



Statement of Assurance and Annual Report

2017 / 2018



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



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1 Introduction

Welcome to our Statement of Assurance and Annual Report for 2017/18.

This report shares our performance in 2017/2018 and the work we are delivering to meet our vision of 'creating the safest community' across Tyne and Wear.

This has been another high-achieving year for us. The professionalism, skills and dedication of our operational staff have continued to protect our communities and prevent harm through our community and fire safety initiatives. We have also worked collaboratively with local and national partners, to share best practice, maximise our resources and deliver greater benefits for the people of Tyne and Wear.

Our non-operational teams have helped to deliver an effective, accountable, forward-thinking organisation, which has maintained robust financial management and governance.

We have continued to operate within a tight financial settlement – which has provided its own challenges and required difficult decisions – such as changing the number of firefighters within a crew, from 5 to 4. Our team has responded with both innovation and flexibility in the delivery of its responsibilities, and has continued to participate and shape national fire service debate on a range of key areas – from diversity in the workforce to trauma support.

There is no doubt that last year was overshadowed by the tragedy of the Grenfell Tower fire, in London. It brought into sharp focus the appalling consequences of fire, and the devastation it brings to communities. It also highlighted the incredible bravery of firefighters – especially when faced with the unimaginable. The impact of Grenfell Tower was felt throughout the world, as we learned about the death and injury of loved ones and the devastation of homes.

We continue to work with other fire and rescue services and partners to share best practice, ensuring the highest standards of safety for communities. We await the findings of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry with great interest.



TWFRS Chair
Councillor Barry Curran

Welcome

The period of this report covers my first full year as Chief Fire Officer. It has been a year when we have continued to demonstrate commitment and innovation to deliver the highest standards of Prevention, Protection, Response and Resilience.

This has been a year when events outside Tyne and Wear have influenced our work. The terrorist attacks in Manchester and London – which led to the national terror level being raised twice to Critical – yet again confirmed our commitment to participating in multi-agency training exercises. These allow us to test and challenge our resilience capabilities and strengthen our partnership working with other key players.

Following the appalling fire at Grenfell Tower, we quickly undertook significant work both with property owners and with residents to bring reassurance at a time when safety concerns for people living in high rise buildings was at its height. In addition, we also supported our colleagues at London Fire Brigade when our trauma support team spent time with firefighters and control room staff who had been – understandably – affected by the fire.

We have also addressed significant financial challenges, including managing negotiations with government on a financial settlement linked to a £10.5 million pension issue. However, through greater financial stewardship we have improved efficiency and financial awareness which contributed to a £1.273 million underspend.

Within Tyne and Wear we saw an alarming increase in the number of attacks on firefighters, one of which led to a successful prosecution. These attacks are not tolerable. Our firefighters should not have to face assault and injury in the course of their work.

We continue to have an enviable performance record, and it is still something on which we strive to both maintain and improve for the communities of Tyne and Wear. In 2017/18 we attended over 17,000 incidents. Our average response travel time to an incident was 5 minutes 22 seconds when excluding Targeted Response Vehicles (TRV's) and specialist appliances. Based on the latest Home Office figures we have the fastest response rate of any metropolitan fire services to dwelling fires.

I would like to thank all our employees for the great work they do – and the challenges they overcome in both the operational and non-operational fields. None of the achievements that we share with you in the coming pages could have happened without each and every one of them not just doing their job, but doing it exceptionally well.



Chief Fire Officer
Chris Lowther

2 Our Vision and Purpose

Our vision for the community will be achieved by providing the people of Tyne and Wear with the services they need, to the highest possible standard.

Our vision statement is:

Creating the Safest Community.

Our mission is:

To save life, reduce risk, provide humanitarian services and protect the environment.

The vision and mission are underpinned by priorities which are aligned to the needs of our communities.

We also recognise that all employees need to have a clear understanding about our working practices, and the core values required for long term success. Everyone has a responsibility for ensuring these values are implemented and upheld.

We strive to ensure equality and diversity is embedded across the organisation by continuously promoting its principles to our employees and to our communities within Tyne and Wear.

We work hard to eliminate inequalities, discrimination, harassment and victimisation. We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity and positive working relations to our workforce and in our local communities. We want to ensure that the service we provide is accessible to everyone and that we have a workforce that reflects the diversity of our communities.

We have recently been recredited with an 'Excellent' award for the Fire and Rescue Services Equality Framework. This recognises our commitment to supporting our diverse community, employing a diverse workforce and promoting the Service as an employer of choice.

The following diagrams demonstrate the link from our vision to our goals and priorities, including our core values.

Vision
Creating the safest community.

Mission
To save life, reduce risk, provide humanitarian services and protect the environment.

Goal One
To prevent loss of life and injury from fires and other emergencies and promote community wellbeing.

Goal Two
To respond appropriately to the risk.

Goal Three
To plan and prepare for exceptional events.

Goal Four
To deliver a modern, effective service, ensuring value for money with staff who reflect the communities we serve.

Priority One
Reduce the occurrence of all incidents attended and their consequences.

Priority Two
Proactively collaborate with partners to promote community safety, health and wellbeing, social responsibility and inclusion.

Priority Three
Use our resources economically, efficiently and effectively by focusing on areas of greatest risk and minimising impact on the environment.

Priority Four
Collaborate with partner agencies to develop and resource effective emergency plans, inform response arrangements and ensure we are a resilient Service.

Priority Five
Provide a highly skilled, healthy, motivated workforce, embracing equality, diversity and inclusion to best serve our communities.

Our Values



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.

Our Strategic Community Safety Plan 2017-20 (SCSP) sits at the heart of our revised and streamlined strategic planning framework. The plan aims to:

- Encourage leadership and innovation by all
- Promote collaborative working
- Strive for continuous improvement
- Further embed equality, diversity and inclusion in all that we do
- Remove duplication.

By providing high quality services to our communities and stakeholders, we have built on our strong partnership approach to ensure we remain one of the safest, most inclusive and high performing public services.



The SCSP is underpinned by three strategies: the Community Safety Strategy, Organisational Development Strategy and Medium Term Financial Strategy. For more details please visit our website: www.twfire.gov.uk

Consulting on our Plans

We recognise the need to seek the views, opinions and involvement of others in the delivery of our services. Where appropriate, this includes employees, Authority Members, members of the public, other stakeholders and community groups.

Our formal Consultation Policy sets out how we will engage with our stakeholders and consult on the issues which affect them. This will provide us with information at the beginning of the decision making process, enabling this information to influence our plans and strategies.



3 Services to our community

Every day we protect 1.1 million people across Tyne and Wear. We ensure community safety by prioritising areas that focus on:

Protection - our protection work reduces the risk and impact of fire on the business community. We support economic growth through intelligence led proportionate regulation.

Prevention - this is at the forefront of our proactive approach to prevent incidents from happening, through education, advice and intervention. Through understanding our community and working with partners we identify and support those who are at most risk.

Response - making a timely and appropriate response to fire and rescue incidents to reduce the loss of life, injuries and damage to property. We offer an excellent service to the community of Tyne and Wear supported by being the fastest metropolitan service to respond to dwelling fires.

Resilience - protects the national infrastructure in the event of catastrophic incidents. We have specialist teams who enhance our ability to respond to major emergencies such as terrorist attacks, industrial and domestic accidents and natural disasters.



1.12
million
residents



1
international
airport



2.42 million
m² retail floor
space



512,000
dwellings



73,000
students, and
3 universities



2 major cities
and 28,000
business sites



5 local
authority
areas



High levels
of deprivation



60 Metro
stations

Protection

Our fire safety work covers all premises other than single private dwellings.

We enforce the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. This legislation is commonly known as the Fire Safety Order (FSO) and places the duty on 'the Responsible Person' to ensure a safe property. Throughout the year we:

- Conducted 1,976 Fire Safety audits.
- Issued 635 informal notifications – where we educate and inform people through verbal or informal written advice, about their duties under the FSO.
- Issued 2 Alteration Notices, 10 Enforcement Notices and 18 Prohibition Notices.
- Conducted 2 Prosecutions of Offences under the FSO

We meet our statutory duty by carrying out a risk-based inspection programme of all premises covered by FSO throughout our five local authority areas. This ensures that premises presenting the highest risk and lowest compliance are audited and inspected more frequently than those considered to be of lower risk and higher compliance.

We also provide fire safety advice in the workplace to assist employers in complying with the legislation and achieving a safe building for employees and visitors.

Following a fire in the basement laundry room of the 11 storey Sandman Signature Hotel in Newcastle upon Tyne we received the following comment:

Mitch Gaglardi, owner of the Sandman Signature Hotel said:

“Our staff worked admirably under pressure in conjunction with the Fire Service whom I would like to commend. Sandman Signature Hotels specify sprinkler systems in all of our properties for this exact scenario to ensure guest safety.”

We continue to carry out targeted and timely engagements following large scale incidents to improve fire safety awareness within the business community and promote safer commercial buildings.

We fully support and promote economic growth through better regulation. Were businesses fail to comply with fire safety legislation, we will use appropriate, proportionate enforcement action, including prosecution to ensure compliance and public safety.

Our Primary Authority Scheme (PAS) continues to grow in strength with new partners continuing to join us from a wide variety of sectors, from care providers to large retailers.

Prosecutions

We have taken proportionate action against the most serious breaches of fire safety. We have had several successful prosecutions for a wide range of offences; from failure to comply with the investigative process to wide spread breaches of the Fire Safety Order in industrial and entertainment premises.

Fireworks seizure

Our Fire Safety Inspectors stopped the risk of a major explosion in the West End of Newcastle by seizing just under 500Kg Net Mass (NM) of fireworks from two premises owned by the same person – one where the licensee was only permitted to store 75Kg NM and the other wasn't licenced at all.

The fireworks were stored in such a dangerous manner located near propane cylinders, petrol and live unsecured electrical wires that they were immediately seized to ensure public safety. Had there been a fire or a spark, the quantity and storage conditions would have led to a major incident that would have devastated the lives, property and homes of those nearby.

Whilst the Service endeavours to work with owners to make buildings safe, this case demonstrates that we will not hesitate to take action when required.

Anyone convicted of storing fireworks without a licence, or not storing them safely, could face an unlimited fine and/or be imprisoned for up to 2 years.

We continue to promote firework safety with our partners, using our social media channels to highlight the legislation around the licencing and sale of fireworks – particularly at retailers. The campaigns run prior to and during the Bonfire period, Christmas and New Year and Chinese New Year.

Prevention

The most effective way to save lives, minimise injuries and losses through fire and other emergencies is to reduce the number of incidents that occur. This is done by focusing on risk reduction for vulnerable people by means of our Home Safety Check (HSC) Targeting Policy and our Vulnerable Persons Strategy.

Our prevention and protection work is just as important as putting out fires. This has helped us to drive down the number of fires over a number of years, keeping our communities safer.

We work hard to understand community risk and this informs our day to day work (such as targeting HSCs at those most vulnerable), or when we make changes to the service through the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).

Accidental fires in the home are the main cause of fire deaths and we do all we can to reduce these fatalities. Our Prevention and Education teams work to educate people about how they can protect themselves from fire. We do this by:

- Delivering over 30,000 HSCs to provide tailored home fire safety advice and fitting 25,000 smoke alarms. The HSC also includes additional elements around health and wellbeing, focusing on a person-centred approach including falls prevention advice, where age appropriate.

- Partnership working with social housing, health and the police. This allows us to continually work closely with key partners to identify the most vulnerable and ensure that appropriate actions are taken to remove or mitigate their risk from fire. This includes the installation of Telecare, packages of care and the continued support for the installation of water suppression systems for those most at risk.
- Reducing fires started deliberately. We have specialist staff to tackle fire setting behaviour by young people by working on the Juvenile Firesetter Educational Programme and engage with schools located within identified hot spot areas delivering targeted educational messages.
- 14,199 people attended our multi-agency Safety centre Safetyworks!, this is an interactive safety centre based in Newcastle managed by us and working in partnership with Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner, Northumbria Police, St Johns Ambulance, Nexus, Sainsbury's and the RNLI.

The centre also delivers key safety campaigns to targeted groups and communities aimed at improving safety and reducing the impact of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) fires. To address deliberate fires and its association with ASB we work together with key partners to deliver a multi-agency approach to reducing fire related crime.

- Delivering youth diversionary activities that include Fire Cadets, Phoenix Project and the Prince's Trust Team programme. 167 people successfully completed the Phoenix Project activities and 89 people successfully completed Prince's Trust. As well as personal development, the aim of these programmes is to provide young people with key advice around home fire safety and personal safety and also an understanding of the impact and consequences of hoax calls and deliberate fire setting.
- During our bonfire safety campaign we visited 32 secondary schools to talk about firework safety, delivering 93 assemblies, to over 17,000 students, across the three targeted year groups. We also led SafetyWorks! education talks, running 25 sessions delivered to 20 Special Educational Needs schools and 5 Pupil Referral Units, to 388 students. As part of the campaign our social media campaign delivered key messages to over 400k people.

We have used campaigns such as Facing Consequences, which included the 'Ryan's Regret' film to highlight the dangers of fireworks.

During the year we worked successfully with Public Health, Newcastle to pilot Safe and Well visits - with almost 1000 visits made in the 12 months of the trial. As a result, using the Newcastle project as best practice, the delivery of the Safe and Well visits was rolled out across the other four local authority areas working with partners including Public Health, Clinical Commissioning Group and Adult Social Care. From December 2017 until 31st March 2018 there have been 1444 visits across Tyne and Wear.

Further developments to enhance our current HSC's have also been undertaken resulting in the addition of health and wellbeing related questions. These questions support the better identification of a person's risk from fire e.g. smoking, alcohol and substance misuse, social isolation.



Response

To create the safest community we have specialist equipment and resources to respond to incidents. Our highly effective Control function managed over 27,000 calls, a 13% increase on the previous year.

We operate front line appliances ranging from standard fire engines through to specialist appliances for specific situations. Each fire engine carries a crew of up to four firefighters and is equipped with the latest radio and computer technology, providing the vital communication link between operational crews and fire control. We also provide Targeted Response Vehicles to provide a risk based response to low level incident types.

"Thank you so much for attending my property tonight as a cable had fallen into the water under my house and caught fire. I couldn't be more thankful for your speedy response from the operator who took my 999 call to the crew that attended. I really appreciate it". (Source: Tyne and Wear resident)

The primary operational response is to emergency incidents that include fires, road traffic incidents, chemical spills and rescues from water, in addition to a wide range of other incidents. Examples of our services include:

- Responding to fires to protect the public, property and the environment we ensure we respond with the right staff, who have had the right training and use the right equipment, at the right time, every time.
- Road traffic collisions form a major part of our work. The incidents we attend range from low speed single car accidents to high speed multi-vehicle crashes involving cars, lorries and buses, and the people within them.
- We have a high volume pump (HVP) that can be used to remove large quantities of flood water or provide large amounts of water for firefighting at larger incidents. The HVP is capable of pumping 7000 litres of water per minute across great distances using up to three kilometres of hose.
- Our highly trained employees use equipment that can limit the harmful effects of the release of hazardous materials. This is done through decontamination, which we can be carried out on a large scale.
- We have specialist rescue teams who are highly trained in the rescue of people from height, from swiftwater and river incidents and who deal with structural collapse and animal rescues.

"Would just like to say a massive big thank you to the guys from Blue watch at Hebburn fire station after they rescued my disabled aunty who was near collapse after being trapped in her home lift for over 4 hours x These guys are amazing thanks again x". (Source: Tyne and Wear resident)

Jarrow Auction Rooms

On 23rd November 2017 firefighters attended a fire at a former church on Bede Burn Road, Jarrow. The structure was adjoined to a residential building.

Due to the speed of fire development, firefighters acted quickly evacuating the residents and bringing the fire under control. The presence of several gas cylinders inside the building posed a serious risk.

Eight fire engines, the Command Unit and the Aerial Ladder Platform (ALP) were at the incident. We used our drone to obtain aerial footage to help in the assessment of the fire and structure of the building.

The fire was successfully brought under control after several hours with no injuries to members of the public or firefighters and limited damage to adjacent properties.

Grenfell Tower - a whole team approach

In response to the Grenfell Tower fire on June 14th 2017, we engaged with all local social housing providers, setting out responsibilities and providing options for future joint initiatives to continue to improve the safety of our residents. We also took a number of steps including:

- Visiting approximately 12,000 flats to provide reassurance and conduct safety checks.
- Conducting over 200 audits of high rise buildings which provided building owners and managers with the opportunity to ask advice and better assess the fire safety measures within their buildings. This also allowed our operational crews to gather vital risk information relating to each building to promote safety.
- Conducting high rise training in collaboration with partners utilising a local authority premises to ensure we respond effectively to high rise incidents.

We also provided reassurance to residents through a range of media releases; strengthened fire safety advice and interviews. We have also been working with housing providers to direct residents to information regarding HSC's.

We also engaged with hospitals, universities and other building owners where there was a potential increased risk due to cladding materials.

Residential gas explosion

On the 12th August 2017 a gas explosion destroyed a property in Ryhope, Sunderland and substantially damaged another house.

The blast occurred while the resident was still inside. Four fire engines and the Operational Support Unit (Rescue) attended the incident.

The Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Tactical Adviser assessed the property and utilised our search and rescue dog to locate people trapped beneath the rubble.

Despite the destruction, the resident survived the blast and was pulled from the rubble by our firefighters. Remarkably, she was the only casualty following the explosion and was flown to the Royal Victoria Infirmary in Newcastle for treatment. Happily, she recovered from her injuries.



Resilience

The National Resilience programme is an essential part of government arrangements to protect the national infrastructure in the event of catastrophic incidents. It has provided us with a Mass Decontamination Module, a High Volume Pumping Unit, USAR and a Detection Identification and Monitoring capability, all of which enhance our ability to respond to major emergencies such as terrorist attacks, industrial and domestic accidents and natural disasters.

The threat of terrorist attacks is increasing and to ensure the safety of people in Tyne & Wear we led national exercises to test simulated terrorist attacks and subsequent plane crash, for instance Exercise Black Kite. Black Kite witnessed a huge multi-agency approach with responses from Scotland, down to Devon. The collaborative approach tested the USAR zone response across the North of England alongside air mobility from the Military.

We worked alongside NEAS and Northumbria Police to successfully test a terrorist attack in the Metrocentre Gateshead, May 2017. Exercise Custodian took place overnight and involved over 300 volunteers. Our specialist Warm Zone Response Team provided a response for a simulated armed terrorist attack.

We hosted a regional training day working alongside the Environment Agency (EA) in May, 2017.

The EA demonstrated the support they can provide and we also explained how the national Memorandum of Understanding will ensure we work together smoothly.

We also took part in a three day exercise which started in Scotland and ended in Northumberland. Our MTFA teams were deployed alongside NEAS, Police, and the military.

Our Resilience team also oversee the upper tier Control of Major Accident Hazards sites within Tyne and Wear. Exercise Jacksnipe in July 2017 successfully tested the site plans of International Paints and the emergency response of all three blue light services.

We engage with Northumbria Local Resilience Forum and work collaboratively with our partners on various areas of business continuity planning e.g. national fuel shortages, pandemic influenza, cyber attacks, severe weather.

Local resilience planning is also supported by the Government's National Resilience Programme through the National Resilience Assurance Team. This has enabled us to take an active role in national resilience exercise planning, be well informed and to be able to share and collaborate on National Resilience issues.



Collaboration with Partners

We continue to build partnerships and work in collaboration to improve community safety.

The Police and Crime Act 2017 placed a duty on fire, police and ambulance services to collaborate. The Act further enhanced the democratic accountability of fire and rescue services and police forces to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of emergency services through closer collaboration.

Our Strategic Collaboration Board with Northumbria Police, Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner continues to work hard to drive efficiencies.

The public benefits from our collaboration and it can be seen in the community with the co-location with other emergency services at 11 of our 17 stations. Partners include Northumbria Police (NP), North East Ambulance Service (NEAS), Great North Air Ambulance, North of Tyne Mountain Rescue Team and Northumbria Blood Bikes.

We will continue to work with partners to find better ways of working together to ensure we keep our community safe, improve services and deliver value for money. Examples of how we improve outcomes for the community are highlighted as follows.

- Conducting schools education bonfire safety talks in partnership with Northumbria Police. This involved visiting 32 secondary schools, delivering 93 assemblies, to over 17,000 students, across the three targeted year groups.
- Deliver ground breaking schemes with partners to deliver HSC's. By working with housing providers, sprinkler systems are installed in over 1200 domestic properties, with over 850 being financed by partners.

We have also worked with partners to provide safeguarding messages and other interventions during HSC's.

- Working with Northumbria Police and NEAS to promote road safety through initiatives such as 'Operation Dragoon'.
- We successfully demonstrated our effectiveness by conducting regional and national multi agency incident response exercises. We hosted a national exercise called Black Kite which tested our response to Malicious Action Response Plan and USAR.
- We worked closely with the National Fire Chiefs Council and worked in partnership with South Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council to provide invaluable high rise training for our firefighters.

We are working with partners to optimise multi-agency response and resilience, through enhanced working relationships, in line with the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme.

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



Operational Assurance

Operational Assurance underpins the application of the Safe Person Concept and contributes towards 'Creating the Safest Community' and firefighter safety.

Responding to emergencies is core to the role of the fire and rescue service - where risk is at its highest – and our operational competence must be the very best. A person is operationally competent only when they can apply their skills, knowledge and understanding at operational incidents or in a realistic simulation.

Within the National Occupational Standards, there is a requirement to implement a quality assurance system. Such systems ensure:

- We deliver our services to a standard expected of the communities we serve.
- Our operational staff have the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding in order to fulfil the vast array of operational demands placed upon them.
- Continuous development of a safe, and competent operational workforce.
- Issues are managed and rectified in an appropriate and timely manner.

We implement Operational Assurance to ensure that an appropriate quality management system is in place for the operational arena.

To facilitate this, we undertake a regular review of all aspects of our operational performance. The process seeks to validate the information gathered on operational performance, at incidents and training events, to verify and measure the level of compliance with current standard operating procedures and incident management systems.

We also undertake a debrief process following operational incidents and large scale training events.

Following a performance and review, event or debrief, the information recorded is submitted onto the Risk Management and Assurance Database (RMAD). This is then assured to provide that there is consistency in how performance and review is recorded across the organisation.

On a quarterly basis, reports are submitted to the Operational Assurance Group (OAG) on good practice and performance. This is to ensure continuous improvement and development across the Service.



4 Performance

Performance Improvement

We recognise the benefits of change and are developing new and innovative ways of working.

To deliver our vision and our commitment to improve community safety we will continue to develop our approach to collaboration and continue to support the reform of the national fire and rescue service.

Fire Service Reform

The Home Office's responsibility for FRS and the emerging fire service reform will see the examination of the following three pillars throughout all UK Fire and Rescue Services over the next few years:

Efficiency and Collaboration

- Sharing of resources
- Multi-year financial settlements
- Embracing technology
- Cost effective procurement
- Evolving our intelligence led approach

Transparency and Accountability

- Independent standards setting body
- Independent inspectorate due to be fully operational in April 2018
- Governance opportunities for Police and Crime Commissioners involvement in fire
- Visible performance information

Workforce Reform

- Flexible crewing
- Greater use of retained firefighters
- Excellent leadership
- National Joint Council (NJC) reform
- Greater focus on equality, diversity and culture change.

The Government is ensuring greater joint working through the Policing and Crime Act's inclusion of a statutory duty to collaborate. Such collaborative working helps us to achieve the objectives of fire service reform.

Our organisational development strategy sets our approach to organisational design and how we lead our people and drive performance. This has been instrumental in developing our leaders of the future. We are rated Excellent under the Fire Service Equality Framework but there is more we can do. The diversity of our workforce and ensuring an inclusive approach in all that we do is an important focus for us.

We welcome the new professional standards being developed nationally and will support their development. The new inspectorate will provide further opportunities to benchmark our services against others and enable better sharing of learning between services.



Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP)

We have successfully utilised the IRMP process for more than 10 years to manage change, strengthen prevention, reduce costs and reduce the risk in our community. This process continues with IRMP 2017-20, which builds upon the achievements of previous reviews.

Over the last 5 years we have made over £13m of efficiencies, with many of the efficiency ideas coming from our own employees. However, we still need to address a projected gap in resources of approximately £3.6m by 2021/2022. The IRMP ensures the right decisions are made to balance risk and available resources.

We have created specialist working groups to review how we perform and respond to risk to ensure we achieve the best possible outcomes for our community. The areas being explored to improve efficiency and effectiveness include:

- Assess Operational Response to the community based on risk.
- Review Mobilisation to assess the effectiveness of our duty systems.
- Assess skills and technology to maximise our effectiveness.
- Explore further opportunities for collaborative working with stakeholders.
- Examine our ways of working and consider opportunities through a review of our policies and systems.

Key Achievements

Riding 4 - In December 2017, we approved changing the level of crewing on fire engines from 5 to 4 Firefighters at 9 stations. This was an essential decision in order for us to balance our available resources against risks to our firefighters and community. We are confident that this decision does not present further risk to our firefighters nor the professional and dedicated service that we provide to our community.

The implementation of the decision was phased with four stations riding 4 from 1st January 2018. The remaining phase of Riding 4 will be implemented in June 2018.

Estates - Dispose of selected surplus assets, this process is ongoing and should yield capital receipts in the next two years.

Supporting Health and Wellbeing - The number of older people within our communities is predicted to rise over the next decade reflecting a 19% increase from 2011 to 2021. This will generate increased demand on all public services for example; HSC's, Safe and Well visits and slips, trips and falls.

Our brand and the esteem in which we are held gives us access to people's homes that some organisations cannot achieve. 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.

Our safe and well pilot resulted in a 7% reduction in hospital admissions by those aged over 65, as a result of a fall.

Awards and Accreditation

We have been successful in achieving several awards and accreditations including:

- Investors in People, Gold status retained in 2018.
- The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA), Gold award received in 2017.
- Inclusive Top 50 employers Award, achieved 4th place in November 2017.
- We were included in the top 100 Inclusive employers in Britain after being included in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index. The annual list recognises organisations that have done outstanding work over the past year to make sure every Lesbian, Gay, Bi Sexual and Transgender employee is accepted without exception.

To align with The North East Better Health at Work there have been several campaigns to focus on healthy eating, work-life balance and managing stress.

Equality and diversity is part of our everyday lives. As an organisation we strive to provide equal access to our services and equality for all in the workplace. We embrace diversity by working with organisations to strengthen our service.



Efficiency Plan and Future Actions

In September 2016 we published our Efficiency Plan covering the four financial years 2016/2017 to 2019/2020. This was a requirement of the Government to allow the Fire Authority to accept the Four Year Grant Funding Settlement it offered to all authorities. The Government reviewed the plan and approved it in the autumn of 2016. The Efficiency Plan set out the Fire Authority's detailed approach to the delivery of savings necessary to address the reductions in funding over this four year period.

The Efficiency Plan identified savings of £8.248m to be achieved over the four year period, based on our Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016/2017 to 2019/2020, reported to members in February 2016. More detailed information on the Efficiency Plan can be found at www.twfire.gov.uk

	Published 4 Year Efficiency Plan £'000	Actual achieved £'000
2016/17 – Budget Efficiencies	1,323	1,323
IRMP Actions	1,184	1,184
2017/18 – Budget Efficiencies	1,394	1,441
IRMP Actions	1,773	2,267
Total as at 31st March 2018	5,674	6,215
Further Proposed Savings:		
2018/19 – Budget Efficiencies	4	948
IRMP Actions	1,081	923
2019/20 – Budget Efficiencies	0	(15)
IRMP Actions	1,489	106
Total	8,248	8,177

We have found savings of £6.215m by the end of 2017/2018, £0.541m more than that set out in the Efficiency Plan. We are not content with this position though as we have to deal with, not only grant funding reductions, but also spending pressures, such as significant inflationary cost increases and pay awards.

A further £2.574m has to be found in the remaining two years (2018/2019 to 2019/2020) of the four year Efficiency Plan, of which planned savings totalling £1.962m have been identified to date.

Spending Pressures and Commitments

In addition to funding changes, we must also plan for a range of spending pressures and commitments that are not funded by Government. We take these spending commitments into account in our Budget Planning Framework, reviewing and refining them throughout the budget setting process.

Our Performance Indicators

We aim to get to people who need us as fast as we can. We closely monitor our response times and review how we can remain amongst the fastest responders within our available resources. This is demonstrated by the fact we are the fastest metropolitan service in responding to dwelling fires.

Our targeted prevention work plays a major role in keeping people safe. Our HSC's and other extensive preventative work with partners, helps reduce the number of fires in the home. This can be seen in our performance at incidents within dwellings. We have the second lowest number of deaths from all fires (LI02) amongst all metropolitan FRS' along with the lowest number of injuries recorded from accidental dwelling fires (LI03) since 2009. This proactive work is also undertaken in our fire safety activity, risk based inspection programme and operational health checks. This is where we engage with the business sector to keep people safe in their working environment.

However, Tyne and Wear includes areas which are disproportionately high in deprivation and unemployment. Local authorities and blue light services have seen reductions in their budgets and many community activities are no longer available. This environment has also seen an increase in ASB and deliberate fires (LI16, LI18, LI33). We are working with partners to identify joint solutions to ASB and working with communities to raise awareness of fire prevention and safety.

This section of the report outlines the key performance areas that we measure and review to improve the safety of people in Tyne and Wear.

Deaths and injuries (LI01, LI02, LI03, LI05)

14% (6) fewer injuries from accidental dwelling fires (LI03)

4 fatalities (LI02)

Lowest number of injuries recorded since 2009/10

43% (16) of the victims who went to hospital were aged between 35 and 64 (LI03)

- 76% (28) of the incidents where a victim or victims attended hospital the room of origin of the fire was the kitchen (LI03).
- In 84% (31) of the injuries where the victim or victims attended hospital, the injuries appeared to be slight. (LI03).
- There has been a 2.3% (4) increase in the number of injuries from all fires (LI05).
- There were 181 victims from 143 fires where there were victim(s) involved (LI05).
- Where an occupancy type has been recorded, 49% (88) were 'Lone person/parent' (LI05).

Fire attendances (LI08, LI09, LI10, LI16, LI33, LI18, LI24, LI29)

5% (17) fewer accidental kitchen fires (LI09)

18% (1115) more fires attended (LI24)

28% (1053) increase in deliberate secondary fires (LI16)

6% (33) fewer accidental dwelling fires (LI08)

- 25% (450) of primary fires had a property type of 'Car' (LI29).
- 4% (26) increase in deliberate primary road vehicle fires (LI29).
- 27% (752) increase in deliberate refuse fires (LI18).
- 25% (1131) increase in deliberate fires (LI33).
- 7% (16) fewer accidental dwelling fires which did not start in the kitchen (LI10).
- Primary fires increased by 4.5% (77)(LI29).
- 46% (819) of primary fires were deliberate and 54% (977) were accidental or not known (LI29).

False alarms (LI22, LI23)

35% (616) of Automatic Fire Alarm calls to non domestic premises were due to faulty alarms (LI22)

3% (57) decrease to AFAs from a non domestic premises (LI22)

6% (150) increase to AFAs in domestic premises (LI23)

16% (59) reduction in false alarms to 'Hospitals and medical care' premises (LI22). Lowest recorded since 2009/10

- 21% (54) reduction in false alarms to 'Hospital' premises (LI22). This is the lowest recorded since 2009/10.
- 45% (1194) of domestic AFAs are due to cooking or burnt toast (LI23).
- 21% (365) of non domestic AFA calls are to an education premises (LI22).
- 39% (1035) of false alarms in domestic premises were to 'purpose built flat/maisonette – multiple occupancy' (LI23).
- 35% (913) of false alarms in domestic premises were to 'self contained sheltered housing' (LI23).

Local Indicators overview 2017/18

The chart below shows how we are performing against our Priority Indicators.

Priority 1 - those incidents with a high risk to life

Priority 2 - those incidents with a low/minimal risk to life

■ Target not achieved / not forecast to achieved

■ Target / forecast equal or within 2.5%

■ Within target / forecast

		Incidents							2017/18 Incidents
Indicator		2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Target
Priority 1	LI01 - Deaths from accidental dwelling fires	2	0	4	1	0	3	2	0
	LI02 - Deaths from all fires	3	1	5	3	2	4	4	0
	LI03 - Injuries from accidental dwelling fires (excl. precautionary check and first aid)	73	70	58	47	40	43	37	41
	LI05 - Injuries from all fires	241	227	219	220	170	177	181	177
	LI08 - Accidental dwelling fires	574	589	570	575	554	563	530	549
	LI09 - Accidental kitchen fires in dwellings	355	360	361	398	313	323	306	313
	LI10 - Accidental non kitchen fires in dwellings	219	229	209	177	241	240	224	240
Priority 2	LI16 - Deliberate secondary fires	5171	3159	4213	3444	3380	3718	4773	3627
	LI18 - Deliberate refuse fires	3795	2515	2825	2466	2392	2821	3575	2759
	LI22 - Alarm calls to AFA from non domestic premise	3096	2671	2456	2532	1816	1801	1745	1651
	LI23 - Alarm calls to AFA from domestic premise	2445	2671	2565	2566	2437	2489	2641	2437
	LI24 - Fire calls attended	7863	5315	6436	5600	5744	6080	7197	5893
	LI29 - Primary fires	1942	1701	1599	1575	1664	1719	1796	1642
	LI32 - Total number of incidents	17679	14772	15526	14501	14377	15459	17082	15065
	LI33 - Deliberate fires	6008	3807	4815	3989	4045	4461	5592	4318
	LI35 - Number of fires in a non domestic property	301	241	245	241	245	217	237	204



5 How we meet the requirements of the National Framework

This Statement of Assurance and Annual Report, along with other documents referred to and signposted within it, demonstrates how TWfRA meets the requirements of the Fire and Rescue National Framework. These are summarised within this section.



Requirement	How this is met
<p>Produce an IRMP that identifies and assesses all foreseeable risk.</p> <p>The Plan must demonstrate how prevention, protection and response will be used to mitigate the impact of risk.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Community Safety Plan (SCSP) and IRMP. • Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). • Community Risk Profile (CRP). • Policies and procedures to implement the Plan, including targeting. • Specific IRMP reviews including evidence base. • Detailed risk data used in decision making e.g. Workload Modelling, MOSAIC. • Community Engagement Strategy. • Monitoring of performance by Performance Action Group and Policy and Performance Committee to ensure risk is being mitigated. • Improved mapping based on various data sources to provide a comprehensive picture of local risks and increase efficiency. • Ongoing Community Safety Education Programme. • Home Safety Check (HSC) Risk Based Inspection Programme. • Lighter Nights campaign. • Improved Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) risk information and maps. • Revised Learning & Organisational Development Policy. • Organisational Development Strategy. • Fire Safety Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP).
<p>Work with communities to identify and protect them from risk.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of HSCs. • The collaborative use of NHS (Exeter) Data. • Ongoing partnership working. • Use of shared data via multi agency groups. • Improved Workload Modeller. • Historical accidental dwelling fire data cross referenced with Mosaic to target most vulnerable for HSCs. • Partners for life. • Recruitment of volunteers. • Recruitment of Community Safety Advocates. • 100+ partners referring vulnerable people to TWFRS. • Introduction of Employee Advisory / Network Groups. • Attendance at local community events e.g. Mela and Pride. • Introduction and development of Social Media. • Formation of Risk Group.

Requirement	How this is met
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of Risk Management Assurance Database (RMAD). • Safe and Well visits.
<p>IRMP should set out the management strategy and risk based programme for enforcing the Regulatory Reform order.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP). • Development of Post Fire Audit guidance. • Collaboration with other Regulatory Bodies. • Primary Authority Scheme (PAS) with eight National Partners including Sainsbury's, Home Group and Intu.
<p>Make provision to respond to incidents and reflect this in IRMP's.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved incident performance. • Introduction of Day Crewing Close Call (DCCC) staffing. • Introduction of Emergency Call Management Policy. • Launch of new mobilising system. • Negotiated common command arrangements. • Undertake compatible training exercises e.g. Exercise Black Kite. • Introduction of Targeted Response Vehicles (TRVs). • Cross border response arrangements. • Introduction of Cobra cold cutting. • Collaboration with NEAS and Northumbria Police. • Contingency re Industrial Action. • Review of Operational Response. • Introduction of swap a shift. • Zero fire deaths in 2012/13. • Introduction of digital fire ground radios. • Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) Policy change.

Requirement	How this is met
(Accountability) IRMP must be accessible, available, reflect consultation, cover a three year time span and be reviewed and revised as often as necessary; reflect up to date risk analysis and evaluation of community outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Risk Profile. • IRMP Consultation Programme. • Sustainable change and increased efficiency. • MTFS. • SCSP / IRMP 2017/20. • IRMP specialist groups, Collaboration, Ways of Working and Response.
Have effective business continuity arrangements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment with ISO22301. • Internal Audit accreditations. • Relevant BCP across the Service. • Maintained and tested on an ad-hoc basis.
Collaborate with other FRAs, other emergency services and Local Resilience Forum (LRF) to deliver interoperability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mutual aid agreements. • Local Resilience Forum (structures, roles, plans, procedures and exercising records etc.). • Common systems for Command and Control with Northumberland FRA. • Further collaboration with Northumbria Police and NEAS. • Multi agency exercises. • Deployment of national assets e.g. USAR and HVP. • Mass decontamination resource. • DIM re CBRN and MTFA. • SafetyWorks! • Assisted other FRS re flooding incidents (Morpeth 2012, Somerset 2013, North Yorkshire 2015 and Carlisle 2015). • SLA with DDFRS re IOSH Training. • Developed USAR training to be shared with partners. • Joint exercises working group. • JESIP. • Shared fire dog with West Yorks FRS 2017/2018.

Requirement	How this is met
Engage with the Fire and Rescue Service Strategic Resilience Board (SRB) to support discussions and decision making on national resilience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies and procedures relating to local and national risks. • Engagement in National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) groups relating to resilience. • Ongoing development of USAR.
Risk assessments must include analysis of any gaps between existing capability and that needed for national resilience, and these must be highlighted to the SRB.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NRAT multi capability assurance inspection. • Multi agency community risk register (LRF).
(Assurance) Work collectively and with SRB to provide assurance that risks are assessed, gaps identified and that resilience capabilities are fit for purpose, and any new capabilities are procured, maintained and managed in the most cost effective manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above plus independent assessment via National Resilience Advisory Team (NRAT) audits. • External audit of financial systems and value for money.
Work in partnership with their communities and a wide range of partners locally and nationally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Community Safety Plan (SCSP) and IRMP. • Policies and procedures to implement Plan, including targeting. • Delivery coterminous with council boundaries. • Engagement in statutory and non-statutory partnerships (Partnerships Register, reports and structures of partnership bodies). • HSC, signposting and data sharing. • Collaboration on diversionary activities i.e. Safetyworks!.
(Scrutiny) FRAs must hold the Chief Fire Officer to account and have arrangements in place to ensure their decisions are open to scrutiny.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Governance Framework. • Standing Orders. • Annual review of Governance. • Authority minutes.

Requirement	How this is met
FRAs must make their communities aware of how they can access data and information on performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement of Assurance and Annual Report (since 2013). • General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) implementation May 2018. • Quarterly performance reports (benchmarked with Mets). • Compliance with the data transparency code as exemplified on website. • Policies and procedures relating to data. • Policies and procedures relating to information governance. • Data & Information policy. • Publication of Privacy notice. • Compliance with all recommendations of the Transparency agenda e.g. publication of senior salaries, procurement and expenditures. • ICO publication scheme. • Publication of peer review action plans. • Publication of pay policy statements. • IRMP Consultation. • Publication of FOI FAQs. • Gender pay reporting.

Requirement	Addendum	How this is met
Have a process of fitness assessment and development to ensure that operational personnel are enabled to maintain the standards of personal fitness required in order to perform their role safely;		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work between OHU and LD to determine a strategy for all Operational personnel which includes: • All Operational employees provided with the time to undertake physical training on a daily basis when at work. • Chester step test – 6 monthly. • OHU Monitoring - 3 yearly and 1 yearly health surveillance. • Gymnasium on all fire stations and at HQ with time built into station work routine for fitness training. • HAVS assessments. • Special assessments. • Monthly health promotion topics and health education for operational employees. • Operational vaccination programme. • Welfare officer support. • Stress awareness programmes. • Promoting Positive Mental health programme. • Mind, Blue Light Time to Change.

Requirement	How this is met
<p>Ensure that no individual will automatically face dismissal if they fall below the standards required and cannot be deployed operationally;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OHU Monitoring and associated fitness plan. • Access to physiotherapy service. • Accelerated access to health scheme. • Welfare officer support. • Access to OHU Physician. • Independent qualified medical practitioner. • Welfare officer support. • Stress awareness programmes. • Promoting Positive Mental health programme. • Mind, Blue Light Time to Change.
<p>Ensure that all operational personnel will be provided with support to maintain their levels of fitness for the duration of their career;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above. • Further work ongoing to include fire fit and Gym improvement group.
<p>Consider where operational personnel have fallen below the fitness standards required whether an individual is able to continue on full operational duties or should be stood down, taking into account the advice provided by the authority's occupational health provider. In making this decision, the safety and well-being of the individual will be the key issue;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above. • Ongoing health surveillance. • Advice from the Occupational Health Physician. • Redeployment if appropriate. • Policy and procedure. • Annual figures regarding this data. • Independent qualified medical practitioner. • Welfare officer support. • Stress awareness programmes. • Promoting Positive Mental health programme. • Mind, Blue Light Time to Change. • Trauma Support Team.

Requirement	How this is met
<p>Commit to providing a minimum of 6 months of development and support to enable individuals who have fallen below the required fitness standards to regain the necessary levels of fitness;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above. • The provision of a fitness support with bespoke training programmes. • Referral to physiotherapy or other specialist OH advisor when required. • A physical fitness plan appropriate for the individual concerned.
<p>Refer an individual to occupational health where underlying medical reasons are identified that restrict/prevent someone from achieving the necessary fitness and that individual must receive the necessary support to facilitate a return to operational duties;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above • Referral to an Occupational Health Advisor / Physician for effective case management. • Written policy for guidelines around this. • Risk assessments to determine reasonable adjustments. • Welfare officer support. • Stress awareness programmes. • Promoting Positive Mental health programme. • Mind, Blue Light Time to Change.

6 Governance Arrangements

We are a local government organisation created under the Local Government Act 1985 to oversee the activities of Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS).

We have statutory responsibilities laid down in legislation including the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, Civil Contingencies Act 2004, Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, Local Government Act 1999, Localism Act 2011 and the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2012, to provide an effective, economic and efficient fire and rescue service.

With effect from June 2018 we will comply with the new Fire and Rescue National Framework 2018.

Our Fire Authority comprises 16 elected members, nominated by the five constituent councils of Tyne and Wear.

Dame Vera Baird, the Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner, became a member of the Fire Authority in 2017.

To enable us to carry out our duties effectively, we have a number of committees that include:

- Human Resources Committee
- Policy and Performance Committee
- Governance Committee
- Appointments Committee
- Disciplinary Appeals Committee
- Personnel Appeals Sub-Committee
- Emergency Sub-Committee

The roles and responsibilities of all Members and Officers are clearly defined and documented, with clear delegation arrangements and protocols for effective communication:

- Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are in place and these set out how the Authority operates and how decisions are made, including a clear Delegation Scheme.
- The Standing Orders and Delegation Scheme indicates responsibilities for functions and sets out how decisions are made.
- A system of scrutiny is in place whereby the Governance Committee provides independent scrutiny of the Authority's financial and non-financial position to the extent that it affects the Authority's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment; and the Policy and Performance Committee scrutinises performance information in respect of the Authority's duty to secure best value and to consider policy initiatives in respect of emerging issues.

For further information regarding Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority, please visit our website: www.twfire.gov.uk

Governance Framework

We have a Corporate Governance Framework in place which aims to ensure we are doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people, in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner.

We are responsible for ensuring that we conduct our business in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for, and used appropriately.

We have a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way we function, with particular regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

As part of this liability, we are responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of our affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of our functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.

The Corporate Governance Framework primarily includes systems and processes which we use to direct and control our activities and engagement with the community. It also enables us to monitor the achievement of our strategic objectives and to consider whether these objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost-effective services.

The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of our policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

We adopted a Local Code of Corporate Governance in 2003 which was revised and updated in 2017/18 and is reviewed annually. The Code ensures that we comply with recommended practice and maintain high standards of conduct.

Any breaches of the Code are reported to the Authority's Monitoring Officer who will determine whether the complaint should be investigated and if so by whom.

The framework is based upon the following seven core Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy principles:

- Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law
- Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement
- Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits

- Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of TWFRS intended outcomes
- Developing TWFRS capacity, including the capability of its leadership and individuals in it
- Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management
- Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability.

Review of Effectiveness

Annually, we are responsible for conducting a review of the effectiveness of the Corporate Governance Framework including the system of internal control. The review of effectiveness is informed by feedback from Members and the work of all senior managers who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment, the Internal Audit Annual Report, and also by comments made by the external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates.

Our Annual Governance Statement 2017/18 based on the annual review of effectiveness, was agreed by the Fire Authority on 18th June 2018. The papers include:

- Annual Governance Review report
- Local Code of Corporate Governance
- Annual Governance Statement 2017/18
- Action plan

These documents can be found on our website www.twfire.gov.uk

Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014

Our Fire Authority adheres to the Department for Communities and Local Government's 'Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity'.

The code became effective in March 2011 and provides guidance on the content, style, distribution and cost of local authority publicity.

In 2014 compliance with the code became statutory as part of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. The Fire Authority's communications policies abide by the code.

Data Transparency Code of Practice

We have an effective publication scheme which increases democratic accountability and helps local people to influence the delivery of our services.

Management of Corporate Risk

TWFRS policy on risk management is to ensure the successful delivery of our corporate goals through the effective management of risks by identifying, prioritising, controlling and monitoring threats to ensure they are eliminated or reduced to an acceptable level.

The key objectives that underpin our risk management policy are to:

- Develop, implement and review our risk management framework and process
- Promote effective risk management at all levels of the organisation.
- Encourage an appropriate risk across TWFRS.

The Corporate Risk Management Group (CRMG) is essential to the effectiveness of this process. The group is chaired by the Chair of the Fire Authority and attended by Executive leadership team members. The group develop strategy to manage risks within in the Corporate Risk Profile and develop, implement, monitor and review action plans to minimise corporate strategic risks.

At the time of publication of the Statement of Assurance and Annual Report, the five corporate risks were:

- Failure to effectively and safely deploy and manage operational staff and resources at incidents leading to staff and public being exposed to unnecessary risks.
- Risk that spending and/or policy decisions of one of our partners has a negative impact on the sustainability of collaborative work and therefore a detrimental impact on the communities that we serve.
- Risk that spending and/or policy decisions of one of our partners has a negative impact on the sustainability of collaborative work and therefore a detrimental impact on the communities that we serve.

- Risk that financial pressures will impact on the Service's decision making and delivery of its goals/priorities and objectives.
- Industrial unrest nationally and/or locally with regard to conditions of service (including ongoing organisational change management programmes) results in industrial action and impacts on service delivery.

Fair Processing Notice / Privacy Notice 2017

Being transparent and providing accessible information about how we use personal information is a key element to the Data Protection Act 1998 and the upcoming General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

We need to handle peoples personal information so that we can provide better services and provide a safer community. Within TWFRS we manage and protect information by adopting the approaches noted below. When we ask you for personal information either online, face to face or over the telephone we are committed to:

- Making sure the person knows why we need it.
- Asking for information that we need. We will not collect too much or irrelevant information.
- Protecting personal information to ensure appropriate access and control.
- Ensuring people are aware if information is shared with other organisations to give you better public services – which we would do to help give you better public services.

In addition:

- We will make sure that we don't keep personal information any longer than is necessary.
- Your personal information will not be made available for commercial use.
- We will delete any personal information which we hold if you request us to do so.

In return we ask you to:

- Provide us with accurate information.

Your rights:

- You can request to see any personal information we hold on you and amend it if there are any mistakes.
- You can have access to sharing data agreements we have with other organisations.
- You can request to have any personal information deleted from our databases.

May 2018 sees changes in privacy law when the General Data Protection Act (GDPR) becomes law. This means that individuals will have more rights on how their personal data can be used and we must be clear and transparent on how we use, collect and share your data. In addition you will see changes to your rights. Our Privacy notices will be updated to reflect these changes from May 2018 when the GDPR becomes law.



7 Financial information

Finance Officer's Statement

This summarised version of our Statement of Accounts aims to provide easy to understand information, focusing on the key points arising from our stewardship of public funds in 2017/18. The figures in this summary have been prepared with regard to proper accounting practice.

Revenue Finances

The revenue budget for 2017/18 was set at £47.921m. The actual expenditure incurred was £47.966m. The revenue account for 2017/18, right, shows the net cost of running the Fire Authority's services during the year, and how these were funded.

	Net Expenditure £'000
Community Safety	4,910
Fire Fighting and Rescue Operations	23,422
Corporate and Democratic Core	183
Non Distributed Costs	777
Exceptional Items	0
Net Cost of Services	29,293
Other Operating Income and Expenditure	24,463
Net Operating Expenditure	53,755
Financed by:	
Revenue Support Grant and General Grants	-10,898
Top Up Grant	-10,688
Business Rates and Collection Fund	-4,244
Council Tax Precepts and Collection Fund	-22,136
Income and Expenditure Account (Surplus) / Defecit	5,790
Capital Financing	-283
Net transfer to / (from) Reserves	-5,506
Movement in General Fund balance in the year	0
General Reserve balance at start of year	-3,943
General Fund balance carried forward	-3,943

Where the money was spent

The Fire Authority's net expenditure was £53.755m. The following shows how the money was spent:

- Supplies and Services (£6.777m), 12.61%
- Employees (£44.020m), 81.89%
- Premises (£1.891m), 3.52%
- Transport (£1.067m), 1.98%

Where the money came from

The expenditure was financed from the following sources:

- Precepts and Collection Fund (£22.136m), 34.44%
- Fees, Charges and Other Service Income (£-0.986m), 9.29%
- Top Up Grant (£10.688m), 16.63%
- Revenue Government Grants (£4.803m), 7.36%
- Business Rates and Collection Fund (£4.244m), 7.37%
- Revenue Support Grant (£10.898m), 24.91%

Summary Balance Sheet

The summary balance sheet shows what the Fire Authority owes and is owed, representing the monetary value of the Fire Authority as at 31st March 2018.

* The statutory accounting requirements require the total value of pension liabilities in place at the balance sheet date to be included in the Fire Authority's accounts, but this takes no account that the liability is to be addressed over a 21 year period.

	Net Expenditure £'000
Buildings, land and other assets owned by Authority	80,385
Short-term investments	33,608
Money owed to the Authority - (debtors)	11,155
Money owed by the Authority - (creditors / borrowing)*	-934,123
Provisions	-628
	-809,603
Financed by:	
Revaluation reserve and capital adjustment account	48,312
Usable capital receipts	2,798
Pension reserve	-886,490
Injury Pension Reserve	-8,639
General fund balance	3,943
Earmarked reserves	30,335
Other unusable reserves	138
	-809,603

Capital Finances

The Fire Authority spent £1.564m on capital schemes during 2017/18. The main schemes were:

	£'000
Equipment	391
Property Improvements	286
Vehicles	887
Land Acquisition	0

The 2017/18 programme was financed as follows:

	£'000
Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay	556
Grants / Capital Contribution	494
Earmarked Reserves	514

Auditors Findings

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Annual accounts submitted for audit on time				
Unqualified audit opinion *				

* An unqualified opinion by the Authority's external auditors means that in the auditor's opinion, the accounts presented fairly the financial position of the Fire Authority.

In addition to the unqualified audit opinion, the Auditors issued an unqualified Value for Money Conclusion, which confirms that we have proper arrangements in place for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in our use of resources.

At the time of writing, the external auditors Annual audit letter is expected to be received in September 2018, and will confirm the above.

Impact of Financial Information

Financial Planning

Our 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 (as set out in the SCSP), 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.

We produce an IRMP which reflects local needs and sets out plans to effectively tackle existing and potential risks to communities. The financial aspects of the IRMP process are linked to the MTFS to enable the required reductions in expenditure to be delivered in a way which takes full account of community risk.

We are committed to delivering further efficiency savings through:

- Further development of the IRMP
- Following best practice in relation to procurement of goods and services
- Working in collaboration with partners- locally, regionally and nationally, and
- Generating efficiency savings arising from policy and service reviews.

Financial Management and Performance 2017/18

Due to planned efficiencies and proactive financial management of Revenue and Capital finances, the Fire Authority were able to allocate funds to restock reserves to a more appropriate level. The key factors contributing to this were as follows:

- Revenue Budget Review
- Review of the Authority's Insurances
- Implementation of the first phase of the IRMP Action to ride 4 on all appliances
- Additional Income generation
- Capital Programme Review
- Savings from the Vehicle Replacement Programme

The Revenue Budget Outturn for 2017/2018 showed a net overall underspend of £1.273m, at £46.648m compared with an original budget of £47.921m. This was reported to a meeting of the Fire Authority in June 2018. During the year we have made a positive drive to achieve this level of savings by:

- Improved financial management and tighter budgetary control, culminated in a Revenue Budget Review in the Autumn which achieved savings of £0.195m across the full service, increased by £0.084m, to a total of £0.279m at the end of 2017/2018.
- A review of insurance services, where all our policies are now separately tendered to ensure best value, has led to savings on premiums of £0.153m, at the year-end. The risks of future insurance claims has also been revised in light of our low level of claims and excellent risk management arrangements. This has resulted in a return of reserves of £0.110m to the Revenue Budget in the year.
- A move to riding four on all appliances was phased in from 1st January 2018. It has made instant savings of £0.098m, in line with expectations. This measure has also made a positive impact on helping to reduce overtime during this period, and during last quarter of the financial year, saved just over £0.200m; and

- A review of all aspects of our finances and a more commercially based approach to income generation has been applied, to ensure best value. The increases in income above budget during the year of £0.182m (excluding government grant changes) reflect this approach and income generation is expected to increase in future years as a result of this new impetus.

The main variations are detailed below:

- Employee costs – a net underspend of £0.462m. Savings have continued to be made during the year from reduced employer pension costs.
- Premises – an underspend of £0.021m on utility budgets across our estate from continued efficiency measures and a prudent approach to price increases.
- Transport – an underspend of £0.113m through savings on transport costs due to revised travel arrangements introduced during 2017/2018 and lower transport insurance premiums.
- Supplies and Services – an underspend of £0.228m on supplies and services due a review of delegated budgets and continued prudent spend and savings on annual insurance premiums.
- Contingencies – an underspend of £0.221m as budget set aside has not been required, mainly due to the operational service delivery actions taken during the year, and the successful implementation of riding four on appliances reducing the call on overtime costs.



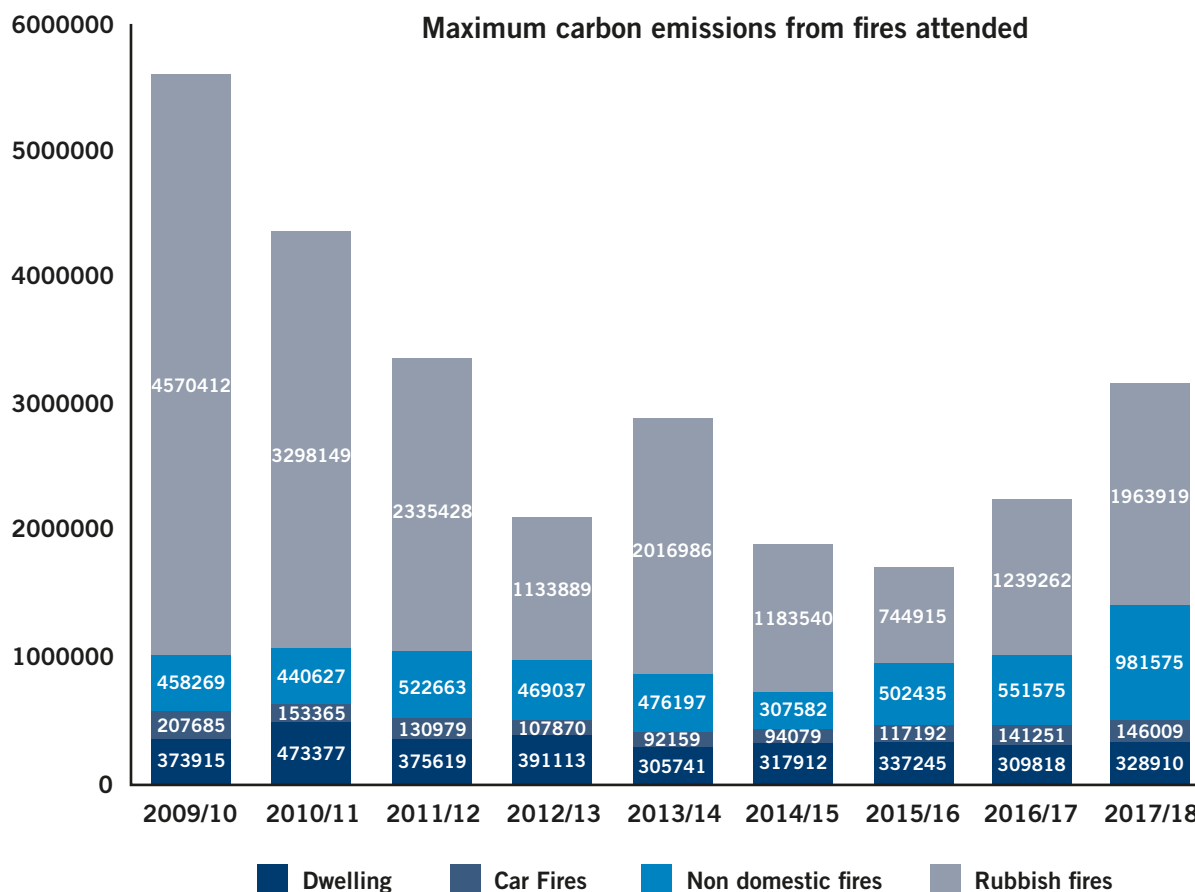
8 Protecting our environment

TWFRS continue to make significant progress in reducing carbon emissions in support of the Governments climate change objective.

This year saw the completion of our programme to replace all internal and external lighting with ultra-low energy LED lighting (non-PFI sites). This action will help us reduce our CO² emissions and lower our utility costs.

We have recently installed two twin rapid Electric Vehicle (EV) chargers at Service HQ and at our Technical Services Centre, this will give us the capacity to rapid charge four EV's simultaneously.

We continue to reduce our energy consumption across TWFRS estates, CO² emissions have fallen over the past six years and show an overall reduction from 3,207 tonnes in 2012-13 to 2,965 tonnes in 2017-18. This represents a 9% reduction.





9 Your views count

Your views are very important to us and having had the opportunity to read our Statement of Assurance and Annual Report, we would welcome any comments that you may have. This would assist in our consultation process and evaluation of the document.

You can find our questionnaire by following this link:

<http://www.twfire.gov.uk/about/annual-report>

All questionnaires requesting feedback will be acknowledged within ten days of receipt.

Complaints and compliments

We aim to provide the highest standards of fire, rescue and community safety services. As a recipient of a public service, there may be times when you wish to comment on our service.

We encourage everyone in our communities to share any complaints and compliments with us, as we value your opinion and it can also help us to continually improve our service.

Complaints Procedure

For our part, if you do make a complaint we will ensure that:

- Your complaint is treated confidentially
- You receive an acknowledgement within 7 working days, including the name of the Investigating Officer

Your complaint is investigated in accordance with the Fire and Rescue Service's standard procedures. We will also:

- Endeavour to send you a full reply including the results of the investigation within 28 working days
- Ensure that you are informed of the progress, if the above deadline cannot be met.

Making a Complaint or Compliment

If you wish to make a complaint or would like to tell us about an area of our work that you have been happy with then please contact us, details are as follows:

Telephone: +44 (0)191 444 1500.

Complete an online form via our website www.twfire.gov.uk

In writing, address your letter to The Chief Fire Officer and send to:

Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service
Service Headquarters
Nissan Way
Barmston Mere
Sunderland
SR5 3QY

Telephone: 0191 4441500

E -mail comments@twfire.gov.uk

Internet <http://www.twfire.gov.uk/>

Alternative Formats

We understand that people have different needs. This plan is available in alternative formats upon request. For further details contact **0191 444 1500**.





Statement of Assurance and Annual Report | 2017 / 2018



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



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