the Service to ensure all opportunities for efficiency are explored, in relation to the risks we face, so that we achieve the best possible outcomes for our community.

Action 2: Explore further opportunities for collaborative working with emergency services and other partners

Drive the collaborative agenda forward where it improves effectiveness and efficiency, strengthening services, increasing innovation, delivering significant savings and better protecting our communities.

Action 3: Examine our ways of working and consider opportunities for further efficiency and effectiveness

Foster leadership and innovation to drive efficiency through a review of our policies, systems and ways of working. Using an intelligence-led approach to maximise personal and organisational performance and minimise risk.

The IRMP 2020 - 2023 is currently in development and will be published by the end of 2020.



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Continuous Improvement

This plan sets out how we will deliver our vision of creating the safest community and our commitment to improve community safety. We will continue to develop our approach to collaboration, manage the 'heightened threat' of terrorism and continue support of reform of the fire and rescue service nationally and locally.

TWFRS 2025 Programme

Over the next five years we anticipate that change across the Fire and Rescue Sector will continue and most likely accelerate with strategic drivers and events contributing towards the pace and extent of change will require TWFRS to remain relevant and continue to add value for money. To coordinate the key project work being carried out across the Service and in support of continuous improvement, the TWFRS 2025 Programme has been established in 2020.

The TWFRS 2025 Programme will incorporate three key work streams that will drive and direct Service activity over the next five years. The three work streams are:

- **Inclusion**
- **An All Hazards Approach to Managing Incidents**
- **Digital and Data**

A Programme Board has been established, which will have corporate oversight of all Service projects and will be a key strategic driver for this transformational change.

Collaboration

The Policing and Crime Act 2017 placed a duty on fire, police and ambulance services to collaborate. For a number of years, we have secured the benefits of working closely together with colleagues in other emergency services, and we will continue to strive for more collaboration where it will bring efficiency, increased effectiveness and keep the public safe. The Service has a successful track record of collaborating, including co-location at a number of sites and improved operational and preventative activities. The following blue light partners form a formalised collaboration group:

- **Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS);**
- **Northumbria Police (NP);**
- **The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria (OPCC);**
- **The North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (NEAS).**

In addition, to the above, the Service continues in Fire-Fire collaboration with County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS); and NFRS. This partnership has undertaken collaboration including; fire investigation, health and wellbeing, water and hydrant management, Emergency Services Network (ESN) implementation, procurement, workforce development including recruitment, talent management, succession planning and cross service secondments.

The partnerships above set out to develop opportunities aligned to the following objectives:

- **Provide improved outcomes - maintaining or improving the services to local people and communities;**
- **Reduce demand - contributing towards strategic objectives of decreasing risk in communities by reducing demand on services;**
- **Deliver better value for money - producing quantifiable efficiencies**

The onset of COVID-19 has strengthened existing partnerships through national and local associations. The Services' response has also initiated interactions with new partners, increasing engagement with the most vulnerable in our community.

The Collaboration Group will continue to find better ways of working together to ensure we keep our communities safe.

Fire Service Reform

The statutory duty to collaborate contained in the Policing and Crime Act helps us achieve the objectives presented by the fire service reform.

We are keen to drive collaboration opportunities across all business areas. We are working with health and wellbeing partners to support the delivery of their Sustainability and Transformation Plans that set out how they will improve health inequalities and deliver safe and sustainable health and care services.

We recognise that better joint working can undoubtedly strengthen our emergency services, delivering significant savings for taxpayers and improving services to the community. Better procurement, greater transparency and shared resources can only improve the efficiency of our services.

We welcome, and are supporting, the development of the new professional standards by the Fire Standards Board. HMICFRS will provide benchmarking and opportunities to share notable practice.

An Inclusive Service

TWFRS are committed to being an inclusive Service, that reflects the community we serve. We are proud of our achievements to date. In 2016 we were the only fire and rescue service nationally to have been twice awarded Excellent under the Fire Service Equality Framework. In 2019 we also retained our Investors in People Gold award. However, like many services, we know there is more we can do.

One of our key priorities is to think more inclusively, be more inclusive in our work and improve the diversity of our workforce.

We want everyone in the Service to be inclusive in everything they do.



Operational Communications and Heightened Threat of Terrorism

Operational Communications

The Emergency Services Network (ESN) is the next generation of critical communications for the three Emergency Services and other user organisations that is being delivered by the Emergency Services' Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP). Utilising EE's 4G mobile network it will replace the current Airwave system and provide a common communications platform for all emergency services supporting collaborative communications and enhancing access to data and information thus improving community outcomes. This is a complex programme being led by the Home Office. Our Service is making preparations to accommodate transition which is currently scheduled during 2023. This involves upgrading equipment in our Control Room and installing new communications equipment in fire appliances.

Heightened Threat of Terrorism

The changing threat to national security cannot be underestimated. The type and scale of risk changes continuously, so our resilience capacity must change to cope with this. We use modern technology and up-to-date intelligence to identify and address the changing risks.

We will support the national response to terrorist incidents and ensure we learn the lessons from tragic events to ensure we can better protect our communities. We will continue to work closely with our partners and ensure that our staff are trained in the emerging risks. Cross-agency counter-terrorism exercises are becoming more frequent and complex. Whilst they are resource intensive, they will only strengthen our collective ability to respond to any potential terrorist attacks regionally and across the UK.

Supporting Health and Wellbeing

The number of older people within Tyne and Wear is predicted to rise over the next decade. This will generate increased demand on all public services for example; slips, trips and falls. While increased life expectancy is good for Tyne and Wear, age is a risk factor for fire. Since the largest percentage increase in population is in the 65 and over category, our policies, procedures and resource allocation will need to be continually adapted to protect this vulnerable group.

Our brand and the esteem in which the Service is held gives us access to people's homes. This, alongside the successful reduction of fire risk through prevention, has led to a greater understanding that we can make a real difference to the wider health and wellbeing of our communities.

We undertake Safe and Well visits in some communities within our area, the Service continues to collaborate with health and social care partners to deliver falls prevention visits to those aged 65 years and over, whilst raising awareness of frailty and its impact.

In the case of a medical emergency, we also help the ambulance service gain entry into property. Feedback from health colleagues on our involvement across all these activities is very positive.

We deliver over 26,000 HSCs a year. Every HSC represents an opportunity to 'make every contact count.' Collaboration with other public services continues to be essential if we are to maximise the impact of public funding and reduce bureaucracy for the public. We are working closely with our partners, focussing our support on the areas we can have the greatest impact.

Further Information

This plan sets out how we will deliver our vision of creating the safest community and our commitment to improve community safety, response and resilience whilst continuing to meet the financial challenge of fire service reform.

If you would like to comment on this document or the services provided by Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service, you can:

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If you would like our plan in another format or language, please contact us so we can discuss your needs. For further details, please contact **0191 444 1500**



Strategic Community Safety Plan

(Interim)

2020 - 2021



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