

FIRE AUTHORITY



Date: Wednesday, 25 June 2025

14:00hr

Red Kite Room

New Shire Hall, Alconbury Weald, Huntingdon, PE28 4YE

AGENDA

Open to Public and Press

1. **Election of Chair**
2. **Appointment of Vice Chair**
3. **Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest**
4. **Minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held 13 February 2025** **5 - 16**
5. **Chairs Announcements**
6. **Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies** **17 - 20**
Appendix 1 to follow
7. **Appointment of Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs: (i) Policy and Resources Committee; (ii) Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

8.	Review of Community Risk Management and Plan 2024-29 Performance	21 - 38
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14.	Proposed Changes to Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure for Firefighter Pension Schemes	99 - 120
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16.a	Fire Overview and Scrutiny Minutes - 15 January 2025	125 - 130
16.b	Fire Overview and Scrutiny Minutes - 26 March 2025	131 - 134
17.a	PUBLIC Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee 28 November 2024	135 - 138
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	Date of Next Meeting	
	18 December 2025	

The Fire Authority comprises the following members:

For more information about this meeting, including access arrangements and facilities for people with disabilities, please contact

The Fire Authority is committed to open government and the public are welcome to attend from the start of the meeting.

It supports the principle of transparency and encourages filming, recording and taking photographs at meetings that are open to the public. It also welcomes the use of social networking and micro-blogging websites (such as Twitter and Facebook) to communicate with people about what is happening, as it happens. These arrangements operate in accordance with a protocol which can be accessed via the following link below or made available on request.

Public speaking on the agenda items above is encouraged. Speakers must register their intention to speak by contacting the Democratic Services Officer at least three working days before the meeting.

Full details of the public speaking scheme for the Fire Authority is available at:

<https://www.cambsfire.gov.uk/fire-authority/meetings/>

Councillor Mike Black Councillor Simon Bywater Councillor Yasmin Deter Councillor Daniel Divine Councillor Ian Gardener Councillor Yannifer Malinowski Councillor Christopher Morris Councillor Edna Murphy Councillor Luis Navarro Councillor Chris Poulton Councillor Peter Rees Councillor Des Watt and Councillor Christine Whelan

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Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority: Minutes

Date: 13 February 2025

Time: 2.00pm - 3.29pm

Venue: New Shire Hall, Alconbury Weald

Present: Cambridgeshire County Council:

Councillors: M Black, S Bywater, D Dew, I Gardener, J Gowing, R Hathorn, S Kindersley, C Rae, K Reynolds, P Slatter, M Smith and S Taylor

Peterborough City Council:

Councillors: A Bond, N Boyce and M Jamil (Vice Chair)

Officers present: J Anderson, U Bird, H Douglas, S Ismail, C Mellons (EY), T Mirfin, T Oviatt-Ham, S Smith, W Swales and M Warren.

141. Apologies for absence and declarations of Interest

Apologies were presented on behalf of Councillor Edna Murphy and Councillor Wayne Fitzgerald.

142. Minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held 19 December 2024 and Action Log

Members considered the minutes of the meeting held 19 December 2024, and the Action Log.

The minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held 19 December 2024 were agreed as a correct record. The Action Log was noted.

143. Chair's Announcements

See Appendix 1 to these minutes.

144. Fire Authority Budget 2025-26 and Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2025-26

The Fire Authority received the final Fire Authority budget and precept for 2025/26 and the Treasury Management Strategy Statement for the same period. The Chief Fire Officer explained that the budget had been built to include an assumed 2% pay award for all employees. The actual rate of inflation on pay would not be determined until after the budget had been set. He stated that at the point of writing the report, the final grant funding figures were not available and so some of the grant values in Appendix 1 were still provisional. He explained that the service had now built the national non-domestic rates (NNDR) relief grants into the base budget as the service had consistently received them in recent years and expected the level of funding to continue. He highlighted that this had enabled the service to absorb the impact of the lost income from the departure of Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service from the control room collaboration. It had also allowed for the recruitment of 8 wholetime firefighters and a growth post, with continued funding in collaboration with health colleagues for the community welfare posts for another year.

A Member queried whether the funding received from health colleagues was for the same personnel or additional posts. The Chief Fire Officer explained that the funding was to keep the two current posts for a further year and that the partnership had been very successful and had won a number of national awards.

A Member queried if the assumption of 1% growth that had been taken into account was realistic and queried what would happen if this was exceeded. The Chief Fire Officer explained that any further growth would have a positive impact on the Service.

A Member highlighted the impact on Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Suffolk residents the decision by Suffolk to end the control room collaboration, would have which would be further impacted by the recent inspection outcome for Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service, as additional funding would be required to replace a good system. He also stated that he would not want to see the good work of the service to disappear as a result of local government reorganisation.

A Member thanked officers for the hard work put into preparing the budget and stated that the council tax rise was the minimum amount for the best possible service. He queried if there were mitigations in place in order to cover any salary increases. The Chief Fire Officer explained that it would depend on the scale of the increase. He commented that there was a more balanced negotiation process underway than in the previous year and that he would keep Members updated on the process.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- Approve the budget book including the recommendations detailed on Page 17 of the report,
- Approve the Treasury Management Strategy Statement.

145. Fire Authority External Audit Report and Final Statement of Accounts for Financial Year 2023-24

Members received the Provisional Audit Results Report for the year ended 31 March 2024 and the final audited Statement of Accounts for 2023/24. The External Auditors EY presented the report. They highlighted that before Christmas, the previous auditors disclaimed the 2021-22 and 2022-23 financial statements, therefore there were no assurances over the opening balances in 2023-24 or the movements, hence there would be a disclaimer on the 2023-24 statements. They reassured Members that this was in line with guidance from the Financial Reporting Council and the National Audit Office and that all Fire and Local Authorities would be in similar positions. They explained that Appendix A of the report highlighted a significant amount of audit work on the 2023-24 financial statements which gave a good base on rebuilding the assurance going forwards for 2024-25 and had found no significant weaknesses in arrangements to report in relation to value for money responsibilities. Since the report had been published there had been a couple of changes, the control recommendation in relation to signed contracts would be removed from the report as this had been resolved and Appendix A updated. They explained that a final updated report would be circulated. **ACTION REQUIRED**

A Member queried if there would be a clear statement to accompany the final statement of accounts to explain the reasons behind the position. The Monitoring Officer assured Members that a statement had been drafted to be included with the final published statement of accounts on the website.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- Review and comment on the external audit report;
- Approve the final Statement of Accounts for 2023/24.

146. Annual (Firefighters Pension Scheme) Pension Board - Update

The Fire Authority received a report that provided the latest position relating to immediate detriment and the Firefighters Pension Scheme (FPS) now that the enabling legislation had been passed. The Chief Fire Officer stated that this had been an ongoing challenge for a number of years and that the dispute was still ongoing and there were complications in relation to taxation. He explained that HMRC guidance was still ambiguous but that the service had all of the records but were still not in the position to apply the changes.

A Member queried who would set the bar in terms of applying the interest rates and whether there was any risk exposure for the Service in relation to finances. The Chief Fire Officer clarified that Government, and the Treasury would be setting the interest rates but that the process was extremely slow. He explained that it was likely that the rates would be tracked over a period of time and that the service would be recompensed by government for the full costs.

It was resolved unanimously to;

- note the contents of this report,

- approve the latest position regarding immediate detriment claims and the timetable for processing.

147. Community Risk Management Plan 2024-29 – Amendment

Members considered a report that sought the following additional activity in the Community Safety Excellence section of the plan;

- work with partner organisations to understand the projected growth plans for the county and create processes to continue to gather and feed this information into strategic planning activities to not only understand our current communities and risks but predict and plan for our future communities and risks.

A Member commented that the proposed additional activity was a significant and important addition particularly with a number of proposed new towns and population growth and that there was a need to engage with the District Councils at the planning stages.

A Member highlighted the role some Councillors played as Community Safety Champions and within Community Safety Partnerships.

A Member queried what could be done in Districts that did not have Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding. Officers clarified that these Districts would have Section 106 funding and whilst introducing the new Growth and Planning Officer post, the Service would also look to utilise planning specialists to create bids for (CIL) funding and to assist in the preparation of documentation to support the Services needs in several Local Authority plans. This would also enable the Service to become more proactive in the application of development bids and funding to support future service delivery.

It was resolved unanimously to approve the proposed amendment to the CRMP 2024/29 as detailed in Paragraph 6 of the report.

148. Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service Sustainability Strategy - Update

The Fire Authority received an update on Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service's (CFRS) Sustainability Strategy. The Strategy was first developed in 2022 and since then had advanced at pace. In 2023 the Service commissioned the Carbon Trust to provide detailed reports of energy use and carbon emissions for all fire stations. This gave a benchmark from which to focus upon making the most impactful interventions to reduce the services carbon footprint. This had been driven by workstream leads for each of the following five key themes: people, property, transport, procurement and offsetting. Areas of improvement in all five key themes were set out in the report. In 2025 the Service would review progress and use reporting data to demonstrate the areas of the largest direction towards achieving the vision of net-zero emissions. The creation of a sustainability dashboard would support oversight of this through the Sustainability Board. The Service had submitted two bids through the Cambridgeshire

and Peterborough Combined Authority Climate Fund to support initiatives to further improve building heat systems and enhance the EV network.

A Member questions if there had been consideration of installing solar panels on all existing fire stations. Officers explained that this was being reviewed as part of the property workstream. The Chief Fire Officer clarified that all new builds would include solar panels and that the Service would look to retrofit where affordability allowed. Officers explained that they were exploring sustainability grants to support funding in this area.

A Member queried if the Service monitored sustainability through its contracts. Officers explained that this was an integral part of the procurement process.

A Member queried if sustainability was part of the training for firefighters so that they could take this forward in their day-to-day work and at home. Officers explained that they looked to encourage more colleagues to become sustainability ambassadors.

A Member questioned what limitations there would be in getting to a net zero carbon emissions position. Officers explained that HVO was a medium-term solution. There were innovations around fully electric fire appliances however range anxiety was a huge challenge, and the costs were currently high.

It was resolved unanimously to review and provide comment, where appropriate, on the contents of this report and the sustainability strategy.

149. Highlight Report - Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service Employee Engagement Survey 2024

Members received a highlight report of the Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS) employee engagement survey carried out during October 2024 along with next steps. Officers explained that the survey had received a 56% response rate with 58% of respondents trusting the survey results would be considered by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) which was an improvement of 17% from the last survey. Officers presented highlights from the survey, outlined in the report, including areas of both high and low satisfaction responses. In summary, officers explained that the areas of dissatisfaction that had been highlighted in the 2022 survey including training, the process for managing trauma and the promotion process had been accelerated, and new systems had been put in place. A progress report and action plan would be brought back to Fire Authority in due course.

A Member questioned how the Service would engage with the 44% of employees that had not responded to the survey. Officers explained that there were other routes to engage with employees including anonymous reporting systems for misconduct and fire station visits. The Chief Fire Officer explained that there was a need to understand further the reasons for not engaging with the survey to ensure that all employees have the opportunity to be heard and to take on board their feedback.

A Member welcomed the 91% of employees knowing how to access mental health support as this was a crucial element of support. The Chief Fire Officer stated that the Service would not be complacent in this area and would continue to promote a positive culture and be open to feedback.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- review and comment on the results of the employee engagement survey,
- review and comment on the Service's plan in terms of next steps,
- agree to receive an update report on progress against the next steps, in six months time.

150. Dates of Fire Authority Meetings 2025-26

Members received a report outlining the scheduling of meeting dates for the Fire Authority and its Committees through to mid-2026.

A number of Members commented that this would be their last meeting on the Fire Authority and stated that it had been an honour to be Members of the Authority and paid tribute to everyone that worked in the Service. The Chief Fire Officer thanked all Members for their support.

It was resolved unanimously to consider and agree the schedule of meetings for 2025/26.

151. Ratification of Deputy Chief Fire Officer Appointment

The Chief Fire Officer presented an urgent verbal item on the ratification of the appointment to the Deputy Chief Fire Officer post. He explained that a thorough recruitment process had taken place before Christmas.

Members welcomed the permanent appointment to the post.

It was resolved unanimously to ratify the appointment of Jon Anderson as Deputy Chief Fire Officer for the Fire Authority

Chair

CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS – THURSDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2025

As we have moved into 2025 at pace I wanted to start my announcements at this, the first Authority meeting of the new year, by briefly reflecting on what was achieved in 2024; a year full of both challenges and triumphs.

As we celebrated our 50th anniversary (and colleagues in Peterborough Volunteer Fire Brigade celebrated their 140th) our crews attended **8,000 incidents** across the county including **1,700 fires** with an increasing number involving batteries, **460 road traffic collisions**, **125 animal rescues**, more than **100 flooding related incidents** and **81 co-responding medical incidents** with ambulance service colleagues. We welcomed more than **40 new firefighters**, including the first two groups of wholetime recruits to be fully trained at the new training facility in Huntingdon. Community safety officers and fire crews visited more than **7,000 vulnerable residents** across the county to deliver safe and well visits, over 1,000 more than in 2023. Whilst crews and fire protection officers delivered safety advice to more than **800 businesses** and **3,500 hydrants** were checked and serviced.

If that wasn't enough, midway through the year, we appointed Matthew as our new Chief Fire Officer following the retirement of Chris Strickland and went 'live' with our new mobilising system; the first of its kind with French-based company SYSTEL.

As the second lowest cost per head funded fire and rescue service in one of the fastest growing areas in the country, these figures are simply outstanding and the resilience and community spirit shown by everyone has been truly inspiring.

Budget 2025/26

Whilst we have a budget item on the agenda and will have an opportunity to discuss the details, I wanted to reassure Members and those viewing this meeting that we have continued to lobby Government about funding but the reality is that there is no additional money to cover the loss of income when Suffolk do finally depart. The fight for fairer, medium-term funding continues and a bid focused on supporting investment in the fire sector to allow us to respond to the significant challenge of matching resourcing to risks will be submitted to Government this month.

Taking the decision to increase tax is always a difficult one however the £4.95 on council tax and continued growth across the county means that no cuts will be required for next year and we hope that with careful planning, we will continue to have the right resources, in the right places to meet future demand.

Celebrating LGBT+ History Month 2025

February has rolled around again and with that we look forward, as always, to supporting LGBT+ History Month. This year, the theme is '*Activism and Social Change*', reflecting the powerful role that LGBT+ individuals have played in shaping history and advocating for equality and justice.

With music being such a powerful medium, colleagues will be spotlighting iconic musicians who have not only left a lasting mark on the music industry but have broken barriers and inspired generations. They will be regularly posting on our tracks either written, performed or

related to the LGBT+ community, so please keep an eye on our internal communication channels and feel free to share any music to join the celebration!

Enjoy the month, show your support in whatever way you wish and let us continue to build a workplace where everyone feels valued, respected and included and can bring their whole self to work.



FireBreak Intervention Scheme

Many of you will be familiar with our Firebreak intervention for vulnerable young people and be aware of the dedicated webpage on our website where you can find a host of information regarding the scheme, including a short video giving an overview of it. The scheme has recently been adapted to enable us to discharge our statutory responsibilities under the Serious Violence Duty and this amended offer has been recognised by both the National Fire Chiefs Council and Home Office as an exemplar of good practice.

The MP for North West Cambridgeshire, Sam Carling, recently attended a Pass Out event and was impressed enough to mention the scheme in the House of Commons, in turn receiving a positive response from the Leader of the House, The Right Honourable Lucy Powell (*Business of the House, 9 January 2025, House of Commons debates*).

Of course, we couldn't deliver the scheme without the leadership, dedication and support of colleagues across the organisation who give everything to ensure the attending young people have the most enriching week we can provide.

On their behalf, I would like to offer all Members the opportunity to attend one of the Pass Out events. Over the next six months schemes are running at Stanground, Cottenham, St Ives, Sawston, Cambourne and Huntingdon and if anyone would like to attend an event, please do let an Officer know.

New 'concept' Fire Appliance

Members will recall that we were able to view the new 'concept' fire appliance before our last Authority meeting and I am pleased to say that it has now also been showcased to the local media and trade press with positive reporting.

This piece of work, ongoing for over 12 months, combines a few areas that the Service has been focusing on; sustainability and protection of our firefighters whilst enhancing their work environment. I look forward to hearing more about this work when the agenda item on our Sustainability Strategy is presented.

Finally, I look forward to the opportunities that the new year will bring. I hope to see as many familiar faces at our next meeting in June as the elections allow so that together we can continue to build on our successes and work towards a brighter future for our county.

FIRE AUTHORITY

Minutes - Action Log

This is the updated action log as of **25 June 2025** and captures the actions arising from the most recent Fire Authority meetings and updates Members on the progress on compliance in delivering the necessary actions.

MINUTES FROM THE 13 JANUARY 2025 MEETING					
145	Fire Authority External Audit Report and Final Statement of Accounts for Financial Year 2023/24	Democratic Services Officer	Members received the provisional Audit Results Report for the year ended 31 March 2024 and the final audited Statement of Accounts for 2023/24 they (auditors) explained that a final updated report would be circulated.	Update 25 June 2025 The final version of the Auditors Annual Report for year ended 31 March 2024, dated 14 March 2025, went to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 26 March 2025 (Minute 119 refers).	Complete

Agenda Item: 6

TO: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority
FROM: Political Group Leaders/Monitoring Officer
PRESENTING OFFICER(S): Democratic Services Officer – Tamar Oviatt-Ham
Telephone: 01223 699178
email: tamar.oviatt-ham@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
DATE: 25 June 2025

APPOINTMENTS TO CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH FIRE AUTHORITY COMMITTEES, OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS AND OTHER BODIES

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to make appointments to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority Committees, outside organisations and other bodies.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Authority is asked to agree the schedule of appointments in Appendix 1.

3. Risk Assessment

- 3.1 **Political** – to ensure the effective operation of the Fire Authority's democratic processes it is important that appointments to Committees and where applicable, outside organisations and other bodies, are made when changes that affect them occur.

4. Background

- 4.1 Following the recent elections (May 2025) there have been changes to the County Council proportionality affecting Fire Authority membership. The Liberal Democrat group now has two additional seats on the Fire Authority (8), the Conservative group has four fewer (3), Reform UK has two and the Green Party has one. There were no changes to the Labour (2) or Peterborough First (1) seats.
- 4.2 The proportionality changes necessitated a review of appointments to Committees and the Monitoring Officer reached out to political group leaders requesting their nominations.
- 4.3 The nominations are included in Appendix 1 and brought to the Authority for approval at today's meeting. Once agreed, Democratic Services Officers will ensure the appropriate meeting invitations are sent as a matter of priority.
- 4.4 The Terms of Reference of each of the Fire Authority's committees can be found at [terms-of-reference-2024.pdf](#). Members should note that those who

sit on the Policy and Resources Committee cannot sit on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

- 4.5 In brief, the outside bodies in Appendix 1 have the following functions and responsibilities;

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority – established in March 2017 as a Mayoral Combined Authority for the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area. The mission of the Combined Authority is to make life better, healthier and fairer for all. It collaborates with local councils, the Business Board (Local Enterprise Partnership), local public services, government departments and agencies, universities and businesses to grow the local and national economy. The Authority is a co-opted member and the Chair attends board meetings as our representative.

Local Government Association (LGA) - The LGA is the national membership body for local authorities. It is a politically led and cross-party organisation that works on behalf of its member councils to ensure local government has a strong, credible voice with national government. It aims to influence and set the political agenda on issues that matter locally.

The fire and rescue service are an integral part of keeping local communities safe and secure and as such the Authority Chair, Vice Chair and Leader of the main political party are nominated to attend any relevant conferences and respond to sector related consultations on behalf of the Authority.

Local Government Fire Commission - the Fire Commission is led by the Fire Services Management Committee which reports to the Safer and Stronger Communities Board. It provides a forum for all authorities in voting membership or associate membership of the LGA with a responsibility for fire and rescue to come together to; discuss matters of common interest and concern, represent the views and concerns of the fire community in relation to fire service modernisation, take the lead on day-to-day policy issues affecting fire authorities, exchange good practice and influence the priorities and activities of the LGA. The Authority Chair attends meetings of the Fire Commission on behalf of the Authority.

- 4.6 Further information on all the above can be found on their respective websites.
- 4.7 The Member Champions/Lead Members also mentioned within Appendix 1 are areas in which Members have expressed an interest that they wish to get more involved in organisational work streams. They are not based on proportionality. Therefore, if any Member has a specific area of interest for example, health and safety, safeguarding, and would like to know more they are requested to let the Monitoring Officer know in the first instance.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Documents	Location	Contact Officer
Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) Meeting Reports and Minutes – various	CCC website	Tamar Oviatt-Ham Democratic Services Officer 01223 699178 tamar.oviatt-ham@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

TO: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

FROM: Assistant Director Service Transformation – Tamsin Mirfin

PRESENTING OFFICER(S): Assistant Director Service Transformation – Tamsin Mirfin
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DATE: 25 June 2025

REVIEW OF COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN 2024/29 PERFORMANCE

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Fire Authority with an update of delivery against our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2024/29.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Authority is asked to note the contents of the report and make comment as they deem appropriate.
- 2.2 The Authority is also asked to note the CRMP performance measures update at Appendix 1 and requested to make comment as they deem appropriate.

3. Risk Assessment

- 3.1 **Political** - the CRMP process, outlined in the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, requires the Authority to look for opportunities to drive down risk by utilising resources in the most efficient and effective way. The CRMP is a legal requirement, and it is therefore incumbent on the Authority to demonstrate that its CRMP principles are applied within the organisation.
- 3.2 **Economic** - the management of risk through a proactive preventable agenda serves to not only reduce costs associated with reactive response services but also aids in the promotion of prosperous communities.
- 3.3 **Legal** - the Authority has a legal responsibility to act as the enforcement agency for the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. As a result, ensuring both compliance with and support for business to achieve are core aspects of the fire and rescue service function to local communities.

4. Equality Impact Assessment

- 4.1 Evidence shows that people with certain protected characteristics are more likely to suffer the effects of a fire. Our prevention strategies include greater education, awareness and support for these groups, with the aim of minimising the disadvantage suffered by people due to their protected characteristic; specifically, age and disability.

5. Background

- 5.1 The CRMP is a public document covering a five-year period and represents the output of the CRMP process for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. The Service CRMP 2024/29, published in April 2024, covers the period from April 2024 to March 2029. This report focuses on the progress made against the action plan in year one (2024/25).
- 5.2 The community risk management process is supported using risk modelling. This is a process by which performance data over the last five years in key areas of prevention, protection and response is used to assess the likelihood of fires and other related emergencies from occurring - we term this 'community risk.' This, together with data from other sources such as the national risk register and our strategic and tactical risk registers, is then used to identify the activities required to mitigate risks and maximise opportunities, with measures then set to monitor and improve our performance.
- 5.3 The CRMP delivery is broken down into four areas for management and monitoring purposes in line with our excellence statements. These four areas are Community Safety Excellence, Operational Excellence, People and Value for Money. Under each area there are several activities we committed to deliver in our CRMP for 2024/29. These are listed in Paragraphs 6 to 9, accompanied by a brief explanation of progress made and plans for this year.

6. People Excellence Update

- 6.1 **Maintain and improve our positive and inclusive organisational culture and employee engagement and make us an employer of choice. This includes looking at how we communicate and facilitating more opportunities for colleagues from across different areas of the Service to engage with each other**

We ran another employee engagement survey in October 2024 and the results showed an improvement in engagement overall from the previous survey (2022) and further improvements in many of the question areas. The Service remains above the sector benchmark average in the majority of areas. A detailed analysis of the survey results has been carried out, focusing on the areas with less satisfaction, feeding information into relevant projects and departments. This will continue into 2025/2026.

We developed monthly manager seminars into Ask SLT (senior leadership team) events. These enable colleagues to ask questions to a panel of Directors and Assistant Directors and is done on TEAMS to enable greater accessibility. These have been well attended.

A number of events have been organised targeting different colleague groups to encourage greater engagement and networking. These include informal charity cake sales to a women's development day and a men's health event.

- 6.2 **Review how we manage, develop and diversify our people and our talent from within our Service, helping people to reach their full potential and supporting those who aspire to progress as leaders. This includes development pathways and programmes, talent management and succession planning.**

We have introduced a suite of leadership programmes that align to the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) products. These support the development of new managers up to middle leaders giving them the skills and knowledge they need to excel in

leadership roles. We have developed a new accelerated development offering called the focussed development pathway. This supports development from supervisory to middle manager in 12 months and is a mix of workplace and evidence-based learning.

Moving forward we are reviewing our current portfolios, the means by which uniformed colleagues collate evidence to demonstrate potential for promotion. This includes service wide feedback from those involved in using those products. We have started our Fulfilling Potential project which, over two years, will review and update the processes we have to develop potential and manage our talent, including PDR conversations and career pathways.

6.3 Review our processes for recruitment and progression, including our community engagement activity, to ensure they are accessible to people from a range of backgrounds and that they enable us to improve diversity over time, to greater reflect the communities we serve.

We have reviewed a range of evidence including our employee engagement survey, colleagues listening groups and results of external audits to make recommendations to improve the experience of all those who engage in our promotion processes. We have implemented a range of changes to our induction process to streamline and improve the experience of our new starters and make us an employer of choice. Over the next 12 months we are implementing the recommendations to improve our promotion processes, improving fairness and transparency.

We are also working with Athene Communications to run recruitment focus group engagement sessions relating to career perceptions in the fire service targeting our diverse communities. We will use this information to promote roles at CFRS and positively engage with diverse communities.

6.4 Review our mechanisms for the management of safeguarding to protect our people and communities.

We have reviewed and updated all service roles to ensure they have appropriate DBS checks in line with new legislation. We have continued our collaboration with Essex County Fire and Rescue Service who provide us with safeguarding support and resilience. We continue to provide dedicated training to colleagues to ensure they can meet their safeguarding duty and keep our communities safe. We have rolled out safer recruitment training to the people team.

Moving forward we are improving our DBS process which will make it more effective and efficient for all users. We will also be actioning the outcomes of our Safeguarding Fire Standards peer assessment. This will ensure our safeguarding procedures are in line with national best practice, in turn keeping the most vulnerable in our communities safe.

6.5 Review our processes and means for supporting the health and wellbeing of our people.

This year saw the launch of our new trauma welfare support processes; these have been well received and well used. The new occupation health system has been implemented, improving visibility of the processes and allowing for self-service as well as putting in place protections for the sensitive data managed.

This year the Wellbeing Strategy will be reviewed as well as the trauma welfare support processes. This review will identify any early learning from our processes

and allow us to make continuous improvements. We are hosting our first 'men's health event' focussing on health issues specific to men. This follows our focus previously on menopause and the successful women's development day that we ran in 2024.

7. Community Safety Excellence Update

7.1 Greater collaboration with health, social care and other partners to improve the ways in which we identify and meet the needs of those most at risk of fire.

The award-winning collaboration between CFRS and East of England Ambulance Trust (EEAST) for Community Wellbeing Officers has been extended for a further 18 months. The Community Wellbeing Officers provide a first response to falls and whilst attending these complete safe and well visits, releasing capacity for EEAST and allowing CFRS greater access to deliver intervention activities. This, along with data sharing from external agencies and partners has given us further access to some of the most vulnerable within our communities.

7.2 Continue to develop our Fire Break programme to help vulnerable young people become resilient and valuable members of their communities. Explore other early intervention opportunities to positively influence children and younger people and keep them safe from harm.

Our Fire Break programme is a highly successful young person intervention, run over a week at CFRS premises by our people. It delivers the opportunity to help young people who may be out of education, already involved in crime or are vulnerable in other ways. The course has been running for a number of years following the same week long input. We are now trialling a Fire Break Plus course which continues the learning from the initial week through five further short sessions. These additional sessions include delivery from partners such as the Air Ambulance, Police and Safer Schools. The aim of the additional sessions is to further embed the positive learning we have identified from the initial course.

7.3 Continue to work with central government, the NFCC and local partners to educate communities and responsible persons on the growing risk of emerging technologies, primarily lithium-ion batteries.

Whilst crews have always been involved in educating the communities, specific community education targets have not been set for a number of years. We reintroduced community engagement work by crews in April 2025. There will be key themes for delivery based on specific risks we see at points throughout the year and lithium-ion batteries safety will run in parallel with each of these subjects providing education to the vulnerable and young people.

7.4 Continue to work with partners from the road and water safety partnerships to reduce the number of people killed or injured on our roads and waterways.

CFRS are involved in both the Water Safety Partnership and the Vision Zero Road Safety Partnership to provide education and safety advice in these areas. Water safety formed the basis of our first quarter of community engagement activities. With the loss of funding from the Police and Crime Commissioners Office for our road safety Officer role we are exploring how we can still support the partnership in a different way.

7.5 Ensure effective evaluation focuses our community safety and fire protection activity to keep our communities safe and bring together expertise from across

the Service to reduce risk to people, places and events, continuing to build long-term relationships with our diverse communities.

We continue to look for ways to ensure our community safety offerings are appropriate and effective. To ensure this we have created a Quality Assurance and Evaluation Officer post who will review all of our current processes to assess their effectiveness and ensure we are aligned with NFCC best practice.

Community engagement activities by crews will be ward-based allowing stronger and more effective relationships to be built which will be particularly beneficial within our diverse and hard to reach communities.

7.6 Continued work with our partners to protect and safeguard the most vulnerable in our communities and the most high-risk premises.

We continue to work closely with partners such as the NHS and Anglian Water and use data sharing agreements to ensure that the most vulnerable individuals are identified and provided with the correct level of support.

Our Fire Protection team inspect high risk premises through following a risk-based inspection programme (RBIP) which ensures the most high-risk premises are inspected annually or bi-annually.

7.7 Work with partner organisations to understand the projected growth plans for the county and create processes to continue to gather and feed this information into strategic planning activities to not only understand our current communities and risks but predict and plan for our future communities and risks.

This is a new line added to the CRMP for 2025/26. In this area we plan to develop a role which will work closely with planning departments within the city and district councils to better understand planned growth within the county. We also plan to further explore funding opportunities which are created through this growth to support us in delivering an effective service to the community.

8. Operational Excellence Update

8.1 Work to align operational resources and skills (wholetime, On-Call and fire control) to our risk and demand, understanding how we respond to incidents and the number of resources required to safely resolve them, and to ensure that we are maximising our productivity and efficiency.

Our performance measures for our wholetime crews were increased in 2023 into 2024; this increased output in prevention, protection, and operational risk work. We have continued to enhance our in-water rescue capability now having an additional six On-Call stations providing water rescue response. We have trialled two new ways of working for our On-Call colleagues with the aim to improve retention and to increase operational availability; both trials are currently under evaluation. Vision 30 project has completed a review into the On-Call with a number of positive recommendations that are being progressed. The project has also reviewed wholetime resource efficiency and is currently creating new resource modelling software to improve operational cover. Cross border working practices have also been reviewed to understand opportunities to improve efficiency.

8.2 Continue to improve the collection and provision of risk data about identified premises, increasing knowledge of local risks and ensuring appropriate operational risk information is available for colleagues when responding to incidents.

We continue to provide risk information to crews within our county and cross border into our neighbouring services. Each of our crews are assigned risk work to undertake each year to review and familiarise themselves on operational risks. We have recently re-introduced ward allocation community engagement work for our wholetime resources to allow them to focus activity based upon local needs and trends.

We continue to provide operational exercise opportunities at risk sites to better embed our working relationships with the sites and to enhance awareness and understanding of responding crews.

8.3 Continue our ongoing work to ensure our emergency vehicles and equipment meet our identified emerging risks.

We have undertaken a concept pilot of a new approach to our fire appliance provision considering our Sustainability Strategy, and the risks posed to our firefighters from contaminants. This pilot has been in place at Huntingdon Fire Station and has seen us develop an appliance which reduces the exposure of post fire contaminants on our firefighters alongside battery operated technology equipment and removal of fossil fuelled equipment. The appliance when using hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) fuel reduces emissions of circa 90% and will be the basis for our ongoing fire appliance design.

We have started the procurement process to replace our existing water carrier with a modern, and improved vehicle provision which meets the needs of our county.

8.4 Continue to align Service procedures with national operational guidance to improve firefighter safety and our ability to work with other fire services, ensuring appropriate business continuity arrangements are in place for contingency situations.

Working within the region alongside other services we continue to align our operational procedures, and guidance with National Operational Guidance (NOG) and use this to develop and train our people and continue to follow our implementation plan for NOG.

We have completed phase one and work towards completion of an action plan for phase two of the Grenfell Action Plan. We are integrating the Fire Standards into the relevant group areas and oversight of their completion is through our operational excellence meeting structure.

8.5 Review current arrangements for operational training and recording to ensure they meet the needs of operational colleagues and our identified emerging risks such as emerging technologies and extreme weather.

We launched the Training Records and Competency System (TRaCS) review project in response to the feedback both from our previous His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services inspection, and colleague feedback. This has seen a deep dive into how we train, record, and plan our training across all areas of the Service. Through this we identified opportunities to improve the time that is available to our On-Call firefighters and support their planning of operational training. With a risk-based methodology we have undertaken a full upgrade in the functionality of the recording system to make this more streamlined for colleagues to access learning materials and record the training they undertake. The creation of

reporting and data now allows for all levels to have oversight of the training that is being recorded against the timescales set to ensure competence.

8.6 Develop further assurance across all operational areas to achieve a high level of performance and support the on-going development of our people ensuring we continue to learn from what we do.

We are continuing to assure all our operational activities through our various routes led by the Operational Support Group (OSG) and aligned to our Operational Assurance Strategy. With targeted areas we have identified trends which then are assured to gain understanding and awareness of any areas of improvements and any learning shared both internally, and nationally via the Joint Emergency Services (JESIP) programme. An example of this is the logging of command hours for all operational commanders. Through being reviewed, scenarios are developed in our training centre to meet the needs of the risks we have in Cambridgeshire to train against.

9. Value for Money Delivery Update

9.1 Continue to update and enhance our mobilising systems, data, processes and procedures.

In September 2024 we went live with the new mobilising system in Combined Fire Control. This was the culmination of a five-year project, replacing the whole system that allows us to receive 999 calls, log incidents, identify resources, dispatch and communicate with crews, it is one of the most complex and critical systems that we have.

In the coming year we will undertake the Control Works project which will see the next upgrade to our system, alongside enhancements to the way in which we mobilise our resources and use risk information to support this. We are working towards the uncoupling of our collaboration with Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service and have set up a project to identify the needs and future requirements of how we best deliver a fire control function for Cambridgeshire post the ending of this agreement.

9.2 Collaboration with other partner agencies, including a rationalisation and sharing of estates as well as looking for joined up working practices.

CFRS has many ongoing and long-standing collaborations. We strive to look at the potential for new opportunities as a matter of business as usual whenever we review or change a process or need to procure a new contract. Last year we implemented new collaborations to; put in place multi-disciplinary teams for building safety regulation, collaboration on tall building remediation plans across the county and supporting partners with training facilities provision.

In the coming year we will be looking at collaborations to support a national training event, exploring further collaboration on rope rescue and we continue to investigate opportunities to share premises.

9.3 Deliver efficient and effective working through existing and new technology, looking at how we can automate activities, enable greater mobile working and improve communication and engagement.

We have replaced the Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) on all appliances moving to a commercial bearer, which reduces some of the restrictions on how we utilise the MDTs. We have also moved the 999 telephones to Session Initiated Protocol (SIP),

to future proof our emergency telephone lines. There have been further efficiencies created through our business process automation work; we create automated business processes, create data integrations and applications to remove administration activities.

This year we will be working to implement replacement secondary bearers to our Station End Equipment (SEE) to remove obsolete PSTN bearers. We are working to scope a replacement for our asset database, a core system for managing our equipment and maintenance work. NFCC have released a new data quality assurance methodology that we will be working to introduce to help us to identify issues and put in place resolutions to ensure that our data is of a high quality.

9.4 Ensure our technology infrastructure and systems are robust and fit for our purposes, reducing the risk of cyber-attacks and ensuring our software is maintained and provides value for money.

Cyber security is one of the highest risks on our risk register, we continue to work to improve our protection measures. New tools have been implemented, and we are seeking to add a post this year to look specifically at cyber security. We have moved our people database to the cloud and are making similar moves of other systems where it makes sense and presents value for money to do so. A review of our technical strategy has been completed with work now commencing to implement this. Work will be focused on removing old systems and servers.

Our new Digital Strategy for 2025/29 is being drafted, ready for launching this year. We will be working to plan our new data centre and looking at infrastructure contracts coming to an end, to replace these.

9.5 Deliver the Service's sustainability strategies and plans.

We continue to develop and improve upon our sustainability strategy through the five key areas of transport, people, procurement, offsetting and property. We have through collaboration with Huntingdonshire District Council and internally, seen the introduction of HVO to be used instead of diesel in a portion of our fire appliances. This gives a circa 90% reduction in emissions. We have installed air source heat pumps at a selection of stations and building management systems (BMS) to support the efficient use of energy thus reducing our carbon footprint.

9.6 Continual review of our commercial arrangements for our equipment provision and maintenance to ensure these are appropriate and meet our requirements for now and for the future.

The Procurement Pipeline has been reviewed for the next 12 months and the appropriate route to market identified taking into account the flexibilities of the New Procurement Act, which came into effect in February of this year.

Commercial arrangements have been completely reviewed following the introduction of the new Act. Over the past year we have sought collaborative opportunities for tactical hazmat, foam and some operational training, working with other fire and rescue services to deliver these.

Training will be delivered to key groups and departments in relation to the new commercial practices and tailored to the needs of specific groups. Commercial standing orders have been redrafted to better reflect current times.

9.7 Carry out scenario planning for potential future budgetary constraints and new financial burdens and seek appropriate opportunities to create revenue streams across the Service.

As part of CFRS's budget setting process, scenario planning is carried out annually, looking at the impact of changes in inflation, grant income and precepts and what alternative resources may need to be used and/or change in direction the Service may need to take should these occur. During 2024/25 we were able to take advantage of relatively high interest rates and maximise the potential of our cash by investing in short-term investments; this resulted in the Service earning a high level of investment interest far above that budgeted.

In the coming year we will look at a more in-depth level of scenario planning, carrying out a detailed analysis with budget holders. We also plan to do a complete review of our special charges rates to make sure they continue to reflect our current costings and consider whether we have any other areas where we could be charging for our services.

Appendix 1

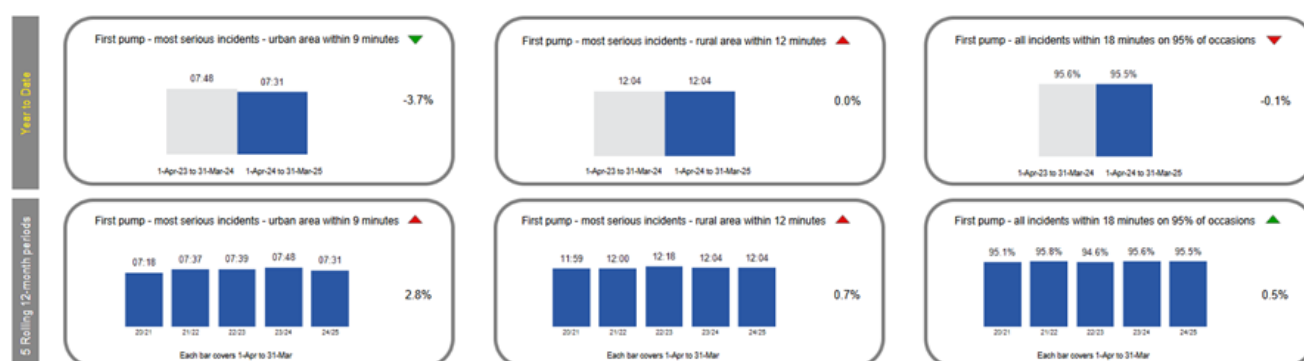
CRMP Performance Review 2024/25 Quarter 4

1. We will respond to the most serious incidents within an average of 9 minutes in urban areas and 12 minutes in rural areas for the first fire engine in attendance. And we will respond to all incidents in our authority area within 18 minutes for the first fire engine in attendance 95% of the time.

The definition of most serious incidents is those that pose risk to life and the highest risk to property – we class these as Category 1 and Category 2 incidents.

In the final quarter of the call year, attendance times for the first pump to urban incidents remained well within target, representing an overall improvement of 3.7% compared to the previous year. Attendance times for the first pump to rural incidents continue to be slightly outside the target; however, performance has stabilised compared to the previous call year, with average rural response times exceeding the target by just four seconds.

The first pump attended all incidents within 18 minutes on 95.5% of occasions, consistent with last year's performance. This target has been consistently achieved over the past five years.

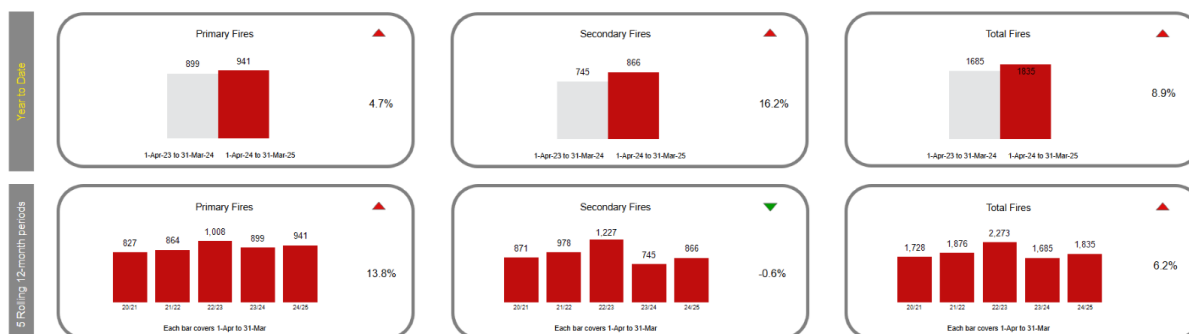


2. We will be monitoring the following areas to ensure that we are making effective decisions about the targeting of our resources:

The number of primary and secondary fires.

There were 406 total fires this quarter; a higher number of fires this quarter compared to last year (328). The 406 total fires are made up from 199 primary fires, 188 secondary fires and 13 chimney fires. Secondary fires are driving the increase in total fires in Quarter 4 compared to last year. Secondary fires have increased across all districts except East Cambridgeshire in Quarter 4. These fires are wheelie bins, small refuse containers and loose refuse.

Over the 12-months there has been 1,835 total fires, split 941 primary fires, 866 secondary fires and 21 chimney fires. Compared to the previous 12-months there has been an 8.9% increase in total fires which comes from 2.2% more primary fires and 6.5% more secondary fires.



Over the past 12-months there has been 31 fire incidents which were caused by lithium battery faults, overheating or careless disposal. Six incidents involved e-bikes and six incidents involved batteries igniting in bin lorries. The recording of lithium-ion related fire incidents is currently in free text fields which can be difficult to identify, so these figures are a best estimate.

The number of associated deaths and injuries from fire.

There have been no deaths in Quarter 4.

Over the past 12-months there have been four fire deaths, all accidental. One in a dwelling, one in an 'other residential' property (boarding house) and two in road vehicles.

Analysis of the five-year data shows that males are at higher risk of dying in a fire, if they have a fire compared to females (five-year average of 0.75 per 100,000 population males compared to 0.27 per 100,000 population females).

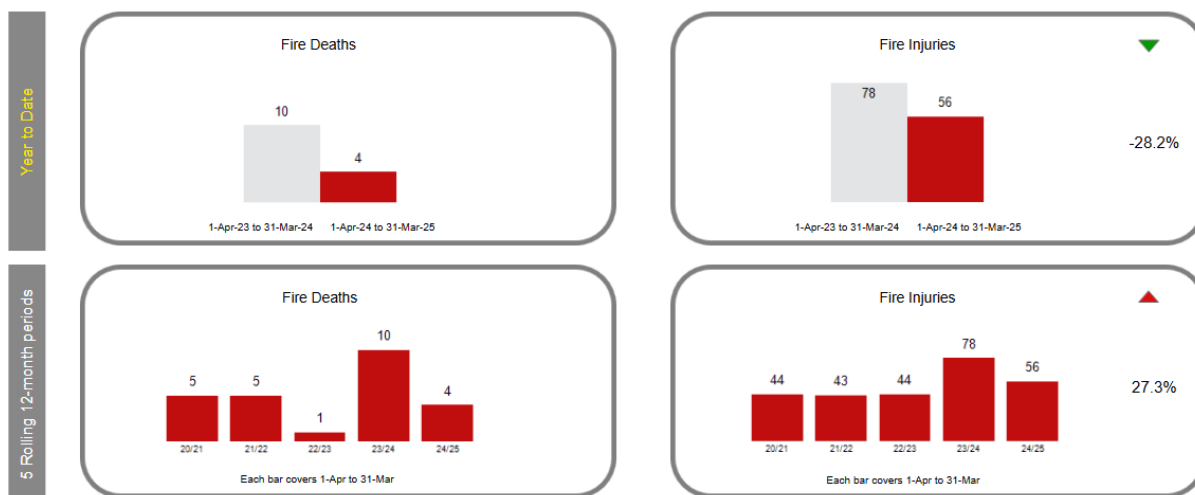
People aged 75 and over are, on average, at higher risk than any other age group (five-year average of 1.01 per 100,000 population).

There have been six fire casualties this quarter. Less fire casualties than the same quarter last year (17).

Over the past 12-months there have been 56 fire injuries. Less than in the previous year (78).

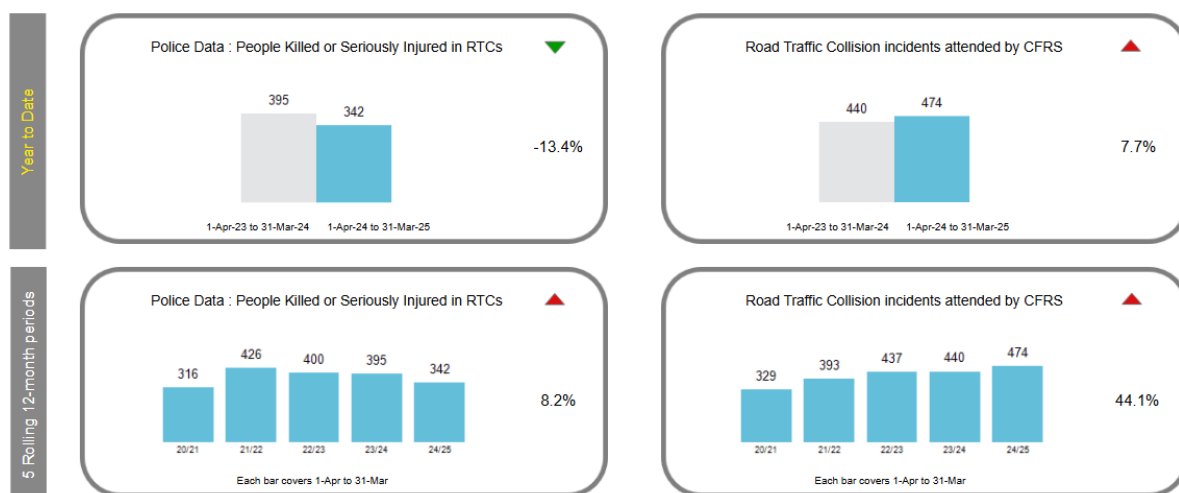
Analysis of the five-year data shows that males are at higher risk of being injured in a fire, if they have a fire compared to females (five-year average of 7.03 per 100,000 population males compared to 3.67 per 100,000 population females).

People aged 75 and over are, on average, at higher risk than any other age group (five-year average of 11 per 100,000 population).



The number of people killed and seriously injured on our roads.

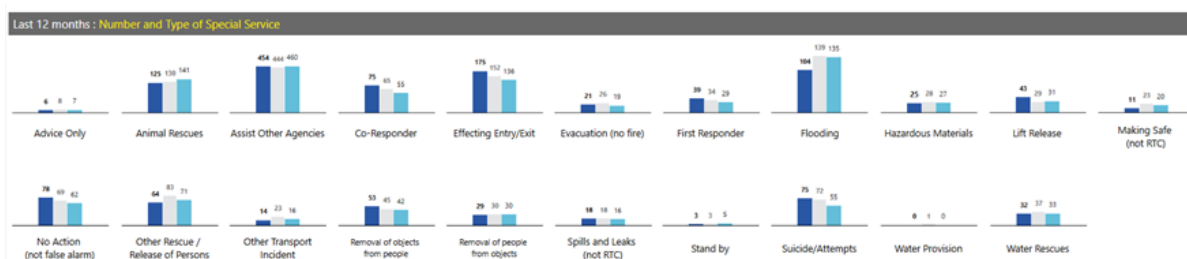
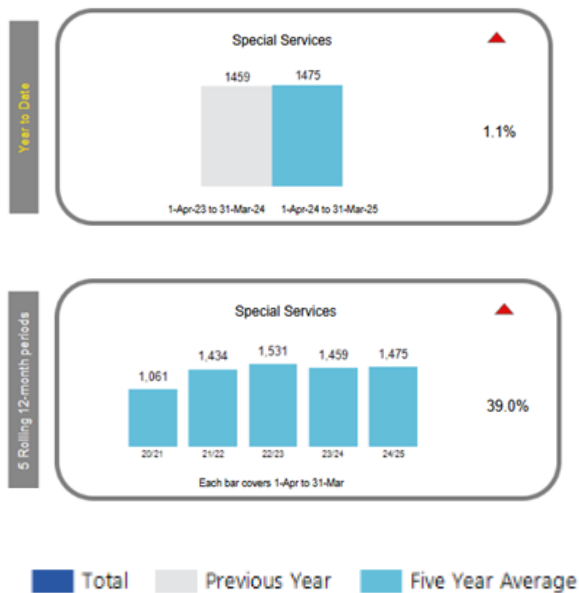
There has been an 13.4% decrease in the year to date of people killed and seriously injured in road traffic collisions compared to the previous call year. There is caution with this data as the 2024 Police data, used here, is provisional only and may be subject to change following data validation. The number of road traffic collisions that CFRS has attended is up slightly on the previous call year to date (7.7%).



The number and type of special services that we attend.

We conclude the call year with an increase in special service attendances, recording a 1.1% rise compared to the previous year. Co-responder incident figures continue to grow year on year, with 10 more incidents than last year and 20 more than the five-year average. We also end the year with a slight increase in Assist Other Agencies incidents compared to last year, although numbers remain marginally below the five-year average. This suggests that such incidents may be stabilising at approximately 450 per year.

Throughout the call year, we have observed a continued rise in special service incidents related to *Suicide/Attempts*, *No Action (False Alarm)*, and *Effecting Entry/Exit*. Conversely, incidents involving *Animal Rescue* have continued to decline.



The number of Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV) against our target groups.

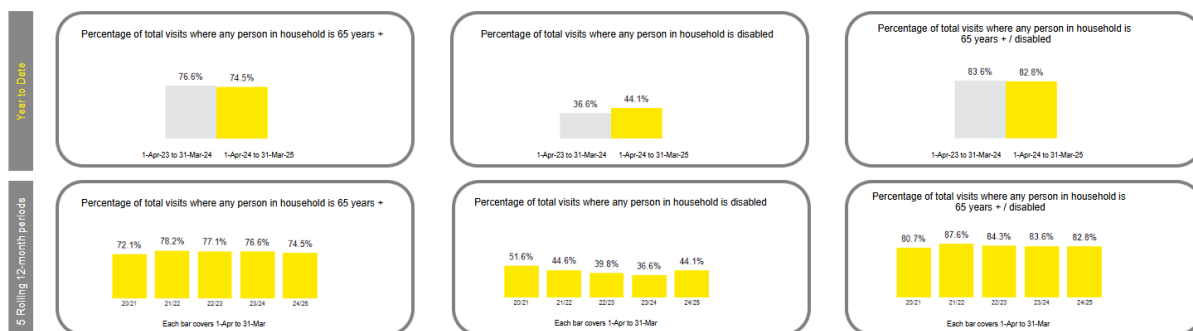
This quarter a total of 2,349 HFSV's have been delivered with a 65.4% resident uptake. Whilst the number of visits has increased compared to last year; the resident uptake is down by 10%.

Over the past 12-months, there have been 8,095 HFSV's which is an increase of 26% on the previous 12-month period (6,434). The resident uptake over this period was 69.9%.

Of the visits delivered by CFRS staff, 90.3% of households contained at least one person with at least one vulnerability or risk factor.

Over the past 12-months, 82.8% of all visits were carried out where any person in the household was 65-years+ or disabled (age and disability are specific Home Office stated vulnerabilities).

The increase in visits has been delivered through the two additional Community Wellbeing Officers and an addition of two Community Safety Officers (CSOs). There has also been more focus on community fire safety work for the roaming pumps.



3. We will be working to support businesses to ensure compliance with the Fire Safety Order and we will monitor this by tracking delivery against our RBIP, particularly:

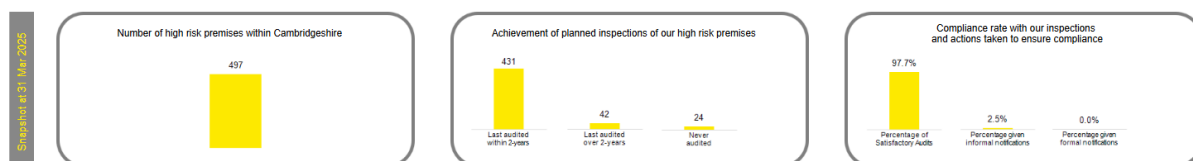
- the number of high-risk premises within Cambridgeshire,
- achievement of planned inspections of our high-risk premises,
- the County compliance rates with our inspections and actions taken to ensure compliance.

189 total fire safety audits were carried out this quarter. Just slightly less this quarter compared to last year (223). Of the 189 total audits, 143 were full audits and 46 were short audits. Staff long-term sickness has been an influence in this reduction.

Over the past 12-months the number of total audits (851) has decreased by 9% on the previous year. However, the proportion of total audits which are full audits has increased by 17% over the past 12-months. These audits are longer and more in-depth and so take more time and capacity to complete. In addition, the onset of the RBIP work means that that by the very nature of those premises full audits are more likely to be required than short audits.

88% of the 851 audits were broadly compliant with our inspections.

As of 31 March 2025, there were 497 high risk premises in the RBIP. Currently, 87% of the high-risk premises have been audited within the last rolling two years (431 premises out of a total of 497 premises). The graphs below highlight that we have a 97.7% compliance rate on our audits completed.



There are five main premises types which make up the 497 high risk (sleeping risk) premises. They are boarding / guest houses / B&Bs / youth hostels, care/nursing homes, fire stations, hotel/motels and sheltered accommodation.

4. We measure our work towards People Excellence by looking at:

Employee engagement and cultural surveys and metrics

Total sickness has seen a slight decrease in Quarter 4 compared to last year. This decrease has come from a reduction in sickness across short-term sickness as well as lower sickness levels within in the On-Call group. This reduction has been offset against an increase in both short- and long-term sickness in Combined Fire Control (2.99 increase) which could be attributed to the changes impacting the

This quarter we have seen eight leavers. Of these leavers the leaving reasons include voluntary resignation, end of contract, retirement (age and length of service), dismissed and transferred to another brigade. We gather feedback on the reasons for leaving and offer the opportunity for leavers to have a leaving interview to provide feedback to the Service.

The number of safeguarding referrals made both internally and externally

Definitions

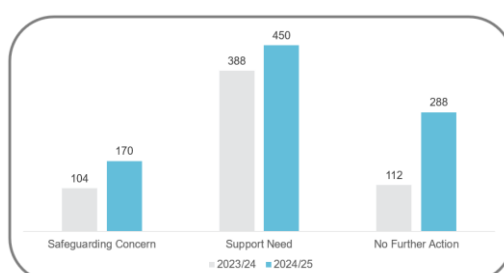
Internal Referral – this refers to any referral generated within the organisation. These typically arise from jobs attended by a CSO or crews, often sourced by HFSV's, incidents, hospital bed data, Anglian Water referrals and Exeter data, that require escalation for review by the Safeguarding Coordinator. Internal referrals also include cases where an external referral, once assessed by a CSO, is deemed to require further support and therefore escalated to the Safeguarding Coordinator.

External Referral – this refers to a referral received by the organisation from an external source, such as a partner or another organisation. Examples may include the Police, EEAST or Adult Social Care. Each referral will be reviewed and triaged by a CSO. If the CSO determines that the referral requires additional support this will be escalated to the Safeguarding Coordinator and will be logged in CFRMIS now as an internal referral.

The number of safeguarding referrals is up by 50.3% for internal referrals and 21.1% for external referrals in the last financial year, this is positive, and further work is planned to support our community facing colleagues with further support and training in this area.



Of the 908 referrals received and reviewed by the relevant individuals within the organisation 620 cases (68%) were determined to meet the threshold of a 'Safeguarding Concern' or 'Support Need' and relevant action would have been taken as well as escalating this to the relevant agencies.



Percentage of employees who have a valid (and at the appropriate level) DBS check

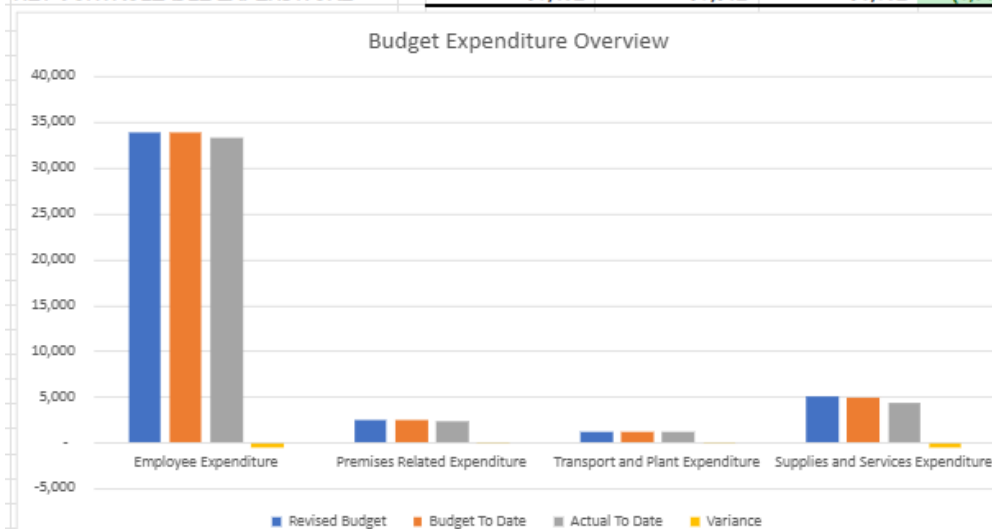
The roll-out of DBS checking for existing employees/volunteers started in November 2023. We have 631 employees and have completed 99% of employee DBS checks at the levels in the updated legislation/guidance.

5. To ensure that we are delivering value for money for our communities, we will monitor:

The data below is prior to end of year final financial adjustments (adjusting for accruals, prepayments, capital adjustment costs and order carry forwards).

- Employee costs – overall employee costs ended up as an underspend, being in operational On-Call, control, mechanics, and management and administration support (all under established for a period of time during the year), and other employee costs (namely clothing, training and occupational health costs), off-setting an overspend in operational whole-time.
- Property costs - overspend in business rates (delayed sale of the former Huntingdon site and houses) has been offset by reduced energy costs (lower unit prices and further push for less wastage plus installation of more efficient heating systems).
- Transport costs - overspend on repairs, equipment and increased vehicle tax charges offset by lower fuel charges and usage (budgeted for summer spate which did not materialise).
- Supplies and Services – currently showing an underspend. End of year transactions will impact on this as accruals and revenue to capital charges are finalised.
- Other income – higher than budgeted, a result of increased ICT costs being partially recharged as part of our shared services, private fuel usage recharged and additional Fire Break programme funding.

Description	Period to 12	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
		Revised Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance
Employee Expenditure		33,933	33,933	33,372	(561)
Premises Related Expenditure		2,377	2,377	2,244	(133)
Transport and Plant Expenditure		1,196	1,196	1,137	(58)
Supplies and Services Expenditure		4,995	4,905	4,306	(599)
Controllable Expenditure		42,500	42,410	41,059	(1,351)
Income from Shared Services and other Services		(2,033)	(2,033)	(2,172)	(139)
Non-NNDR Government Grants		(2,015)	(2,015)	(2,035)	(20)
		(4,049)	(4,049)	(4,207)	(159)
NET CONTROLLABLE EXPENDITURE		38,452	38,362	36,852	(1,510)



6. Sustainability measures:

Offsetting of carbon footprint

Sustainability is a focus for CFRS. Offsetting our carbon footprint is our aspiration. CFRS are looking at the options available to us for offsetting.

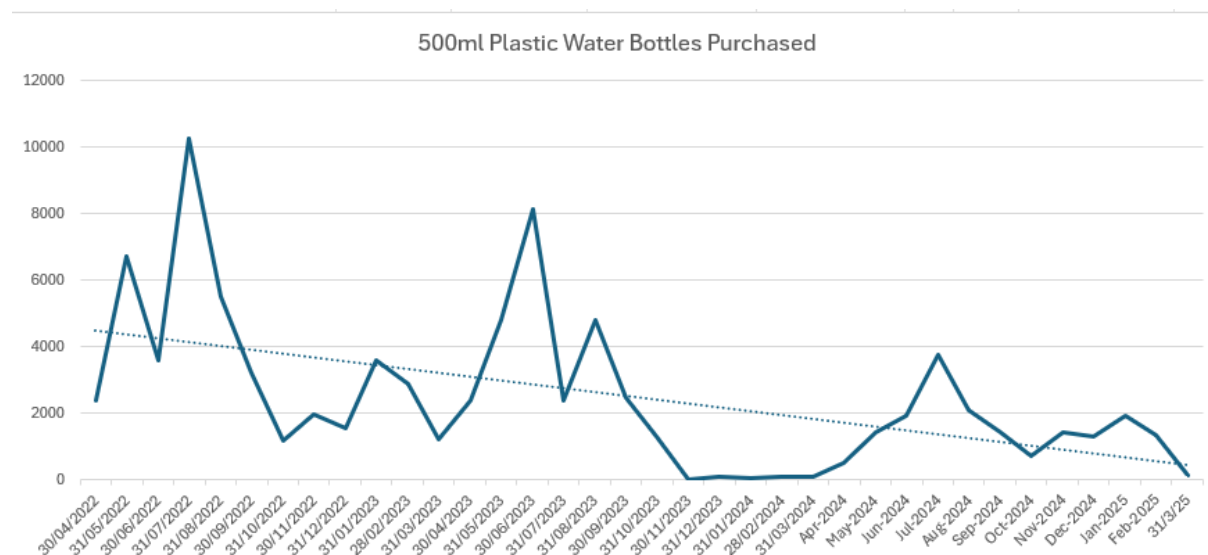
Waste reduction – amounts that we send to land fills

We remain committed to achieving a domestic recycling rate of 40%. All waste continues to be diverted from landfill, with a recycling rate of 31.64% recorded for the final quarter of the call year. Waste production for the quarter totalled nine tonnes, representing a reduction of three tonnes from same period of the previous call year.

Through our waste management efforts, we have avoided an additional carbon dioxide (CO₂) output of 811 kilograms for this financial year, the environmental benefit of which is equivalent to planting three trees.

Single use plastic usage

During 2023/24 a total of 26,328 plastic bottles were purchased, a reduction of over 17,000 bottles from 2022/23, and this dropped further still to 18,024 for 2024/25.



7. Crews of Three

The number of hours offered by crews of three has slightly decreased compared to the figures recorded throughout the three months of this reporting period, with February seeing the highest number of hours offered. On average, crews of three have contributed 1,455 hours per month over the call year, compared to an average of 1,349 hours per month during this quarter. The increased availability during this quarter represents a monthly average improvement of 6.09% compared to periods when crews of three were not utilised.

During this quarter, crews of three were mobilised to an average of 22 incidents per month, a slight decrease compared to the previous quarter. Nevertheless, the availability of these crews enabled us to attend incidents, on average, 4 minutes and 38 seconds faster than would have been possible without them.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Documents	Location	Contact Officer
CRMP 2024/29 CRMP Action Plan 2024/25	Hinchingsbrooke Cottage Brampton Road Huntingdon	Tamsin Mirfin Assistant Director - Service Transformation 07900 267944 tamsin.mirfin@cambsfire.gov.uk

Agenda Item: 9

TO: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

FROM: Assistant Director Operational Support and Combined Fire Control - Wayne Swales

PRESENTING OFFICER(S): Assistant Director Service Operational Support and Combined Fire Control – Wayne Swales

Telephone: 07554 425128

email: wayne.swales@cambsfire.gov.uk

DATE: 25 June 2025

COMBINED FIRE CONTROL UPDATE

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Fire Authority with an update on the position of Combined Fire Control (CFC) and the future direction of the function.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Authority is asked to;
- 2.1.1 note the significant progress made to date and current position of the CFC function,
- 2.1.2 review and provide comment on the proposed next steps for CFC as outlined in Paragraph 6 below.

3. Risk Assessment

- 3.1 **Political** – CFC enables the taking of emergency calls, dispatching of appropriate resources, communications, and coordination activities. There may be interest in the progress of associated projects and the impact(s) they may have on our partner agencies and the public perceptions of the change to our provision post Suffolk Fire and Rescue Services (SFRS) departure from the collaboration.
- 3.2 **Economic** – the budget deficit realised from the loss of the collaboration with SFRS may impact the Service.
- 3.3 **Legal** - Section 7 of the Fire Services Act states that a fire and rescue authority must make arrangements for dealing with calls for help and for summoning personnel.

- 3.4 **Social** – the system and the control function used to mobilise our resources is a critical entity, the public perception may be impacted should we experience any disruptions to our service delivery.

4. **Equality Impact Assessments**

- 4.1 Due to the discriminative nature of fire, those with certain protected characteristics are more likely to suffer the effects. Throughout our projects we will continually undertake equality impact assessments to ensure we identify areas which may affect people differently.

5. **Background**

- 5.1 Since 2011, Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS) has been providing a highly efficient and effective CFC function to the communities of both Cambridgeshire and Suffolk. The receiving and handling of calls has been provided from the CFC based at Service Headquarters in Huntingdon.
- 5.2 The control room operated using a system provided by Remsdaq and Frequentis. This system served our control room well for approaching 40 years, but the ageing technology required significant upgrades to ensure it was compatible with new and emerging technologies, including the Emergency Services Network (ESN). The collaboration agreed to jointly procure a new technical solution; in 2019 Systel solutions was awarded the contract.
- 5.3 In June 2023, SFRS announced their intention to separate from the highly successful collaboration to initiate the establishment of a standalone SFRS fire control. Outside of the significant financial impacts to Suffolk residents and ourselves, this also raised significant concerns around SFRSs commitment to the 'go-live' with Systel. Many of the teams that we had been working with within SFRS left the organisation which in turn presented a significant risk to the project that was never fully mitigated by SFRS both in terms of capacity and skillsets.
- 5.4 The risks and concerns were repeatedly raised with SFRS senior management, as it was evident that SFRS were not ready to cut over to Systel on the mutually agreed date. Where possible CFRS took over responsibility for SFRS activities as it was unlikely that they would be able to complete them for example, the required integrations.
- 5.5 In June 2024, the planned 'go-live' was delayed by three months as it was evident SFRS were not sufficiently prepared. Due to the lack of progress by SFRS in that time to rectify the issues identified and the need for 'go-live' to happen in September 2024, CFRS initiated business continuity planning with SFRS to ensure mitigations would be in place should not all activities be completed.
- 5.6 Despite reassurances from SFRS, the predicted risks materialised quickly on the 'go-live' date, with SFRS having to operate snow-ball arrangements (manual station alerting) and have three Officers in the control room 24/7 to

support effective mobilising. An action plan was initiated by our Service for the critical activities required and daily meetings were held to establish progress against these and agree when business continuity arrangements could be exited.

- 5.7 In September 2024 we went live with the new mobilising system in CFC. This was the culmination of the five-year project, replacing the entire system that allows us to receive 999 calls, log incidents, identify resources, dispatch and communicate with crews; it is one of the most complex and critical systems that we have. The Service has been working alongside Systel as our supplier during this time to continue to integrate the system within both Cambridgeshire and Suffolk alongside identifying and resolving identified areas of improvement. We have engaged throughout this period with Systel with supplier visits both to their headquarters in France, and through on-site visits to our service headquarters.

6. Current Priorities

- 6.1 With the implementation of the new mobilising system provided by Systel, the exit of SFRS from the collaboration, and the known budget pressure resulting from that, there is a need to review and transform the current model of operation within the control room function. This will realise a more efficient, effective, and futureproofed delivery of the function using modern technology and ways of mobilising our resources to meet the changing needs of our communities. We have identified and put in place key areas of priority to meet the needs of our control function for the future. This is to be achieved through the launching of two projects;

- **P157 Control Works Project**

Following the implementation of the Systel mobilising system, several enhancements have been identified to further develop system efficiency. The upcoming version of the operating system, AEGIS, is a significant mandatory upgrade encompassing multiple software system upgrades which will further improve the system.

The mySTART+ application is currently used by Officers as an operational viewing platform, (OVP), to monitor ongoing incidents. This was implemented with basic functionality but now the system is in use, capacity exists to conduct a full review of any other functionality or benefits the app can offer.

The current provider of telephony within the Systel solution has given Systel notice that they will no longer be providing the service, and a replacement telephony supplier is required to maintain business continuity. Given the systems deep integration with Systel, this transition must be carefully managed to ensure uninterrupted emergency service provision.

SFRS expects to 'go-live' with its own mobilising system and control room this month. CFRS will need to manage this with a comprehensive transition plan to ensure operational service is maintained to Cambridgeshire communities whilst also providing resilience for SFRS and ensuring data security post-contract.

- **P158 Control Review Project**

This project will seek to identify and implement ways to improve and modernise how we deliver our fire control function utilising our modern mobilisation system. We will seek to align the function with the wider organisational ways of operating to drive positive cultural change.

Throughout the project it is key that we ensure colleagues in fire control are engaged and communicated with on any changes and involved in activities that will support the drive for positive cultural change.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Documents	Location	Contact Officer
<p>Programme and Project Management documents – various</p> <p>Fire Authority Reports and Minutes - various</p>	<p>Hinchingsbrooke Cottage</p> <p>Brampton Road</p> <p>Huntingdon</p>	<p>Assistant Director Service Operational Support and Combined Fire Control – Wayne Swales</p> <p>07554 425128</p> <p>wayne.swales@cambsfire.gov.uk</p>

TO: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

FROM: Assistant Chief Fire Officer - Stuart Smith

PRESENTING OFFICER(S): Assistant Chief Fire Officer - Stuart Smith

Telephone: 07900 267 853

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DATE: 25 June 2025

VISION 30 PROGRESS UPDATE

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Fire Authority on the Service's work to date and planned future work to ensure the Vision 30 project objectives are achieved, and that Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS) has a flexible and resilient response to the growing risks across the county.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Authority is asked to;
- 2.1.1 note the contents of the report and make comment as they deem appropriate,
 - 2.1.2 agree the plan and timeframes for future works and associated reporting to the Authority outlined in Paragraph 7.

3. Risk Assessment

- 3.1 **Political** – unless the Service uses its operational resources efficiently and effectively, there is a high likelihood of a failure to meet the response standards set within our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2024/29. This will lead to negative scrutiny from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS), Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and local politicians.
- 3.1.1 Re-distribution of resources will require engagement with local councillors and Members of Parliament. There is a risk that representative bodies and local communities may challenge any operational change. The Service must engage with all stakeholders to ensure the risks and benefits of any proposed course of action are understood.
- 3.2 **Economic** – the county's population growth continues, and to mitigate the risk of increased population, the right resources in the right location at the right time is vital. Recruitment and retention in the On-Call workforce continues to

challenge the Service and is also recognised as a national concern. If our operational availability maintains or worsens, the Service may not be able to meet its CRMP aims and objectives.

- 3.3 **Social** – changes to crewing arrangements and re-distribution of resources will impact our people and may create additional concern and tension within the operational workforce.
- 3.4 **Legal** – any proposals for change will need to be consulted on with affected colleagues to ensure the Service correctly follows employment law. The Service must ensure it is using its resources to provide the best operational response under its statutory duties within the Civil Contingencies Act 2005, the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and to meet the CRMP objectives.

4. Equality Impact Assessments

- 4.1 These will be completed as the process moves forward to understand the impact to all involved in the change.

5. Background

- 5.1 In November 2024, the Authority was briefed on the opportunities and risks the organisation is facing in the coming years when trying to manage the increased risk across the county due to the rapid growth plans that are being shared.
- 5.2 The Vision 30 project scope was developed and created to allow CFRS to effectively plan to manage future risks. The project has a number of workstreams and will enable us to ensure we have the correct resources in the most appropriate locations to deliver the most effective service for the public of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

6. Work to Date

- 6.1 Since November 2024 we have started to undertake a range of work known as Vision 30. The project, led by Area Commander Simon Thompson, has reviewed all the current processes and procedures relating to the current shift systems to make sure they are operating effectively and efficiently.
- 6.2 The project has reviewed its operational skillsets to properly understand the additional skills needed to appropriately provide the most effective operational response to incidents. As a result, crews have been upskilled in animal and water rescue. We have also enhanced the range of equipment on certain appliances to help deal with a broader range of operational incidents, including potential spate conditions. A number of our operational flexible duty response officers have also been trained in a broader range of skills to enable them to assist at specialist incident types.
- 6.3 The project has a vast scope and to aid in its delivery, a Group Commander has been seconded into the team to help deal with the significant workload. In

the short-term this role will focus on negotiating and implementing a mixed crewing policy that will allow On-Call firefighters to crew appliances with wholetime firefighters; something that does not currently happen within our wholetime shift system. In addition to affording more flexibility in how we crew our appliances, mixed crewing will also offer an alternative resilience model by ensuring our degradation procedures are robust. We will have processes in place to scale up the number of appliances we have available during times of need or reduce attendance to certain incident types during extremely busy operational periods. The role will also understand potential risks (growth in domestic and non-domestic premises, new infrastructure and transport networks and respond by locating resources at locations best served to those risks. This resource is also supporting our digital technology team to build a bespoke risk modelling tool that will help us determine the best place to locate our resources to deal with risk and demand.

- 6.4 The modelling tool is expected to be tested later this year with Officers being able to use its full capabilities early next year. This tool will allow us to programme where growth is being planned against resource availability, providing modelling solutions as to where we need resources to mitigate the risk and demand of incidents.
- 6.5 The Service is currently out to advert for a Growth and Planning Officer role to help support the gathering of information about growth across the county. This role will also be our presence at the discussions around funding through Section 106 or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding. The Service currently has a relationship with an external partner who successfully supported a bid for funding from Huntingdonshire District Council of £700k for the upgrade to St Neots Community Fire and Rescue Station.
- 6.6 In addition, senior Officers are also engaged with growth partners on the borders of our county such as East-West rail link and station/terminal at Tempsford, as well as the new Universal Studio's build in Bedfordshire to best understand any potential impacts these may have on our service delivery model.

7. Work Planned and Next Steps

- 7.1 Where appropriate, consultation with representative bodies will take place to progress policies and procedures to improve resilience of our frontline services to the public.
- 7.2 The internal modelling tool will be used to create future modelling scenarios to ensure the Service is best placed to have an effective response to the public as growth in the county continues. The options will be reviewed as part of the Vision 30 project before being brought to Members for awareness.
- 7.3 A full review of operational rotas including Principal Officers through to Station Commanders will be undertaken.

- 7.4 It is hoped that we will be able to secure further funding year on year. In 2024/25 we received additional funding that allowed us to grow our wholetime firefighter establishment by eight. It is hoped that this same funding offer is available for the coming years ensuring we can increase resources across the Service (where needed) thus enabling us to respond to the rapidly growing risk across the county.
- 7.5 It is also hoped that we will be in a position to bring our new operational response planning scenarios to Members in December 2025 for ratification. This will then drive how the Service utilises its resources moving forward.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Documents	Location	Contact Officer
Vision 30 project documentation Fire Authority Reports and Minutes – various	Hinchingbrooke Cottage Brampton Rad Huntingdon	Stuart Smith Assistant Chief Fire Officer 07900 267 853 stuart.smith@cambsfire.gov.uk

TO: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

FROM: Assistant Director Service Transformation – Tamsin Mirfin

PRESENTING OFFICER(S): Assistant Director Service Transformation –
Tamsin Mirfin

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DATE: 25 June 2025

FIRE AUTHORITY PRODUCTIVITY AND EFFICIENCY RETURN AND FINANCIAL BUSINESS CONTINITY PLANNING UPDATE

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Fire Authority with an update about the Service's productivity and efficiency return (completed for the Home Office) and the Service's financial business continuity planning.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Fire Authority is asked to;
- 2.1.1 note the Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS) Productivity and Efficiency Report April 2025, attached at Appendix 1,
 - 2.1.2 note the update on financial business continuity planning for 2025/26,
 - 2.1.3 approve the financial business continuity plans for 2026/27.

3. Risk Assessment

- 3.1 **Economic** – CFRS must deliver its services within a balanced budget. Financial business continuity planning supports the Service to achieve this through early identification of where savings could be made, if required, in a considered and measured way whilst also understanding what the impact of such savings would be on service delivery.

4. Background

- 4.1 Over many years CFRS has continuously strived to work more efficiently and effectively whilst maintaining a good, if not outstanding, service to its communities and demonstrating value for money.

- 4.2 Each year we have seen unpredictable increases in costs, nationally negotiated pay settlements not being finalised until after budget setting activities as well as single year settlements. The Service has concentrated even more to see where further efficiencies can be made and put contingency plans in place should costs outweigh our funding.
- 4.3 To do we have in place robust financial planning, including financial business continuity planning, that is reported regularly to the Fire Authority and its Policy and Resources Committee. The Service also completes annual statutory returns as well as productivity and efficiency returns requested by the Home Office.

5. Productivity and Efficiency Plans

- 5.1 As part of the 2021 Spending Review, the National Fire Chiefs Council and Local Government Association agreed that between 2022/23 and 2024/25, fire and rescue services in England would increase wholetime firefighter productivity by 3% and create 2% of non-pay related efficiency savings.
- 5.2 The 2024 Spending Review included a re-commitment to these targets for 2025/26. As part of this all fire and rescue services were requested to draft and publish productivity and efficiency plans for 2024/25 and again for 2025/26.
- 5.3 CFRS plans provide an update on all efficiencies both cashable and non-cashable as well as updates on the productivity of our wholetime firefighters.
- 5.4 As a lean and one of the lowest funded services in the sector, CFRS puts considerable focus on efficiencies, looking for opportunities to improve and provide value for money. Our reports have always shown CFRS to be highly effective in making efficiencies, challenging ourselves and making savings in one area to reinvest in another.
- 5.5 Examples of how we achieve these are through collaboration activities, challenging supplier costs, reviewing how we deliver activities, and reviewing our financial business continuity plans.
- 5.6 We have been on this journey to make the Service as lean as possible since the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review. However, with the growth that we are currently experiencing and expected to experience in this county, we need to look for other ways to meet our changing population and risks. This is highlighted in our current Productivity and Efficiency Report April 2025, attached at Appendix 1.

6. Financial Business Continuity Planning 2025/26

- 6.1 In His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services report for Cambridgeshire 2023/25, CFRS is graded as 'Outstanding' and highlighted for Innovative practice in 'Making best use of resources'. It states;

“Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service’s financial and resource planning is agile and flexible

Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service has comprehensive financial and resourcing plans. These are aligned with its strategic [integrated risk management plan](#)’s priorities and sustainability strategy. The service uses its resources efficiently and gets value for money by making:

- cashable savings, which it then reinvests;
- non-cashable savings (by doing more with the resources it already has);
- cost-avoidance savings (by carrying out thorough and effective contract negotiation); and
- good use of new ways of working to make sure the services it provides are proportionate to risk and public safety.

These financial plans help provide a sustainable service to the public and are continuously updated and improved”

- 6.2 To mitigate against the impact of Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service withdrawing from the highly successful Combined Fire Control collaboration, leaving a circa £1.2 million funding gap, CFRS has increased precepts for this financial year by £4.95. This has supported us in managing areas of increasing costs.
- 6.3 The Government continues to provide additional funding to authorities to compensate for the impact of previous caps on the increase in the business rate multipliers and other business reliefs given. This is known as a Section 31 Grant and this year the Service has received £1,907,050 which will enable investment and growth in some areas to match the risk and demand of our communities. However, some of this funding (£443,000) was only confirmed later in the year post budget setting processes.
- 6.4 As well as this the Service has invested a small amount in professional support, which includes resource to bid for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) grants. Utilising this support, we were successful in our first bid with Huntingdonshire District Council CIL fund securing £700,000 for the renovations to Saint Neots fire station that are now in progress.
- 6.5 The Section 31 Grant along with the CIL Grant have provided capacity in the budget to invest in growth, meaning that for this year, should there be unexpected expenses where we would need to invoke financial business continuity, this can be done without making significant impact(s) to core service delivery.

7. Plans For Financial Business Continuity 2026/27

- 7.1 The grants detailed above cannot be relied upon year on year, however we will continue to utilise the professional support employed to seek further CIL and Section 106 funding to allow for continued investment in the Service to make it fit for the future.
- 7.2 The risk from annual funding settlements remains into the next financial year, along with increasing costs, unknown nationally negotiated pay settlements and the future projected growth of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. As we commence the budget setting process in October 2025, we will also carry out an in-depth financial business continuity review. The outcomes of this work will be presented to the Fire Authority in conjunction with the budget setting late 2025/early 2026.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Documents	Location	Contact Officer
April 2025 Productivity and Efficiency Plan <u>Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service 2023–2025 - His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services</u>	Hinchingbrooke Cottage Brampton Road Huntingdon <u>Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service 2023–2025 - His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services</u>	Tamsin Mirfin Assistant Director Service Transformation <u>tamsin.mirfin@cambsfire.gov.uk</u>

Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service Productivity and Efficiency report

April 2025

1. Introduction

Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS) has worked hard over the years to continuously strive to work more efficiently and effectively whilst maintaining a good, if not outstanding, service to the community, providing a value for money service.

With the unpredictable increases in costs and unknown pay settlements over the years, the Service has concentrated even more to see where further efficiencies can be made and put contingency plans in place should the costs outweigh our funding.

CFRS continues to operate as a lean service. We are situated in a growth area and have seen significant housing and population growth over the last decade and yet we have managed to maintain a good service to the public whilst significantly reducing our costs in real terms. We now need to consider the impact of this growth and how we can sustain delivering a good service in the medium-term and as such we need to invest in our people and estates.

Coupled with this, Suffolk's departure from the highly successful Combined Fire Control (CFC) collaboration which has created a financial impact of £1m. This is a huge impact to CFRS's budget and therefore ability to invest and grow the Service. We continue to see uncertainty about when Suffolk will actually depart the collaboration leading to repeated short-term planning implications, hindering our ability to proactively plan and act.

The housing growth in our region has declined slightly from 1.61% to 1.2% but is expected to increase further based on the planning information that we are gathering. For future years we have assumed a 1% growth in housing year on year although Government plans for Cambridgeshire suggest a significant future increase in population and commercial enterprise. Prudent budget planning means that for 25/26 a £4.95 increase in precept per household has been applied. Inflation and pay increases are expected to be between 2-3%.

With currently only annual settlements, CFRS must operate an annual Financial Business Continuity planning process to allow forward planning. The plans are developed in alignment with budget preparation to understand when savings could be made should the funding not be sufficient to meet the budgeted spend for the up-coming year.

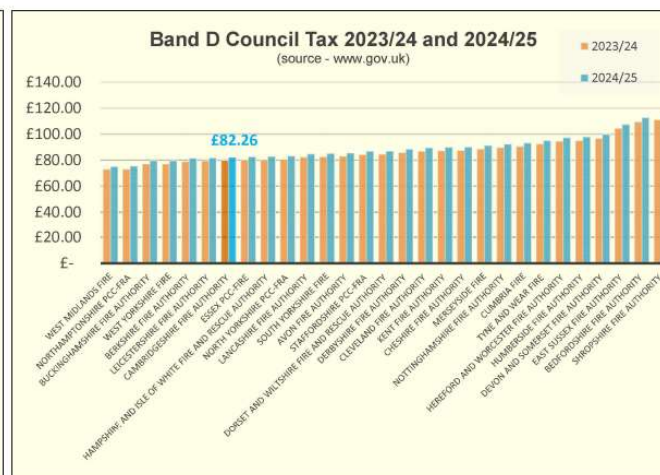
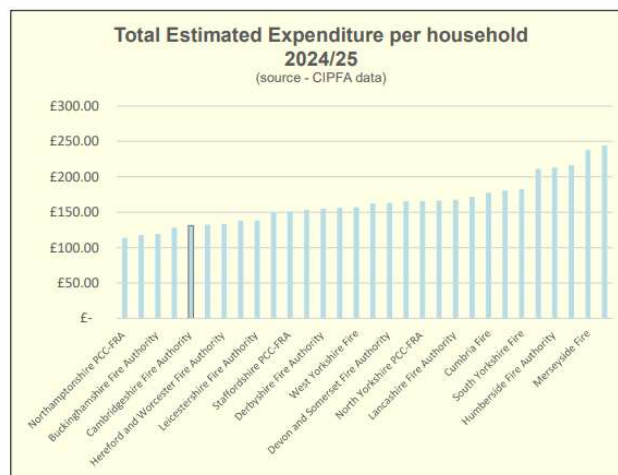
2. Primary information

BUDGET (£000)			
Revenue Expenditure	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
Direct Employee	27999	31011	33439
Indirect Employee	429	522	583
Premises	2031	2400	2324
Transport	724	720	707
Supplies and Services	5308	5525	5526
Capital Financing	638	469	548
Other		1850	
Total	37129	42497	43127
Income	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
Actual Received from Precept	24137	25243	27083
Local Government Finance Settlement	9534	13534	13637
Other Grants	1863	1927	1427
Income Raised Locally	1595	1793	980
Total	37129	42497	43127

We have continued with a zero-based budgeting approach, reviewing the individual cost drivers which make up the budget, taking into consideration what needs to be delivered as per our CRMP and how we can deliver those plans.

With a growing population and increased demands on both our operational and support staff to deliver core services and statutory reports, we have budgeted for a slight increase in both operational and support personnel. Support personnel were reduced in 2022/23 but this reduction in staff is not sustainable if we are to continue to meet our statutory obligations and also look after the well-being of our employees.

The latest statistics from CIPFA and the Government show Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue as being one of the lowest in England compared with other Fire Services, being in the bottom five of thirty for 2024/25 for total expenditure per household.



2.1 Reserves

RESERVES (£000)					
	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028
General Reserves	2407	3692	2392	2392	2392
Earmarked Revenue Reserves	923	923	923	923	923
of which MRP reserve					
Earmarked Capital Reserves	1400	1400	0	0	0
Other Reserves					
of which revenue	860	860	860	860	860
of which capital					
Total	5590	6875	4175	4175	4175

The Authority maintains a General Reserve to cushion impacts of uneven cash flows and avoid unnecessary temporary borrowing. It acts as a contingency in the event of unexpected emergencies or unforeseen spending. In recent years it added a Finance Business Continuity Reserve from revenue savings from 2021/22 and 2022/23 in anticipation of new budgetary pressures and unpredictable funding in the medium term. In 2023/24 the Authority utilised £459k of the reserve to fund pay awards which were above budgeted.

As at 31st March 2024 the Authority's usable General Reserve balance was £2.4m and £3.3m including the Finance Business Continuity Reserve. The General Reserve will be used in line with the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. The Authority also maintains three earmarked reserves to fund known or predicted liabilities. These reserves are a Property Development Reserve to finance the future capital programme relating to properties and avoid borrowing or poor return on investments, a Pension Reserve to fund ill-health retirements above budgeted, and a Wholetime Recruitment Reserve to allow for fluctuations in firefighter establishment.

The Property Development Reserve at 31st March 2024 was £1.4m (£nil at 31st March 2023). This funding has been allocated to the upgrade of St Neots Fire Station which commenced in 2024/25 and will continue into 2025/26. The cost of borrowing continues to be greater than the return on cash investments, it is therefore more cost effective to borrow internally, using funds currently held.

The Wholetime Recruitment Reserve is £400k. This reserve will be used to ensure any fluctuations in our establishment can be maintained.

3. Efficiency data

EFFICIENCY DATA (£000)

	EFFICIENCY DATA (£000)					
	Actual 2023-24		Actual 2024-25		Forecast 2025-26	
Opening Revenue Expenditure Budget (Net)	35534		40704		42147	
Less Total Direct Employee Costs	-27999		-31011		-33439	
Non Pay Budget	7535		9693		8708	
Efficiency Target (2% of non-pay budget)	150.7		193.86		174.16	
Efficiency Savings	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent
<u>Direct Employee</u>						
Reduction in Prevention/Protection/Response Staff				81		
Reduction in Support Staff		257		90		
<u>Indirect Employee (e.g. training, travel etc.)</u>						
All Indirect Employee Costs		9		53	6	
<u>Premises</u>						
Utilities				201		
Rent/Rates						
Other Premises Costs		1				
Shared Premises					6	
<u>Transport</u>						
Fleet						
Fuel				77		
Other Transport Costs			6	10		
<u>Supplies and Services</u>						
National Procurement Savings	48	70	10			
Local Procurement Savings						
Other Technology Improvements		55				
Decreased Usage						
<u>Capital Financing</u>						
Revenue Expenditure Charged to Capital		333				700
Net Borrowing Costs				21		
<u>Other</u>						
Other Savings 1 (Please Specify)				23		
Other Savings 2 (Please Specify)			20			
Other Savings 3 (Please Specify)						
Total Efficiency Savings	773		592		712	
Efficiency Savings as a Percentage of Non-Payroll Budgets	10.26%		6.11%		8.18%	
Efficiency Savings Target	2.00%		2.00%		2.00%	
Over/(Under)	8.26%		4.11%		6.18%	

4. Income

INCOME						
£000						
	Actual 2023-24		Actual 2024-25		Forecast 2025-26	
	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent
Income generated from charging policies	438	37	283	50	92	
Income generated from trading operations	20		20		20	
Income generated from shared premises						
Income generated from interest on investments	70	269	70	388	70	150
Income generated from other sources	1265	372	1610	209	307	342
Total	1793	678	1983	647	489	492

Income generated from other sources is made of income from Suffolk for the Combined Fire Control (CFC), Bedfordshire for the ICT shared service and the GIS/Gazetteer managed Service, and income from East of England Ambulance Service for the Blue Light Community Welfare Officer Collaboration.

5. Efficiency narrative

5.1. Direct Employee

With Suffolk leaving the CFC collaboration, permanent recruitment has been frozen to move back to pre-collaboration resource numbers through natural wastage to avoid future redundancies. This does however mean that the CFC is operating below establishment. The continued delays of Suffolk leaving the collaboration (originally 31st December 2024, 31st March 2025, 19th May 2025 and now end June 2025) are now impacting Cambridgeshire's operating assumption and ability to transition to new operating assumptions.

There were two posts budgeted within our Business Support Group which were frozen to allow for a review of the roles to better understand if these were required. It was agreed, because of the review, that recruitment activity did not proceed for these posts.

5.2 Indirect employee

There have been reductions in clothing pending a review of the existing contract. Quantities have been reviewed with the intention of moving in the longer-term to a more incident specific Personal Protective Equipment approach. Training costs have been reduced by bringing First-Aid training in-house and using a hybrid model, limiting the requirement for external training; this not only saves on the cost of courses but also travel and transport costs and employees' time. The Service has also reduced recruitment costs by using local initiatives from stations and social media rather than incurring external advertising costs. We continue to deliver our New recruit and bridging course in house. We have had 14 individuals joining the operational service in 24/25, running this training internally has saved us (non cashable) £44,000 based on the previously known training costs, this excludes any accommodation and travel and subsistence savings.

5.3 Premises

The Service Sustainability strategy is a core priority across the Service. We have a proactive drive to reduce utilities, encouraging a culture of smart use of heating and lighting. This combined with unit costs reducing has delivered efficiency savings. We have introduced building management systems, air-source heat pumps and lighting replacement initiatives; it is too early in the programme to establish the consistent savings that these will deliver into the Service. We have done a review of our stations looking at contamination and welfare of crews and work is underway to make them more efficient in managing contamination and the clean-up following incidents. We have continued to fit gyms to On-Call stations where possible to allow fire fighter to be more productive in terms of enabling them to still be on call when training rather than for some that had to travel away to a gym as there wasn't one in the local area. These are ongoing initiatives that we continue to deliver as part of our estates' programme including solar panels as part of a station extension.

5.4 Transport

There has been a fuel saving of £77k in 2024/25. This has been achieved in a number of ways. Firstly, we have been part of a HVO fuel trial with Huntingdon District Council (HDC) allowing the Service to test the fuel economy of moving to an alternative, more sustainable fuel source and allowing HDC to broaden the types of vehicles utilising this fuel source. This delivered a cashable saving to CFRS of approximately £4k and provided evidence to support our move to HVO fuels where possible. We have replaced many of our silver fleet vehicles with hybrid or electric vehicles, therefore, using less fossil fuel, installing a further 9 EV chargers during 2024/25, meaning a total of 16 of our sites now have EV chargers. We did not see the summer spate conditions anticipated, which meant less fuel was consumed and the decrease in cost per liter has contributed to this efficiency.

The service has renegotiated the roadside assistance contract delivering further cashable efficiencies.

5.5 Supplies and Services

National procurement savings have been delivered through the contract negotiations to reduce costs on telecommunications. Software contract negotiations have seen further reductions by removing software modules that were not being utilised. These were achieved during 2024/25 and budgets reduced as a result for 2025/26.

5.6 Capital Financing

We have a focused cash management system in place which has meant the Service has managed its cash flows without the need for external borrowing to fund the capital programme for 2024/25, a saving of £21k in interest charges.

We have invested in a consultant to assist with our grant applications and have succeeded in securing a substantial grant for our St Neots property development through a £700k Huntingdon District Council Community Infrastructure Levy grant which we did not plan for in our budget.

5.7 Other

Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service's positive performance, quick reporting and investigation of incidents, carrying out relevant checks and providing relevant security measures drive insurance premiums down and reduces the number of insurance claims, this has meant that we have not seen insurance premium increases and received a credit adjustment, resulting in a cashable saving of £23K through the Fire and Rescue Indemnity Company.

There has been £20k saved through the removal of printing and scanning costs, and reductions in postage. achieved through the implementation of a new finance system. Changes in working practices and proactive engagement with suppliers have improved processes, making them much more efficient and effective.

5.8 Future efficiencies

Our Vision 2030 project aims to look at a more dynamic approach to resourcing and exploring different models to allow us to continue to deliver an efficient and effective service. We have already commenced the development of digital tools to enable us to better model and predict resource requirements, work will continue this year to test and refine this and then look at scenarios to enable us to improve operational availability in a targeted way.

In our non-cashable efficiencies we have saved £493k which will be realised more fully in 2025/26 through a complete risk-based review of our training packages for operational colleagues. This has reduced 140 hours of on-line training to 76 hours for every Firefighter. This time has been reinvested into community engagement activities as well as supporting Phase 2 Firefighter development, which is an increasing requirement.

We have developed and delivered our own Menopause awareness training, we have delivered 40, hour-long, menopause awareness training sessions in the past 12 months rather than commissioning an external supplier. This saved approximately £7k. We also refreshed our Values and behaviours guidance - we reviewing and updating our values and expected behaviours in-house, engaging colleagues in the process through a survey and workshops. An external supplier would have charged approx. £8-10k for this work.

Our Community and Operational Intelligence project aims to review the data and technologies that are required by our colleagues working within the communities to put in place technical solutions to reduce administration activities, improve efficiencies and ensure that our people have the data required to enable them to do their jobs.

We are looking at our Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking process going forward, establishing what good practice looks like, what our processing options are and what the most efficient and effective method is for us. Initial reviews suggest, for a small investment, non-cashable equivalent savings of at least three times the amount can potentially be made.

We will continue to work on our Training Records and Competency System to further refine and review how we deliver and record training and competencies information. Refining our information governance online training has seen approximately £10k worth of non-cashable savings during 2024/25 and into the future.

We continue to work with partners to explore further opportunities to collaborate. We will be working with another Fire and Rescue Service to look at providing a joint station/response model, we are also investigating the feasibility of a joint fleet workshop with another party.

5.9 Collaboration

Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service has many ongoing and long-standing collaborations. We strive to look at the potential for new opportunities as a matter of business as usual whenever we review or change a process or need to procure a new contract. The Service actively reviews these collaborations to ensure we are still receiving benefit from these.

The table below identifies these collaborations along with any savings or efficiencies.

Description	Date initiated/ duration	Cost savings/efficiencies
Combined Fire Control Room providing a joint control room function for Cambridgeshire and Suffolk FRS hosted in CFRS. Although this collaboration has been hugely successful, Suffolk's decision to end this at some point in 2025 will lead to increased costs for Cambridgeshire (circa £1m) and for Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service (Circa £800k)	2011	£400k (in 2011) per annum for each service, over £546k at current pricing.
ICT Shared Service with Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service providing joint information technology internal support	2019	Provides resilience and enables greater resourcing at the same cost
Gazetteer managed service for Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service providing a managed database service and specialist skill sets provision to Bedfordshire.	2011	£72k income and shared contract managed by CFRS.
Safeguarding resources and services, provision of safeguarding oversight and support to CFRS from Essex Fire and Rescue Services	2021	£28k per annum cost to CFRS
Drone and Operational joint training in collaboration with Cambridgeshire Constabulary.	2019	Allows for training of pilots to be shared with Police and shared governance of drone use provides significant savings on costs to train and certificate.
Shared space - Use of meeting rooms between Cambridgeshire Constabulary and CFRS		Allows greater flexibility and reduces room and venue hire costs through allowing use and access to other service's facilities.
Co-responding - Currently nine stations delivering co-responding working with East of England Ambulance Service	2008	Cost recovery for co-responding activities, allowing the EEAST to use capacity and at no extra cost to CFRS.
Internal Audit - Joint contracting of internal audit programme with Bedfordshire and Essex fire and rescue services	2016	Knowledge shared, endorsing best practices. Procurement cost savings for other services.
Shared network contract for internal network provision with Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service	2019	£500K over the 5-year contract period for CFRS.

Fire and Rescue Indemnity Company (FRIC) - Insurance consortium-- mutual management of risk, provide discretionary cover and purchase external insurances. This is operated with 12 other fire and rescue services	2019	Savings on insurance premium tax (5-7%), enhanced management support and risk management. Aims to optimise each member's risk transfer programme and reduce costs. Reserve pool surpluses are distributed back to members.
Incident command and cross-border working - Common basis for the actions of FRSs undertaking their responsibilities as a result of agreements made under S.13 and 16 of the Fire Rescue Services Act 2004. Working with Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk Fire and Rescue Services.	2021	No cost saving but increased resilience
Specialist operational equipment sharing across all three emergency services working with Cambridgeshire Constabulary and East Ambulance Service		Allows greater access to resources if the service requesting does not have the resources available. Cost saving of recalls to duty and increased asset availability.
Supporting the most vulnerable. Working with Adult Social Care teams to support services through Safe and Well visits. Identify data that will assist our vulnerable risk profiling. Working with Peterborough Plus, Solutions for Health, Everyone Health, Insight, Leap (local energy assist programme), Health and Wellbeing network, Peterborough County Council, Camquit.	2015	Improved targeting of activities
Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), working together on safeguarding concerns in the following key areas: Child Protection, Vulnerable Adults and Domestic Abuse. Working with Cambridgeshire constabulary, Probation Service.	2010	Improved safeguarding
Share information from Anglian Water on vulnerable individuals in order to provide support.	2021	Improved success rate for Home Fire Safety Checks.
Shared rota for area commanders and principal officers, providing officer cover across Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire.	2015	Allows for services to manage the rota with one less resource.
Shared use of HVO fuel between Huntingdon District Council and CFRS for operational vehicles	2024	Trial for 3 months during 2024/25 allowed for CFRS to understand the impacts of

		<p>use of HVO and HDC to learn of the impacts to different vehicle types.</p> <p>Permanent arrangement being set up with an MOU for Q1 2025/26.</p>
<p>United States Air Force (USAF)</p> <p>MoU with USAF Alconbury</p>	2014	<p>Provides access to 2 x water carriers for operational response, joint training opportunities and sharing of sites for exercising.</p> <p>Shared resource for driver training which provides CFRS with additional capacity to deliver driver training courses and refreshers</p>
Community Wellbeing Officer x2 originally on 12 month trial, extended for further 18 months	Apr 2024	In place – shared costs with East of England Ambulance Trust (EEAST)
Ely and March station parking 5-year agreement signed with EMED to facilitate patient transport parking 3 vehicles at the station	New Oct 2024	£8k per annum income
Soham EV charger - the Town Council are utilising the station pod point for 1 vehicle during the day.	New Oct 2024	In place
Use of CFRS premises by EEAST for community first responder training EEAST had previously hired venues for training. The EEAST training team now have access to CFRS premises to enable training across the county.	2024	Cost savings for EEAST
Tall building remediation. Collaboration between CFRS, County Authorities and Local Authorities to develop and complete the Local Remediation Action Plan	2024	Ensures a joined approach to building inspection

Multi-agency training with other services, shared JESIP/MAGIC and Tactical command training with other services.	New	In place
Building Safety Regulator - Regional multi-disciplinary team 2 x fire protection officers supporting the regional multi-disciplinary team	New Apr-2025	
MAGPAS meeting room - Use of meeting room free of charge	2025	Circa £200-£400 per meeting
CIA (Finance System) System Customer Community Sharing knowledge on how to resolve system issues and/or configure elements with other CIA finance system customers (all public sector).	2024	Knowledge sharing and not needing to pay for consultancy resource
CIA Advocacy Programme CFRS are flagged as being an advocate customer where other potential or existing customers can reach out to for advice (typically other UK fire services)	2025	Benefit to CFRS - any CFRS cases logged are given priority. Benefit to other fire services is they get the benefit of our knowledge of the system and tips on a successful implementation (Contacts to date with three other Fire and Rescue Services)
Magpas training - event hosting the Magpas National training event, use of Huntingdon training facilities and engagement in training activities	New	In discussion
Police rope rescue. Police use of CFRS accredited trainers, assessments and assessors. Looking to expand to share resources to support rope rescue work	New	In discussion
Cambridgeshire's development of integrations on behalf of Suffolk. Development of integrations to take data directly from the ICT systems in Suffolk to the mobilising the system saving resource time manually entering data.	In place	Best practice and data sharing
Feasibility study for combined Fleet planned (shared premises)	Pending	Shared facility for fleet and maintenance workshop hub with another organisation, study being carried out early 2025 for conclusion by end of Q1 2025/26.

Potential collaboration with another service to improve response and resilience	Pending	
Strategic Interoperability Board (SIB) – Facilitate the sharing of best practices and innovative ideas among the emergency services within Cambridgeshire, specifically Cambridgeshire Constabulary, Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue and East of England Ambulance Service.	2024	Best practice and data sharing
Access provided for touch down point for roaming appliances at East of England Ambulance Melbourn site.	2022	Enhanced operational cover and reduced property estate cost through sharing.
Collaboration as members of eastern region Hazardous Detection Identification and Monitoring (HDIM) team	Ongoing	Enhanced skills within county
Cambridgeshire County Council – Alconbury Weald – use of meeting rooms	2023	Allows greater flexibility and reduces room and venue hire costs through allowing use and access to other service's facilities.
Blood donating sessions – Blood UK use Wisbech Fire Station to hold blood donating sessions.	In place	Station given for free to save Blood UK money on venue costs. CFRS employees attend to give home safety advice to donors while they wait.

5.10 Assessment of Efficiencies

Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service is already a lean and efficient Service. We have frontloaded our efficiencies making reductions to our resources, reducing spend and collaborating effectively.

As a service we have operated a zero-based budgeting process for the last three consecutive years, this means that efficiencies are planned in during budget preparation and monies reallocated to more appropriate budgets where necessary. Our people costs are increasing for 2025/26 to allow us to meet the demands of our communities and mitigate the risks. We have also seen increases to

our national insurance costs as a result of government increasing the employers' national insurance rate for 2025/26, although this is partially off-set by a government grant.

We have planned for some increases in professional support staff, to help manage the increased pressures felt across the Service. Half are temporary fixed-term contracts to allow for evaluation of the impacts and improvements; for example, a Growth post to work with local government to gain a holistic understanding of planned growth in our community, informing resource disposition and requirements. This will enable the Service to make appropriate funding bids to support the required growth of the Service to match that of our county. Other examples are increases in digital teams to enable more development activities to streamline processes and improve data quality and usage. We are also investing in cyber security roles, as the threats increase we need to look to specialist skill sets to ensure we are protected as much as possible and mitigate against cyber-attacks.

The increases to the on-call firefighter scale rates driven by the NJC negotiations have increased our on-call firefighter costs by approximately £400k, although this could potentially reduce on-call availability depending on the reactions of the on-call teams.

CFRS is also increasing wholetime operational resourcing by 8 posts at a cost of £420k as we look to adapt our response models to meet our changing environment.

In 2024/25 our focus as an organisation was implementing our new mobilising System, this was a significant endeavor and as a small service consumed a considerable proportion of our resources. Our priority remains to embed this system and leverage the new capabilities that this delivers to us. Effective prioritisation and organisation focus meant that we have successfully delivered the new system into operation. Since the go-live of this project we have re-focused the Service and launched our new projects and initiatives now that we have the capacity to do so. We have several new and exciting projects and initiatives that we are embarking on end of 2024/25 and continuing into 2025/26 as detailed in section 5.8.

We have mentioned previously that Suffolk have taken the decision to depart from the highly efficient and cost effective Combined Fire Control. This is a challenging situation that ends the extremely successful collaboration, increasing costs across both Services with no pretensions of improving efficiency or productivity for either Service. For Cambridgeshire alone this will leave circa £1M funding gap that significantly reduces our ability to invest in the future improvement and growth of the Service.

6. PRODUCTIVITY

6.1 Collaboration

All collaborations are listed in section 5.9 and our potential new collaborations are detailed in section 5.8.

6.2 Asset Management and IT investment

During 2024/25 the Service commenced the move two systems to the cloud environment – CFRMIS and Resourcelink, our community Risk Management system and our People system. Efficiencies have been gained in system maintenance and upgrades as well as access to increased functionality that will be implemented in 25/26, such as the talent and performance management module.

We launched our Community and Operational Intelligence project in 2024/25, to look at how we streamline processes and provide data to operational personnel and those working remotely in the community. The focus is to improve efficiency and effectiveness of capturing and the provision of data to remove paper-based working removing duplication of activities and reducing risks.

During 2024/25 we built an estates utilisation and estates overhead costs dashboard to focus on driving costs down, to better understand the utilisation of our sites and, thus, to make best use of available working spaces. The plan is to roll out these dashboards to fire stations for greater visibility and understanding Service-wide. Already these are helping us to identify low usage facilities and where costs could be reduced.

Our operational on-line training system has been reviewed (TRACs). The system and the training covered within this was reviewed and resulted in training modules being improved and hours required to complete reduced as detailed in section 5.8.

GDPR mandatory on-line training was reviewed during 2024/25 and resulted in being streamlined, reducing the time required to carry out the course - a reduction in hours across the Service amounting to approximately 400 hours per annum.

For 2025/26 an Amazon on-line business account is being set up – reducing costs by centralising the invoicing to one monthly invoice, reducing the amount of non-claimable VAT due to missing invoices and reducing the expense processing time; increasing controls by restricting supplier types and making purchases go through an approval stage prior to purchase, and greater transparency for the finance department.

CFRS has commenced the asset management review project – understanding our asset management processes and recognising any improvements that can be made, before seeking a replacement system which offers best value for money, this project will continue into 25/26.

With the introduction of the new mobilising system, we have created automatic data feeds to provide efficient and effective mobilisations. A number of integrations were built to send firefighter availability and skills at regular intervals. This required huge amounts of testing and work to ensure the data was sent in the correct formats, and required large amounts of data cleansing and

management of processes for our firefighters crew bookings, to ensure a consistent service. We provided self service capabilities to our Control function in order for them to manage out of business hours, if data anomalies are spotted. In 25/26 we are looking to introduce integrations to our mobilising system from our risk management systems, reducing manual data entry and improving data quality.

In addition to this we also built the Operational Viewing Platform (OVP) as this was no longer able to be provided by our partner service. This is real-time data used on a Self-Service basis by operational staff, promoting efficient working practices and less reliance on Control Room and Business Intelligence departments for mobilising data. The OVP also provides continuous resource level awareness which feeds into operational degradation procedures supporting appliance redistribution where required.

We have built integrations between our mobilising system and IRS. This takes fields from the mobilising system and pre-populates the forms within IRS so that the officer in charge can complete information required, rather than entering call handling data and other information recorded in the source system. This improves efficiency and reduces data entry errors.

Our digital developers have implemented a Bank holiday API, this automation of data entry removes the need for manual data entry for our Business Intelligence team to add bank holiday days to their reference data.

A project ran throughout 2024/25 to review how we provided Trauma Welfare support to our colleagues. This proactively engaged with colleagues to identify requirements and successfully delivered a new process of support into Service in January 2025. This has seen positive engagement from our operational colleagues and in the longer term is anticipated to reduce sickness levels. We have also developed a digital application to manage the requests for support and the coordination of delivery. This has taken away the need for manual processes and phone calls. This application has been received well and ensures staff receive support in a more timely manner.

A foam application app has also been developed and released in 2024. Previously operational colleagues manually calculated foam usage required at an incident or training exercise, this calculation is now performed automatically using an app, improving accuracy and saving time.

The new Occupational Health system was introduced in 2024. Integration with a new Occupational Health system has been created using our people database as the primary data source, to integrate up-to-date employee data rather than this requiring manual upkeep. The new Occupational Health system has made processes more efficient by digitising forms, referrals, communications and bookings. Managers are able to submit referrals online and track progress themselves. Data collection and presentation has also been improved to assist with trend monitoring.

We have developed a Wholetime productivity exceptions app. We collect records of where the productivity of operational staff has been impacted due to issues with equipment, technology, etc. This was previously collated within a spreadsheet which required manual upkeep however we have developed an app which provides a simple means of adding records.

To avoid unnecessary journeys and fuel usage, we developed an app for staff to request a courier visit rather than couriers visiting stations based on a rota, where this may be unnecessary. This was implemented in 2024.

An Integration was developed to draw data from the Ordinance Survey API, to remove 3 hours of manual intervention per update, updates are conducted every 6 weeks.

The Procurement card expenses processing system was launched in 2024/25. This system is now integrated into our existing finance system, whereas previously this was a separate stand-alone system. This means there has been a reduction in data processing, improved controls and management information and greater visibility and accessibility for the finance team.

We launched our new inventory control system in 2024/25. This system is now integrated into our existing finance system, whereas previously this was a separate stand-alone system. This means there has been a reduction in data processing, improved controls and management information and greater visibility and accessibility for the finance team.

We have rebuilt the Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP), adding in further refinements which has allowed us to more efficiently target the premises with greater risk.

Within CFRS we have utilised our internal digital development team to develop a digital evacuation board. Utilising our internal resources to build this has saved significant costs of purchasing, implementing and maintaining an externally provided system.

Our digital development team have also commenced work to build a dynamic cover tool allowing the Service to use historic and real-time data to provide a detailed picture of operational cover and allow predictive modelling of impacts of moving resources.

6.3 Resourcing

Since reducing the minimum number of on-call firefighters from 4 to 3 in order for an appliance to be made active in 2023/24 we have seen a further improvement to our on-call retention, with on-call pumps now being mobilised to a wider range and greater number of operational incidents. On-call retention and maintenance of skills has also improved during 2024/25 following our on-call roaming appliance trial, when an on-call Pump is Wholetime status they can be targeted to provide cover at the high-risk areas of the county

and therefore the Operational response area increases along with opportunity to respond to an increased number of operational calls.

A further improvement seen during 2024/25 is with our Station Commander (SC) Flexi Rota. In principle the rota is now self-sustaining under the management of the Resource Management Unit (RMU). Should it fall short due to sickness, leave, courses etc., RMU work with the remaining SC's to identify and arrange appropriate cover for the duty shortfall at a previously agreed rate rather than paying overtime which provides financial savings to the service. This is managed by the RMU who work closely with the Flexi Duty System (FDS) SC's resulting in achieving our target of ensuring that CFRS does not drop below the minimum of 5 x FDS SC's on 24 duty every day. This ensures appropriate officer cover across the county 365 days a year. This has been achieved through the introduction of the new FDS agreement which has increased both the engagement of the FDS SC's and provided the RMU with the tools to arrange operational cover and subsequently meeting the targets above at no additional cost to the service.

A recent introduction of the Text Local facility, a low-cost automated text facility, has resulted in a massive efficiency in administrative time and phone call cost savings for both RMU (during office hours) and the Duty Officer (out of Hours) and has helped to maintain operational cover across the county.

Over the past 12 months, there have been 8,095 home fire safety visits, which is an increase of 26% on the previous 12-month period (6,434). Of the visits delivered by CFRS staff, 90.3% of households contained at least one person with at least one vulnerability or risk factor. Over the past 12-months, 82.8% of all visits were carried out where any person in the household was 65-years+ or disabled (age and disability are specific Home Office stated vulnerabilities). The increase in visits has been delivered through the two additional Community Wellbeing Officers (via collaboration) and an addition of two Community Safety Officers (CSOs). There has also been more focus on Community Fire Safety work for the Roaming pumps.

The Service has supported private medical funding for operations for colleagues who have been on long term sick for prolonged periods. The Service considers the current length of absence and recovery to wait for NHS treatment including the cost of sickness absence during this period, in comparison to the cost of private treatment and the cost of sickness absence. For one colleague the NHS cost including sickness totaled £33,712, and private funding including sickness totaled £26,412. With a Service saving of £7,300.

6.4 Income generation

Our charging policies are listed below

Activity	Description	Charging Basis
Special Service Charges	Attending special service operational incidents e.g. lift release, locked out of properties, where a charge is due (charges do not apply to vulnerable persons).	Set fee based on costs to provide the service
Hire of equipment	The loan of salvage sheets at incidents such as roof fires or house fires where the equipment needs to be left in situ	Set fee based on costs to provide the service
Hydrant testing	The testing, examination and repair of private fire hydrants	Set fee based on costs to provide the service
Photocopying	A charge set for printing in both black & white and colour at CFRS site for non authority use	Set fee based on costs to provide the service
Fire Reports & Fire investigation reports	To provide Insurance companies and private clients with a fire report when requested.	Set fee based on costs to provide the service
Cylinder recharge	The costs to private companies and other Fire & Rescue Services to recharge a cylinder of air	Set fee based on costs to provide the service
Automatic Fire Alarms charges for collecting Stations	An annual charge for access to dedicated telephone lines to our combined control for automatic fire alarms	Set fee based on costs to provide the service
Interviews with fire investigation officers and incident commanders	Charges for interviews between fire investigation officers and incidents commanders for the purpose of insurance and loss adjusters	Set fee based on costs to provide the service
Cross border charges	Charges for providing assistance to and from other Fire & Rescue for the provision of fire and rescue activities	MOU agreements - charging based on previous LGA charging Mechanism (Average of 3 years incidents - set rate per incident) unless agreed differently otherwise
Charging to other Local Authorities	Charges to other local Authorities for shared services and collaboration activates	MOU's with specific agreements. Charging based on actual costs incurred
Firebreak Course	Charging to provide 1 day or 1 week fire cadet courses to schools	1 day - £45 per student 1 week - £4,500 per course

		based on costs incurred to deliver courses
Primary Authority Scheme	Charging to local organisations for primary authority activities	Costs based on actual activity delivered
Portable Misting Systems	Charges for the installation and maintenance of portable misting systems installed into properties	Installation costs shared with house owner for the installation of the unit. Maintenance and call charges based on actual costs.
Co- Responding	Charges due to East of England Ambulance Service for attendance to co-responding incidents	Charges based on actual costs incurred by authority to attend the incident
Staff costs	Charging for costs incurred by the authority for an employee. E.g. private mileage	Charged based on expenditure incurred
Rents	Charging for rents for use of Authority properties	Charges based either on market value of property or nominal amount agreed
Cycle scheme	Charges to Employees for the provision of a salary sacrifice cycle to work scheme	Charges based on cycle scheme agreement
Awards sponsorship	sponsorship packages available for specific supplier to contribute and attend the annual Authority Awards evening	Gold Package - £2,500 Silver Package - £1000 Bronzer Package - £500 Only provide packages up to the cost incurred for holding the event.
Community Wellbeing Officer	Collaboration between EEAST and CFRS with 60/40 split.	Invoice monthly for EEAST contribution to salary and vehicle costs over 18 months @ £5432.99 per month
Building Safety Regulator	2 x members of staff trained with BSR to assist with work as required	Recharge cost of £99.35 per hour when used

New income generated and other income:

During 2024/25 cash generated from short-term cash investments far outweighed that budgeted. The Service benefitted from higher interest rates than originally budgeted but also sought out to maximise on those by close scrutiny of short-term cash flows and investment opportunities.

In 2024/25 Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue entered into an agreement with EMED for parking facilities, enabling CFRS to charge for some site running costs.

During 2024/25 CFRS increased the number of Fire Break courses made available to the community, resulting in an increase in income of £20k and this is being further promoted in 2025/26.

We are in the process of setting up our operational training centre to be an accredited apprenticeship centre for firefighters, which will provide income through the apprenticeship levy.

Our recent investment in a consultant with knowledge of grant applications has rewarded us with a Huntingdon District Council Community Infrastructure Levy grant of £700k for 2025/26 meaning there is less burden on our revenue capital contribution and borrowing requirements. We plan to utilise this expertise to seek further grant opportunities.

6.5 Outcome based activities

Outcome-based activities are CRMP-aligned non-incident activities, which include home fire safety visits, business fire safety audits & other business safety engagements, site specific risk information reports, community initiatives (such as care home visits, fire cadets and youth engagement), and non-incident blue-light collaboration.

The crews have measures for training, prevention, protection, operational risk and community engagement activities. The activities undertaken are aligned to our CRMP and are based upon our highest risks within our county. We also adapt these targets if required to allow for a flexible approach to emerging risks or requirements.

The service records activities in electronic systems of record such as CFRMIS, Community Fire safety (CFS), Technical Fire Safety (TFS) and Operational risk, and Systel for mobilisation data. The data is analysed through local tactical and strategic overview by using various digital reports.

WHOLETIME WATCH TARGETS	Achieved 22/23	23/24	24/25	comments
TRAINING - 8 hours per tour				No data held to confirm this time assigned to watches to maintain operational competence and to support Phase 2 Firefighters.

OPS JOBS - 20-30 per year dependent on station (target for 2024 320-480)	206	297	351	Total CFRMIS Ops jobs for 16 watches per year
TFS JOBS - 33 per watch per year (Target for 2024 528)	545	459	525	Total CFRMIS TFS jobs for 16 watches per year
CFS JOBS (HFSV) - 96 per Watch and B01 = 144 (target for 2024 1728)	1801	1773	1717	Total CFRMIS CFS HFSV visits for 16 watches per year
DAY CREWED STATION TARGETS				
TRAINING - 8 hours per week				No data held to confirm this time assigned to watches to maintain operational competence and to support Phase 2 Firefighters.
OPS JOBS - 20 per year (target for 2024 60)	28	55	58	Total CFRMIS Ops jobs for 3 stations per year
TFS JOBS - 66 per year (target for 2024 198)	189	182	193	Total CFRMIS TFS jobs for 3 stations per year
CFS JOBS (HFSV) - 180 = B05/B13 and 200 = A20 (target for 2024 560)	618	573	573	Total CFRMIS CFS HFSV visits for 3 stations per year
ROAMING PUMP TARGETS				
TRAINING - 14 hours per week				No data held to confirm this time assigned to watches to maintain operational competence and to support Phase 2 Firefighters.
OPS JOBS - 20 per appliance per year (target for 2024 40)	0	13	42	Total CFRMIS Ops jobs for 2 Roaming Pumps per year
CFS JOBS (HFSV) - 730 per Pump (2 per day) (target for 2024 1460)	958	1519	1505	Total CFRMIS CFS HFSV visits for 3 stations per year
ANTICIPATED TIME ALLOCATION				
WT STATIONS (hours per tour)				

Training: 8hrs minimum				No data held to confirm this time assigned to watches to maintain operational competence and to support Phase 2 Firefighters.
CFS: 3hrs minimum Community Engagement: 2hrs minimum	355.8	268.5	289.5	Total Community Engagement (excl HFSV) for 16 watches per year (Hours)
TFS: 3hrs minimum	627.7	881.5	959.8	Total hours per year
OPS: 4hrs minimum	407.9	682.5	775	Total hours per year
Ops Calls: 5hrs (10% of all time)	4324	3691	3972	Total hours per year (incidents attended)
Available: 4hrs (to include routines, emails, admin, bookings, personal study and additional hours for any of the above)				
7 DAY CREWING (Hours per week) (2 Watches)				
Training: 8hrs minimum				No data held to confirm this time assigned to watches to maintain operational competence and to support Phase 2 Firefighters.
CFS: 4hrs minimum Community Engagement: 2hrs minimum	65.4	98.1	155.8	Total Community Engagement (excl HFSV) for A20 per year (Hours)
TFS: 3hrs minimum	99.3	111.5	108.3	Total hours per year
OPS: 4hrs minimum	31.2	78.2	93.3	Total hours per year
Ops Calls: 5hrs (10% of all time)	401	283	326	Total hours per year (incidents attended)
Available: 7.5hrs (to include routines, emails, admin, bookings, personal study and additional hours for any of the above)				
5 DAY CREWING (Hours per week)				
Training: Minimum 8hrs minimum				

CFS: Minimum 8hrs minimum Community Engagement: 3hrs minimum	72.1	88.3	47.8	Total Community Engagement (excl HFSV) for B13 and B05 combined per year (Hours)
TFS: 6hrs minimum	180.3	241.4	259.1	Total hours per year
OPS: 4hrs minimum	57.3	77.7	69.1	Total hours per year
Ops Calls: 5hrs (10% of all time)	634	471	567	Total hours per year (incidents attended)
Available: 8hrs (to include routines, emails, admin, bookings, personal study and additional hours for any of the above)				

We record the outcome of the activity along with time spent and then have various levels of assurance in place for the work to be completed. As an example, we have period assurance in Technical Fire Safety activity, local assurance of quality in Operational risk and central oversight by our Operational Support Group, assurance of operational activity through Ops excellence meetings, centrally lead deep diving station assurance inspection programme. And local assurance for the completion of Community Fire Safety activity, soon to be enhanced by a central resource.

We continually look to improve efficiency in our activities. Most recently we have reintroduced ward-based work for watches which will focus attention and times; our Community and Operational Intelligence project is exploring enhanced connectivity in the field to reduce admin burden time. We have reintroduced a 2-visit per month measure for community engagement activity following the recent efficiencies in training requirements.

6.6 Workforce Capacity

We undertook a productivity capacity review in 2023/24. This provided some thoughts on maximum theoretical output. This led to an increase in activity. We review work activity monthly through 121's and quarterly through excellence meetings. This allows us to identify capacity issues and where there is opportunity to increase capacity. We are now looking to implement an app to track work activities on watches to account for other types of work activity. Our productivity measures are set by us, understanding how much time we allocate to each type of activity and is cross-checked against actual time for completion.

We have robust data through our various reports which are managed centrally through our Business Intelligence and Performance team.

The ability for us to understand how much time and how many activities people are completing has allowed us to scrutinise productivity. We revise our performance standards annually, which demonstrates how this process has increased measures each year.

At the end of 2024 we revised our training requirements (detailed in 5.8) which has released more time for crews to undertake Community engagement activities (detailed in 6.3). In 2023 we revised measures in Safe and Well visits for our roaming appliances and increased Technical Fire Safety output. In 2022/23 following a review and change to our AFA attendance policy we increased our Ops risk visit measures.

6.7 Meeting the 3% productivity Target.

Using the recent productivity review new minimum standards have been set and are reviewed on a quarterly basis. Review dates have been changed to ensure watches are maintaining progression towards requirements. Our baseline for activities is based upon useable time available once admin time and rest time has been incorporated.

We continue to review our activities as outlined in 6.5, looking at where and how productivity can be improved. In addition to these activities we have also had an increase in phase two firefighters in the county. Our crews have been able to spend more time supporting specific training requirements for probationary firefighters alongside supporting on-call stations with increased skill sets notably in water.

With reference to the table in 6.5, we have seen an increase in job completion output of 32% from 23/24 - 24/25 and an 8% in time spent on CFS, TFS, OPS work and OPs calls. This follows an increase in job completion of 25% from 22/23 - 23/24 and a 26% increase in time spent on the activities listed above. These increases in work delivery are in addition to increased demand for training delivery due to additional phase two FF's moving into the service. Our activities are targeted to our risk groups.

Additional community engagement activity has been added to each Whole-time crew. This additional community engagement work is listed for 2 hours per month per crew and is focused at school engagement reacting to growing prevention trends.

Agenda Item: 12

TO: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

FROM: Head of People - Laura Hutchcraft

PRESENTING OFFICER(S): Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer -
Matthew Warren
Head of People - Laura Hutchcraft

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DATE: 25 June 2025

UPDATE ON CULTURE RELATED WORK AT CAMBRIDGESHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE AND UPDATE ON STRUCTURE OF SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Fire Authority on the culture related work we have undertaken and to update on the structure of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Authority is asked to note the contents of this report and make comment as they deem appropriate.

3. Risk Assessment

- 3.1 **Political** – His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Standards of Behaviour: The Handling of Misconduct in Fire and Rescue Service’s report, published on 1 August 2024 follows the HMICFRS’s spotlight report on culture across the sector and other independent culture reviews.
- 3.1.1 Our 2023 HMICFRS inspection focused on culture and it is now mandated across the sector to disclose any cases related to culture that are current or within 12 months, directly to HMICFRS.
- 3.2 **Economic** – Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS) must ensure a positive workplace culture exists, to avoid investigation time (both internal and outsourced), high employee turnover and legal claims.
- 3.3 **Social** - by reviewing the report and implementing recommendations we can continue to demonstrate improvement towards our vision and values. We also align to our commitments in the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP)

2024/29 to improve our positive and inclusive culture making us an employer of choice.

3.4 **Legal** – compliance with our existing Code of Conduct, which was updated in October 2021 to reference the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Core Code of Ethics fire standard, outlines our culture in the expected behaviours for colleagues and is written into all contracts of employment.

3.4.1 The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from harassment or less favourable treatment in the workplace related to their protected characteristics. A strong culture of good conduct will ensure compliance with the law.

3.4.2 The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England requires that “fire and rescue authorities must give due regard to reports and recommendations made by HMICFRS and – if recommendations are made – prepare, update and regularly publish an action plan detailing how the recommendations are being actioned.” Therefore, there is a requirement to action these recommendations.

3.5 There is therefore significant political, social and legal risk in failing to demonstrate that we have duly considered these reports against our current practices.

4. Background

4.1 Ensuring a positive work culture has been a strategic focus in the Service for the last 10 years. In our current CRMP we have an organisational objective to maintain and improve our organisational culture. Through our review of risks and opportunities we have identified the following areas of strategic focus under ‘People’;

- maintain and improve our positive and inclusive organisational culture and employee engagement and make us an employer of choice. This includes looking at how we communicate and facilitating more opportunities for colleagues from across different areas of the Service to engage with each other.
- review how we manage, develop and diversify our people and our talent from within our Service, helping people to reach their full potential and supporting those who aspire to progress as leaders. This includes development pathways and programmes, talent management and succession planning.
- review our processes for recruitment and progression, including our community engagement activity, to ensure they are accessible to people from a range of backgrounds and that they enable us to improve diversity over time, to greater reflect the communities we serve.
- review our mechanisms for the management of safeguarding to protect our people and communities.

- review our processes and means for supporting the health and wellbeing of our people.

5. Culture Work

- 5.1 Culture continues to be heavily scrutinised at national level for fire and rescue services and we continue to work towards sustaining and improving our own organisational culture. This includes reinforcing our values through leadership behaviour and systems and proactively addressing where behaviours do not meet our values and expectations. Sustaining a strong, values-aligned culture is central to our work to attract and retain talent and our ability to mitigate reputational risk and deliver on our strategic objectives.
- 5.2 With engagement from employees, we have recently updated our three core values to **Welcoming, Respectful** and **Professional**. These align heavily to the [NFCC Core Code of Ethics](#) and our Code of Conduct for employees and Members respectively. We expect all colleagues and Fire Authority Members to consistently demonstrate these values in their behaviour to each other and to all members of the public.
- 5.3 We carry out an employee engagement survey every two years and ask questions that help us understand how our own employees perceive our culture and how they feel about working at CFRS. Seventy-five per cent of colleagues agreed CFRS has a positive culture, which was up 7 points from the previous survey, and the most repeated words to describe the culture at CFRS were welcoming, inclusive, friendly, supportive and positive. Eighty-four per cent of employees agreed everyone is welcome regardless of differences, which is 11 points higher than the fire and rescue service benchmark and 78% of respondents would recommend CFRS as a great place to work, 14 points up from the previous survey. Seven per cent of respondents had been on the receiving end of some form of misconduct by others in the past 12 months. Eighty-five per cent of managers agreed they felt comfortable having performance or behaviour conversations with their direct reports and 80% of employees feel able to raise at the time any inappropriate or offensive behaviour.
- 5.4 On 1 August 2024, HMIFRS published its report entitled Standards of Behaviour - The Handling of Misconduct in Fire and Rescue Services. The HMICFRS report followed a report in 2023 highlighting issues of unacceptable behaviour and culture. The 2024 report made 17 recommendations for fire and rescue services and a copy of our published action plan is available here; [HMICFRS Standards of Behaviour](#)
- 5.5 To summarise, we have completed 11 of the actions, have four in progress and for two of the actions we are awaiting further information and guidance nationally.

Outstanding Action	Update
Chief fire officers should make sure a programme of training is in place for all supervisors and managers on how to manage staff performance and welfare and how to raise an issue.	We are working on a training programme in conjunction with Learning and Organisational Development which will launch in 2026. All employees are aware of the People Team and stations have an assigned partner to talk through concerns.
Chief fire officers should introduce a case management system if they don't already have one. The case management system should allow data to be produced that will help them to better understand and oversee misconduct cases in their services.	We recently migrated our HR system to the cloud and are now exploring a case management system. We are mapping out the requirements before creation and implementation.
Chief fire officers should review the training their services provide for supervisors and managers who investigate misconduct issues at all levels.	We have scheduled ACAS training and will supplement this with bespoke misconduct training facilitated by the People Team. A member of the People Team supports all misconduct cases, so appropriate support is provided.
Fire and rescue authorities and chief fire officers should make sure all service managers and members of fire and rescue authorities who hear appeals receive appropriate training. Chief fire officers should make sure services have a consistent approach to hearing appeals.	Appeal training is scheduled In July for those who undertake appeals. A member of the People Team supports all appeals, so appropriate support is provided.

- 5.6 To provide assurance to the Fire Authority, on 6 May 2025, RSM (internal auditors) completed an audit which reviewed our misconduct processes and found reasonable assurance.
- 5.7 The audit found that the controls surrounding misconduct processes are well-designed including a suite of policies, procedures, guidance and templates in relation to misconduct processes in place and accessible to employees. They noted that CFRS has a case file closing review meeting to review recommendations and lessons learnt for formal cases. In addition, a case review and learning outcome tracker is maintained on SharePoint to monitor implementation of recommendations and lessons learnt actions as relevant. Investigations training with ACAS (external party) is in place for line managers and investigating managers. RSM confirmed that CFRS has established the Professional Standards Board (PSB) for the discussing, monitoring and overall oversight of misconduct cases. They also noted that an overview of the current cases by type and date period is reported to the SLT Planning, Performance and Review and Authority meetings as part of the Notes for People - SLT Quarterly reports.
- 5.8 The audit recommended eight management actions, six of low priority and two medium priority which are;

- **A review and update of misconduct related policies.** CFRS has policies and processes in place, to provide clear guidance, ensure consistency, and support fair and transparent decision-making across the Service. We recognise the importance of ensuring these policies are compliant with legislation and are reviewed regularly. The CFRS People Team maintain a policy pipeline, which ensures that policies are created systematically, comply with legislative updates, and remain current and effective over time. We recognise that some of our policies remain legally compliant, but outdated, and therefore we are working to update these as a priority. The Head of People, People Manager, Monitoring Officer and Legal advisor and the People Partner – Culture meet bi-weekly to update progress on policies.
- **Consideration for the implementation of a case management system.** The People Team recently completed a project to move our HR system to the cloud. Now this has been successfully completed, we are looking at the additional modules which can be facilitated on the platform and are currently in the requirements gathering stage.

5.9 An action plan has been created, with completion dates and action owners assigned. The action plan will be reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

6. Learning and Organisational Development

- 6.1 We have started a two-year project that seeks to progress the work we have already completed aimed at improving all offerings that support personal and career development. This work will also contribute to areas of focus identified by HMICFRS in recent reports. We want all colleagues to have valuable conversations about their development to enable them to fulfil their potential. Initially this work starts with redefining our personal development review (PDR) conversations and the process that support this. These should support individual development and meet the Services performance and succession planning needs. Training will also be delivered to service managers to support them in successfully facilitating these conversations for us. We are also looking at career pathways and promotion processes ensuring these are clear, transparent and consistently applied. Finally, we will ensure there is robust governance with oversight of our workforce planning and talent management pool. We will do this by producing a clear strategy and take a more integrated approach to our current people planning arrangements. This will ensure we are effectively able to meet the needs of our workforce plans and strategic objectives.
- 6.2 We use NFCC development programmes tailored to the needs of our developing first line and middle leaders. These are supported by our Learning and Organisational Development Team and senior leaders to bring diversity of thoughts and role model our commitment to development.
- 6.3 We have developed a “focused development pathway” which provides an alternative development option for promotion to the station commander role.

We are running the second iteration of that pathway this year showing our commitment both to leadership and development and to innovative solutions to improve promotional pathways.

7. Recruitment and Community Engagement

- 7.1 Attraction initiatives from recruitment and the communication and engagement team have seen a significant increase in the number of On-Call candidates compared to 2023 and 2024, which has helped build a solid candidate pipeline, however applicants in February and March were below previous years.
- 7.2 Increasing the diversity of our workforce continues to be a key priority for the Recruitment and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team. We are currently engaged with an external company to conduct some focus groups in diverse communities to gather opinions and attitudes about cultural perceptions with fire service recruitment in their local community. One focus group has taken place so far and further workshops are being planned. Once a final report is received, we will implement the learning and adapt our attraction strategy accordingly.
- 7.3 We have recently launched our wholetime recruitment campaign, recruiting for a holding list, due to our succession planning predictions of requiring more wholetime employees next year. Applications go live from 14 July 2025, and we are ensuring our recruitment campaign is accessible to people from a range of backgrounds. Equality impact assessments will be completed for the different stages of the wholetime recruitment process to ensure that we are removing potential barriers within it.
- 7.4 A risk assurance review is being undertaken in our recruitment team, to review current recruitment processes and the function to understand the positive practices and to also identify opportunities for improvement.

8. Safeguarding

- 8.1 Fire and rescue service's eligibility to request DBS checks changed in July 2023. Due to the inclusion of fire and rescue authority employees in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (Exceptions) Order 1975; eligibility for a minimum of Standard Level of DBS check is available for all who work or volunteer for fire and rescue authorities.
- 8.2 The People Team, Recruitment Team and Safeguarding Team have ensured that CFRS has met the legislation by completing the relevant DBS check on existing employees and prospective employees. We are currently at 99% compliance rate, which is overseen by the PSB. We have also created an action plan to ensure that we meet the guidance of renewing all employees DBS every three years.
- 8.3 We have in place a collaborative partnership with Essex Fire and Rescue Service who provide us with safeguarding and peer support. This arrangement brings many benefits including an independent safeguarding

audit which has just been completed against the safeguarding fire standard. This audit highlights our progress over the last two years, gives us an action plan for improvement and demonstrates our commitment to protecting the most vulnerable in our communities.

9. Health and Wellbeing

- 9.1 Implementation of a new Occupational Health (OH) system has made significant efficiency improvements for both OH colleagues and for managers in the wider service. It has also enabled more transparency with referrals and improved data governance.
- 9.2 The implementation of Trauma Welfare Support (TWS) to replace the previous Trauma Incident Management (TRiM) process has been well received by colleagues across the Service and is delivering improved support to operational colleagues post traumatic incidents.
- 9.3 The addition of a psychological wellbeing advisor to provide counselling services in-house has continued to improve mental health support. The services are now more easily available to colleagues, with additional specialist external counselling still being available when required, although reliance on this has been considerably reduced.
- 9.4 The Service has continued to provide training and advice to all colleagues on issues such as menopause, fitness and health related issues. These have been delivered as bespoke training sessions, personal interventions and at 'know your numbers' events. These sessions will continue as they have been well received by colleagues.

10. Governance

10.1 People Excellence

10.1.1 The People Excellence quarterly meeting is chaired by the Head of People and enables the monitoring of achievement against the excellence statements as detailed below and CRMP People Excellence objectives. This also provides quarterly exception reporting to the Directors via the SLT meetings.

10.1.2 The statements under People Excellence are;

- we have a culture that embodies our values and expected behaviours,
- we listen and engage with our people, communities and our partners to improve what we do,
- we develop our people and encourage them to reach their potential,
- we continually improve the service we deliver.

10.1.3 People Excellence attendees also review, analyse and monitor data and metrics to identify any trends or any proactive work which is required. The digital team are producing a culture dashboard to support CFRS with better oversight of the data and trends.

10.2 Professional Standards Board (PSB)

- 10.2.1 In September 2024, CFRS established a PSB. The purpose of the PSB is to oversee all investigations of concerns raised within CFRS or from an external source (including, but not limited to grievances, disciplinarys, complaints and whistleblowing concerns that are values, behaviour and culture related) in order to learn lessons and implement organisational change where required to meet the high expectations of our employees in terms of culture and values. A paper was taken to the Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 15 January 2025, which provides further details.
- 10.2.2 In our April PSB meeting, Councillor Simone Taylor attended on behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. She reported that the meeting offered reassurance to the Service and Fire Authority that misconduct and professional standards are being taken seriously at CFRS and are receiving oversight at the appropriate level.
- 10.2.3 A report will be presented at the next Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting in July 2025 to outline key trends and insights and a new lead Member will be requested.

11. Structure Changes

- 11.1 The appointment of the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer in July 2024, triggered a review of structures within the SLT. An interim structure was established to allow the new Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer time to assess individual and collective accountabilities.
- 11.2 The initial immediate change to the structure was driven by his appointment as Head of Paid Service meant he could no longer continue as the Authority's Section 151 Officer/Chief Financial Officer. This change led to a wider review of resilience arrangements in statutory officer roles, with deputy Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officers being nominated and approved by the Fire Authority in December 2024. The appointment of Ursula Bird as the Authority's Section 151 Officer/Chief Financial Officer, led to a formal review of the Head of Finance role to ensure the responsibilities were properly integrated. This review led to a formal review of grade and alignment with the Service's Assistant Director salary structures (excluding the operational response elements).
- 11.3 In addition to these arrangements, the appointment of a new Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer has led to several appointments needing to be conducted in order to complete the SLT structure; the agreed structure is shown in Appendix 1. It is formed of the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer and Directors (Principal Officer team). They are advised and supported by the Assistant Directors. The Assistant Director of People is the one post that remains temporary following the departure of the previous postholder in September 2024. The recruitment for this position is on-going

and it is envisaged that it will be concluded by mid-July to complete the broader SLT structure.

- 11.4 In addition to the SLT, the Head of Learning and Organisational Development currently attends SLT meetings as the Service continues to focus on its cultural journey. The role is vital in shaping how we develop our future leaders, identifying talent and succession planning for the Service. This interaction with the SLT is seen as critical to ensure alignment.

12. Conclusion

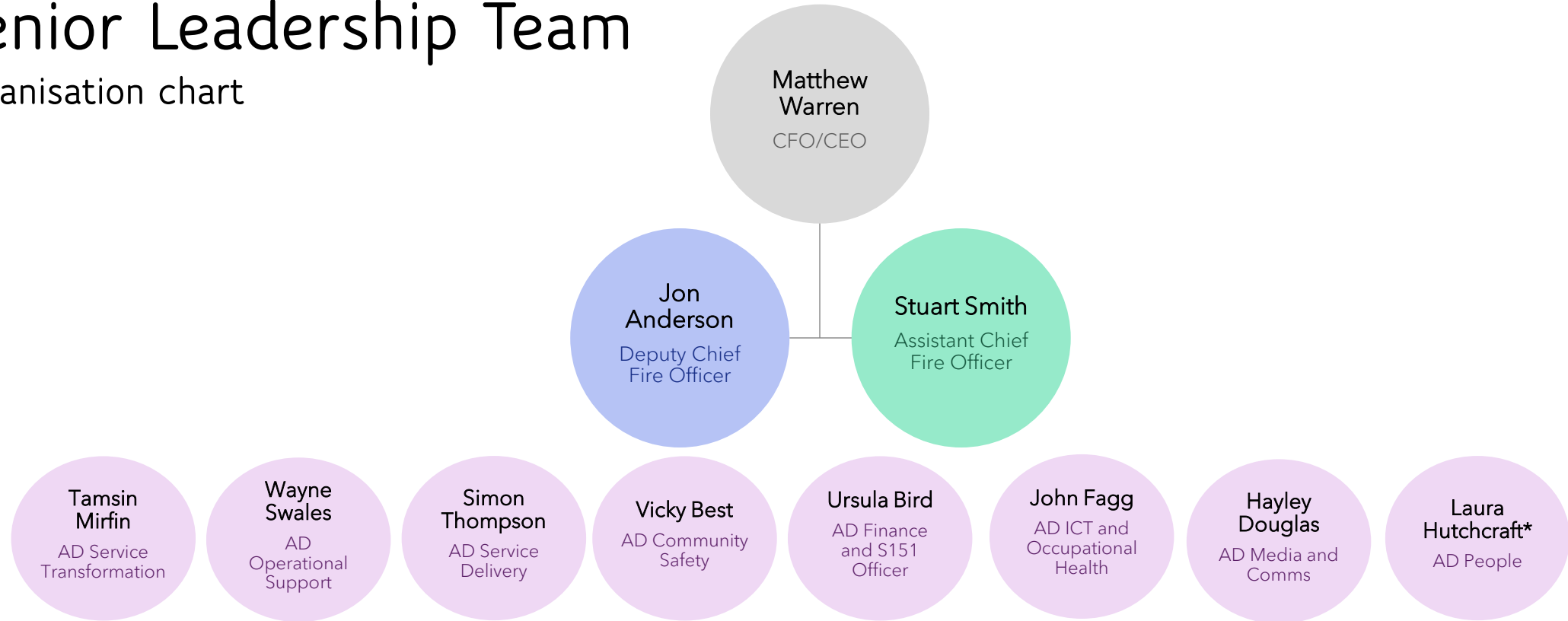
- 12.1 To summarise, the Service is doing well against the recommendations from HMICFRS; HMICFRS has recognised our good practices and culture in our most recent inspection. Our latest Employee Engagement survey also recognises the culture we have, with 88% of employees noting a positive culture at CFRS. The additional work we have planned for the next year builds on this positivity.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Documents	Location	Contact Officer
HMICFRS Standards of Behaviour: The Handling of Misconduct in Fire and Rescue Service's Report	HMICFRS Standards of Behaviour	Laura Hutchcraft Head of People laura.hutchcraft@cambsfire.gov.uk
NFCC Core Code of Ethics	NFCC Core Code of Ethics	
Fire Authority and Overview and Scrutiny Committee Reports and Minutes - various	Culture update paper - Overview & Scrutiny - Jan 2025	

Senior Leadership Team

Organisation chart



Statutory Officers

Head of Paid Service - Matthew Warren
Monitoring Officer - Shahin Ismail
Deputy Monitoring Officer - Tamsin Mirfin
Section 151 Officer - Ursula Bird
Deputy Section 151 Officer - Josh Muir

TO: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

FROM: Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer - Matthew Warren

PRESENTING OFFICER(S): Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer
Matthew Warren

01480 444619

email: matthew.warren@cambsfire.gov.uk

DATE: 25 June 2025

DRAFT PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2025/26

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to the Fire Authority the Pay Policy Statement for 2025/26, for approval.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Authority is asked to approve the draft Pay Policy Statement 2025/26, attached at Appendix 1, for publication.

3. Risk Assessment

- 3.1 **Political** – in recent years remuneration has increasingly come under the spotlight. In approving and publishing their policy, the Authority is demonstrating its commitment to transparency whilst being mindful of future changes to ensure flexibility of their approach toward remuneration levels.
- 3.2 **Legislative** – the Authority is now required to produce a Pay Policy Statement in accordance with the Localism Act 2011; any statements must be published on our website.

4. Background

- 4.1 Since financial year 2013/14 the Localism Act 2011 (s38) has required a relevant local authority to produce an annual pay policy statement. This follows Will Hutton's 2011 Review of Fair Pay in the Public Sector which has been a key driver for the Government's aim for greater transparency and value for money in terms of senior public sector pay.
- 4.2 Having been reviewed and strengthened in line with recommendations made following a Member-Led Review of Pay Policy in January 2014, the attached policy meets the legal requirements and clearly sets out the Authority's

position in terms not only of its remuneration for Principal Officers but also other employees, including the lowest paid.

- 4.3 The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 require the Service to publish information relating to any gender pay gaps. Whilst compliant with this requirement, based on recommendations arising from an independent 2019 equal pay audit and subsequent approval from the Authority, the Service implemented a new management band pay structure for professional support service roles in 2020. This action further demonstrates our commitment to best practice, equality and transparency.
- 4.4 The Pay Policy Statement is based on known information relating to the previous financial year; in this statement the pay multiple at Paragraph 1.7 has decreased from that in the previous statement from 1.7.73 to 1.7.37.
- 4.5 Members will be aware that the Service continues to face several significant financial planning challenges not least of which is nationally negotiated pay awards for employees. Last month the National Employers for the National Joint Council (NJC) announced that the Fire Brigades Union had agreed the 2025 pay offer and therefore our Grey Book employees will receive a 3.2% pay increase with effect from 1 July 2025 (Circular EMP/2/25 refers). Discussions around Gold Book pay have not yet concluded.
- 4.6 At the time of writing, the National Employers for the NJC for Local Government Services had made a full and final offer to the recognised unions (GMB, UNISON and UNITE) of 3.2%, effective from 1 April 2025 for Green Book employees; this has not yet been agreed.
- 4.7 Once finalised the data in Paragraphs 4.5 and 4.6 above will form part of the next Pay Policy Statement.
- 4.8 In the meantime, the Service will continue to proactively monitor and report on the national landscape whilst working with key stakeholders to ensure its financial plans are as robust as possible.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Documents	Location	Contact Officer
Localism Act 2011 NJC Circulars 2025	Hinchingsbrooke Cottage Brampton Road Huntingdon	Matthew Warren Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer 01480 444619 matthew.warren@cambsfire.gov.uk

PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2025/26**Introduction**

This statement of Pay Policy is provided in line with Section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011 and is authorised by Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority.

Purpose

The purpose of this statement is to provide transparency to the Pay Policy adopted by Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service.

Accountability

The Fire Authority is responsible for establishing the Pay Policy for the employees of Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service.

The Fire Authority is directly responsible for reviewing the pay structure for Principal Officers.

The Chief Fire Officer has delegated responsibility to establish appropriate grading and salaries for all other employees of Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service.

Pay Negotiating Bodies

The Authority applies the annual pay settlements negotiated by the:

- National Joint Council for Local Government Services;
- National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services;
- National Joint Council for Brigade Managers of Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services.

The Authority undertakes negotiation with its recognised representative bodies on local agreements which affect the terms and conditions of its employees and which may include agreement of local allowances.

The representative bodies recognised for negotiating purposes are the:

- Fire Brigades Union;
- Fire Officers Association;
- Fire Leaders Association;
- Fire and Rescue Services Association;
- UNISON.

Section One - General Pay Policy

- 1.1 The Authority applies the pay scales adopted by the respective National Joint Councils (NJC) for all its employees up to the level of Principal Officer.
- 1.2 Local pay arrangements for Principal Officers are established through the provisions of the NJC for Brigade Managers of Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services and are reviewed annually by the Fire Authority. Further details are set out in Section 2.

- 1.3 The number and level of roles within the Service are determined by the Fire Authority on advice from the Chief Fire Officer.
- 1.4 Pay Policy reflects the different roles, duties and responsibilities undertaken by service employees. This is reflected in pay differentials between different groups of workers and between workers in the same pay group. The pay bands established are based on nationally applied role maps (operational employees) or grading bands established through a job evaluation process (professional support services employees).
- 1.5 Pay Policy reflects adherence to the principle of “equal pay for work of equal value.” Since April 2018 the Service has complied with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and reported on any gender pay gaps; it will continue to do this annually and is committed to taking relevant action to reduce any such gaps.
- 1.6 In applying its policy, the Authority will work to eliminate any elements which may, directly or indirectly, discriminate unfairly on the grounds of sex, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, age, marital status, having dependants, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, trade union activity, disability or any other factors. Part-time workers receive the same pay and remuneration as full-time workers undertaking the same job role on a pro-rata basis.

Generic Pay Information

1.7 Pay multiples

The idea of publishing the ratio of the pay of an organisation's top earner to that of its lowest earner has been recommended to support the principles of Fair Pay (Will Hutton 2011) and transparency.

The current lowest ratio is 1:7.37; this will be monitored each year within the Statement of Pay Policy.

Section Two - Pay Policy for Principal Officers

2.1 General Principles

- 2.1.1 National pay awards negotiated by the NJC for Brigade Managers of Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services are applied by the Authority on an annual basis. This represents a cost-of-living increase.
- 2.1.2 The Performance Review Committee undertakes an annual review of performance, in accordance with the performance system in place for Principal Officers (Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Assistant Chief Fire Officer). Members of this Committee agree a series of objectives at the start of the financial year; these objectives are formally assessed by the Committee at the end of the financial year.
- 2.1.3 Performance related pay for Area Commanders was paid in 2024/25 at a rate of 4% of their basic pay plus flexi and Group Commanders were paid 3% of their basic pay plus flexi, weekend resilience and positive hours.

2.2 Establishing the Pay of the Chief Fire Officer

2.2.1 The base salary for the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer role at Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service is currently set at £179,739 per annum. This is established through a local pay review, details of which are set out below.

2.2.2 Additionally a car is provided for operational and business use and where applicable, pension contributions are paid at the appropriate rates as detailed in Paragraph 3.7.1.

2.3 Local Pay Review

2.3.1 In 2008 the Authority, through its Performance Review Committee, approved a methodology for the review of Principal Officer pay based upon a comparator for the role of Chief Fire Officer. The review compared the pay levels of fire and rescue authorities and established a benchmark salary; this was updated in 2016.

2.4 Other Principal Officer Pay

2.4.1 The Authority has established a policy that Principal Officer roles below that of Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer are paid as follows:

- Deputy Chief Fire Officer - £156,706
- Assistant Chief Fire Officer - £145,873.56

Salaries of newly appointed Officers will be reviewed and determined in line with the conditions of the local pay review.

2.5 Publication of Principal Officer Pay

2.5.1 Details of Principal Officer Pay are published on the Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service internet site and can be found by clicking on the section Home – Transparency – Senior Officer Pay.

2.6 Principal Officer – Internal Pay Comparators

2.6.1 In 2024/25, the lowest paid role within the Service was £24,404 (full time equivalent); the highest paid role within the Service was £179,739. The Service does not have a policy of direct correlation between the highest and lowest paid roles (it does not apply a pay multiple in establishing Principal Officer pay).

2.6.2 The ratio of pay between the highest paid employee of the Service is set out in Paragraph 1.7 above.

2.6.3 The pay, including rota allowances, of the most senior officer below Principal Officer (Area Commander) is 53% (with CPD) of Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer pay.

2.6.4 The pay of the most senior professional support services role below Principal Officer is 40% of Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer pay.

2.6.5 It should be considered that the salaries of Principal Officers and other flexible duty officers include an allowance for the associated additional responsibility and hours of work required to provide duty cover on a 24/7, 365 basis.

2.7 Severance Payments

- 2.7.1 Principal Officers are subject to the same severance arrangements as other service employees; these are set out in more detail in Section 6.

Section Three - Pay Policy for Firefighters

- 3.1 This policy applies to wholetime and On-Call firefighters and combined control staff.
- 3.2 National pay awards negotiated by the NJC for firefighters of Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services are applied by the Authority on an annual basis. In March 2024, the Service received notification from the NJC that it had agreed a pay increase of 4% effective from 1 July 2024.
- 3.3 Pay is based upon the role undertaken and the stage of competence of each individual for example, trainee, in development and competent.
- 3.4 A formal assessment of individuals is undertaken at each stage of development before moving to the next salary level. Maintenance of competence is a requirement at all levels of the Service and is reviewed annually.
- 3.5 Progression between roles is subject to a competitive selection process.

3.6 On-Call Duty System

- 3.6.1 Employees employed on the On-Call duty system are paid an annual retaining fee based on their availability and receive subsequent payments based on attendance at incidents and other activity including attendance at drill nights, disturbance fees, turnout fees, attendance and training fees, other authorised duties and compensation for loss of earnings. All payments are made in line with nationally agreed pay scales and rates.

3.7 Other Allowances and Payments

- 3.7.1 Pension contributions. The Service makes an employer contribution to the Firefighters Pension Scheme 2015 of 37.6% of salary. The employee made a contribution in 2024/25 of between 12.9% and 14.5% of pensionable pay for the scheme. Combined control staff contributions are detailed at Paragraph 4.7.1.
- 3.7.2 Flexible duty payment. Under national conditions of service, a flexible duty payment is made to Station Commanders, Group Commanders and Area Commanders who provide flexible duty cover on a 24/7 rota basis and who are available to attend emergency incidents when required and provide Duty Officer cover. This is paid at an allowance of 20% of base salary.
- 3.7.3 Area Commander rota payment. Under local arrangements, Area Commanders are paid an additional 9% for additional responsibilities carried out under their shared operational duties rota with Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service.
- 3.7.4 Acting up. An allowance is paid on a daily basis where employees temporarily undertake the duties of a higher graded role. This is paid at the rate applicable to the role being undertaken; employees must be qualified to undertake the higher-level role.
- 3.7.5 Overtime rates. These are paid for roles below Station Commander at time and a half or double time on public holidays or time may be granted in lieu at the appropriate enhanced

rate. We also pay pre-arranged overtime which would be at single time for Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service meetings and voluntary development training courses or overtime rates for mandatory critical need courses.

3.7.6 Detachments. We pay overtime for travelling time for standby duties (when operational employees are required to provide cover at other stations) based on a matrix depending on station travelled to.

3.7.7 Recall to duty. These are paid at a minimum of three hours at double time rates.

3.7.8 Continuous Professional Development Payment (CPD). Under national conditions of service, a CPD payment is approved annually on an individual basis for employees with more than five years of service (since attaining competence in role). It is an annual payment of £719 for wholtime and for On-Call it is pro-rata based on availability (100%/75%/50%/25%) up to 31 December 2024 and from 1 January 2025 bandings are 5%/7.5%/10%/12.5%/15%. The payment is made by application and authorised at middle or senior management level. To be eligible, an individual must demonstrate evidence of CPD over and beyond that required for competence and have a good attendance, performance and disciplinary record.

3.7.9 Additional Responsibility Allowance (ARA). We pay Training Centre employees 5% of basic pay (non pensionable) for providing weekend training courses. We also pay Officers with a HDIM qualification £500 per annum (paid monthly) and firefighters with the 'Safe to Ride' qualification £500 per annum (paid monthly). We pay On-Call Watch Commanders for additional administration duties, equivalent to one hour per week (paid monthly).

3.7.10 Local resilience payment. A local payment is made for employees, at Station/Group Commander level, volunteering to provide operational cover for periods when the Service struggles to provide an operational response owing to external factors for example, industrial action. Current payments are £1,216.69 per person per annum.

3.7.11 Travel allowance. A local allowance to cover additional travel costs when an operational employee is compulsorily transferred to another work base including substantive and temporary promotion. A payment is made of the difference in mileage undertaken and is paid for four years (compulsory transfer). We also pay our professional support service employees an excess travel payment for the mileage as well as a travelling time allowance.

3.7.12 Reimbursement of medical fees. This only applies to employees whose service commenced before November 1994. The reimbursement of fees covers dental, optical and prescription fees and is paid at NHS rates.

3.7.13 Holiday Pay. Any entitlement to holiday pay will be paid annually.

Section Four - Pay Policy for Professional Support Services Roles

4.1 This policy applies to employees covered by the NJC for Local Government Services and includes all non-operational staff.

4.2 National pay awards negotiated by the NJC for Local Government Services are applied by the Authority on an annual basis and represent a cost-of-living increase. For 2024/25 the NJC for Local Government Services agreed an uplift of £1,290 per full time employee be applied; pro-rata for part time employees.

- 4.3 The pay structure for non-management band professional support staff is aligned to a spinal column point system. Spinal column points are configured into groups to provide incremental pay points. The incremental rises occur on 1 April and employees progress incrementally through their respective grade until they reach the maximum point.
- 4.4 In 2020, Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service implemented a new management band pay scale for professional support staff in order to replace the previous wide and significantly overlapping management pay bands with narrower bands which have no overlap and even, incremental steps, with an equal number of steps within each grade. The new management band pay structure resulted from the recommendations of an independent equal pay audit undertaken in 2019. Movement along the existing pay grade is not automatic but depends on assessment against prevailing market rates for similar roles and must be authorised by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer. A 4% pay award was applied by the NJC for Local Government Services from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.
- 4.5 Starting salary for non-management band roles may be uplifted along the incremental structure if experience and knowledge warrant this approach. Starting salary on management band scales (which each cover 16 scale points) may exceptionally be uplifted beyond the top of the lower quartile, if experience and market pressures warrant this, at the discretion of the relevant Chief Officer. Where this is the case, justification will be recorded by the recruitment team. Movement between grades is through a competitive selection process.
- 4.6 Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service apply the Hay analytical job evaluation process that systematically ranks each job objectively and fairly. The Hay Group evaluation system is a recognised best practice, non-discriminatory method of ranking jobs against a predetermined scale. The evaluation process assesses all roles and allocates an appropriate grade according to the duties and responsibilities undertaken. A review of the grading of a role is undertaken where permanent, substantial and material changes have increased the level of duties and responsibilities attached to the role. Any substantive changes to grade or pay scale must be authorised by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer.
- 4.7 Other Allowances and Payments**
- 4.7.1 Pension contributions. The Service makes an employer contribution of 16.9% of salary for all members of the Local Government Pension Scheme. The employee will make a contribution of between 5.5% and 12.5% of pensionable pay depending on their salary band.
- 4.7.2 Additional responsibility. An allowance, at the discretion of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, may be requested and paid if an employee is required to fill a higher-level role.
- 4.7.3 Honorarium. A discretionary payment may be made, with the approval the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, for duties undertaken outside of the normal job requirements for an extended period of time.
- 4.7.4 On-Call. Employees required to attend work outside of normal office hours or to be on-call are paid an allowance depending on the nature of the arrangements.
- 4.7.5 Disturbance. An allowance is paid when an employee is required to move work location (see also Paragraph 3.7.11).
- 4.7.6 Holiday Pay. Any entitlement to holiday pay will be paid annually.

Section Five - Policy on Re-engagement and Pension Abatement

- 5.1 This applies where individuals retire from the Service, draw pension benefits and are subsequently re-engaged into the same or other role with Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service. The policies set out below apply to all employees; re-engagement of Principal Officers is subject to Fire Authority consideration and approval.
- 5.2 The Service operates a Re-engagement Policy, which has been authorised by the Authority, for operational employees. This permits re-engagement if there is a tangible benefit for public safety. During any period of re-engagement, the employee has full abatement of pension i.e. when combined with salary their pension cannot make the employee earn more than in their previous role. This complies with the provisions of the Firefighters Pension Scheme and is in accordance with the revised National Framework for England.
- 5.3 The Service operates a Flexible Retirement Policy for employees in the Local Government Pension Scheme which allows employees to take their pension benefits and be re-employed on reduced hours or at a lower grade without abatement of pension. This complies with the provisions of the Local Government Pension Scheme.
- 5.4 Where employees who have taken retirement benefits (either as former service employees or employees of another public sector organisation) apply for a professional support services role with Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service as part of a competitive selection process and are successful, abatement of pension could be applied.

Section Six - Severance Payments

- 6.1 In the event of redundancy, the Service applies statutory redundancy payments under the provisions of its Redundancy Policy. This applies to both compulsory and voluntary redundancy situations. All relevant legislative requirements are adhered to.
- 6.2 In 2024/25 there were one settlement agreement, when the employment of an employee was terminated by the Service, or in settlement of a claim. Such agreements are subject to confidentiality clauses.

Early Payment of Pension Benefits

- 6.3 Under the provisions of the Local Government Pension Scheme employees aged over 55 who are made redundant, or who are retired from Service on the grounds of efficiency, are awarded early payment of pension benefits.
- 6.4 In this case, a charge is made against the Fire Authority by the pensions fund; this is referred to as actuarial strain.
- 6.5 In 2024/25 no agreements for the early payment of pension were made by the Service.

TO: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

FROM: Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer - Matthew Warren

PRESENTING OFFICER(S): Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer
Matthew Warren

Telephone: 01480 444619

email: matthew.warren@cambsfire.gov.uk

DATE: 25 June 2025

PROPOSED CHANGES TO CAMBRIDGESHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE INTERNAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURE FOR FIREFIGHTER PENSION SCHEMES

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Fire Authority with an overview of proposed changes to the Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP) for firefighter pension schemes.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Authority is asked to;
 - 2.1.1 provide views and comments on the contents of this report,
 - 2.1.2 approve the proposed changes (with immediate effect) as outlined in Paragraph 5 below,
 - 2.1.3 subject to approval of recommendation 2.1.2 above, authorise the Monitoring Officer to make the necessary amendments to the constitutional documents, namely the Terms of Reference and Appointments to Committees, Outside Organisations and Other Bodies.

3. Risk Assessment

- 3.1 **Legal** – the Pensions Act 1995, as amended by the Pensions Act 2004 and 2007, requires all occupational pension schemes to have an internal procedure for dealing with complaints or disputes.

4. Background

- 4.1 The Service's current IDRP document (Appendix 1), has not been reviewed since 2017 and therefore contains out of date and incorrect information.

- 4.2 Pension legislation has been through significant change in recent years. The report presented to the Authority in February 2025 and attached as Appendix 2, detailed the changes, along with how the Service was and continues to seek to address them (Agenda Item 6 and Minute 146 of the meeting held on 13 February 2025 refer). The IDR process must support current and retired members through the process of processing remedy payments.

5. Proposed Changes and Rationale

- 5.1 Following a review of the current IDR document the following changes are proposed;

- 5.1.1 **Proposed Change 1** - the current IDR document only refers to the 1992 Firefighters Pension Scheme and therefore needs amending to include references to the 2006 and 2015 pension schemes (as per legislation).
- 5.1.2 **Proposed Change 2** – in 2021 the Service changed pension providers therefore any reference to West Northamptonshire Pensions needs amending to the current provider, West Yorkshire Pension Fund.
- 5.1.3 **Proposed Change 3** – the Pensions Advisory Service (TPAS) was a British government body that provided free information, advice and guidance on state, company and individual pension schemes. Additionally, they helped any member of the public who had a problem, complaint or dispute with their occupational or private pension arrangement. In 2019 TPAS was merged to create its successor, the Money and Pensions Service (MaPS). Therefore, references and contact details for TPAS need to be amended to MaPS who continue to provide free, impartial money and pensions guidance directly to consumers online and by telephone.
- 5.1.4 **Proposed Change 4** – Stage One applications are submitted to the Chief Fire Officer for decision within two months of the date of receipt. The response includes an explanation of the right to have the disagreement referred for consideration by the Fire Authority Appeals (Pensions) Committee within 28 days of the date of receipt of the decision (Stage Two). It is proposed that, moving forward, Stage One applications are submitted to the Deputy Chief Fire Officer for decision within two months of the date of receipt and should it progress to Stage Two that it is referred for consideration by the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer in consultation with the Fire Authority Chair.

The proposed change to who hears a Stage Two referral is based on best practice within the sector (other fire and rescue service authorities have done similar given the operational nature of the IDR) and the complexities of the firefighter pension schemes that would require significant and detailed Member briefings in time sensitive processes. The proposal will maintain independence as the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer is removed from any of the earlier stages and the removal of the Fire Authority Appeals (Pensions) Committee will not affect the political balance on the remaining committees.

- 5.1.5 **Proposed Change 5** – the current procedure instructs submitters to send applications and correspondence to the Service’s Scrutiny and Assurance Manager via post. The Service now has a dedicated mailbox to deal with pension related matters. It is therefore proposed this is changed to the Head of Payroll and Pensions via pensions@cambsfire.gov.uk; this will ensure individuals receive an appropriate, timely response.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Documents	Location	Contact Officer
Fire Authority Reports and Minutes - various	Hinchingbrooke Cottage Brampton Road Huntingdon	Steve Beaton Head of Payroll and Pensions 01480 444500 steve.beaton@cambsfire.gov.uk

Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service

The Firefighters' Pension Scheme 1992

INTERNAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

INTERNAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Section 5.0 of the Pensions Act 1995 required all occupational pension schemes (other than very small schemes) to introduce formal internal dispute resolution (IDR) procedures for dealing with complaints from scheme members.
- 1.2 The detailed procedures to be followed are now set out in Section 50B of the Pensions Act 1995, which was inserted by section 273 of the Pensions Act 2004 and amended by Section 16 of the Pensions Act 2007, and the Occupational Pension Schemes (Internal Dispute Resolution Procedures Consequential and Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2008. Together, these Regulations are referred to in this document as 'the IDR Regulations'.
- 1.3 A copy of the IDR Regulations is available for inspection at the Headquarters of Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service. The documents are also available on Legislation.gov.uk, the website managed by The National Archives on behalf of HM Government at:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/35/section/273>
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2007/22/section/16>
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/si/2008/649/made>
- 1.4 The IDR procedures have direct application to firefighters' pensions. Fire and Rescue Authorities are required to follow the procedures the IDR Regulations lay down in all disputes other than appeals under Rule H2 of Schedule 2 to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme Order 1992 (appeal to board of medical referees).
- 1.5 Appeals under Rule H2 of Schedule 2 to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme Order 1992 (appeal to board of medical referees) are specifically excluded from the IDR procedures by Regulation 4 of the Occupational Pension Schemes (Internal Dispute Resolution Procedures Consequential and Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2008.

2. What are the IDR procedures?

- 2.1 If you have a complaint about the Firefighters' Pension Scheme, other than a complaint about a decision on medical retirement taken under Rule H1 of Schedule 2 to the Firemen's Pension Scheme Order 1992 and are a person who comes within the categories of people listed in Section 3 below, the IDR Regulations give you the right to have the complaint considered and decided, and to receive a written explanation of the decision. There will be two levels for dealing with complaints:

Stage One: is an application to a "specified person" for a decision. The person specified by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority is the Chief Fire Officer; and

Stage Two: is the right of appeal to the Fire Authority Appeals Committee against the Stage One decision,

- 2.2 The forms at Annex A (for Stage One) and Annex B (for Stage Two) are provided for your use in order to simplify the task of adhering to the procedures.

3. Who can make an application under the new arrangements?

- 3.1 The IDR procedures are available to you if you are:

- an active, deferred or pensioner member of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme
- a widow, widower or surviving dependant of a deceased member of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme
- a person who ceased to be within any of the categories above
- a person claiming to come within one of the categories above where the dispute relates to whether they are-such a person; or

4. Can someone else make an application for me?

- 4.1 An application may be made or continued on your behalf by a representative nominated by you (e.g. staff association, solicitor). An application may also be made or continued on your behalf if you die, are a minor, or are otherwise incapable of acting for yourself:

- in the case of death, by your personal representatives; and
- in any other case, by a member of your family or some other person or body suitable to represent you.

5. What can the application be about?

- 5.1 You may make an application under the IDR procedures about any claimed action or omission by the Fire and Rescue Authority within the scope of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme except for a determination of a Fire and Rescue Authority on a question referred to an independent qualified medical practitioner under Rule H1, where a notice of appeal has been issued under Rule H2 of Schedule 2 to the Firemen's Pensions Scheme Order 1992.
- 5.2 You cannot make an application under the IDR procedures about a matter which is outside the scope of the Firefighters' Pensions Scheme. Thus, for example, an application cannot be made about a decision not to pay a pension to a common-law spouse if the fact that he or she is not married to you is not disputed.

6. How do I make an application for a decision? - Stage One

- 6.1 Under the IDR procedures you must make an application for a Stage One decision in writing; you must set out the facts of the matter in dispute and the reason why you are aggrieved; and your application must contain enough details to enable the Fire and Rescue Authority to identify the complainant. The application must be made to the Chief Fire Officer:

Chief Fire Officer
Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service
Hinchbrook Cottage
Brampton Road
Huntingdon
Cambs
PE29 2NA

- 6.2 In addition to the above you should bear the following in mind:

- if you are firefighter or former firefighter making a complaint, you should provide your full name, address, and date of birth;
- if you are being represented by a relative, he or she must, in addition to the details about you, provide his or her full name, address and relationship to you;
- if you are being represented by someone else, your representative must give his or her full name, address and profession or other authority to represent you;
- the application should make clear the address the Fire and Rescue Authority should use to send their reply; and
- the application should be signed by or on behalf of the complainant.

- 6.3 A form is attached at Annex A to help you in making a Stage One application.

7. Is there a time limit on when I can make a complaint?

- 7.1 Rule H3 of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme Order 1992 provides that you have 28 days from the date of receipt of the decision you want to complain about in order to make a written application under the IDR procedures.

8. Stage One decision

- 8.1 The reply from the Chief Fire Officer is called the "notice of decision". It should provide an explanation of the decision taken in response to your complaint and should be issued within two months of the date of receipt of your application. In the absence of a full reply in that time you should receive an interim reply

explaining why there is a delay and when you can expect a full reply. The notice of decision must include the following:

- a statement of the decision;
- a reference to any legislation relied upon;
- a reference to those parts of the relevant legislation relied upon including a reference to any legislation conferring discretion on the Fire and Rescue Authority where that has been exercised;
- a reference to any documentation on which the decision is based;
- an explanation of your right to have the disagreement referred for consideration by the Fire Authority Appeals Committee within 28 days of the date of receipt of the decision.

9. What if I disagree with the Stage One decision?

- 9.1 Under the IDR procedures you have the right to ask for your case to be referred to the Fire Authority Appeals Committee if you are not satisfied with the Stage One decision- You or your representative must submit the written Stage Two application within 28 days of the date of receipt of the Stage One decision.

10. What if I do not receive a Stage One decision?

- 10.1 You can also make a Stage Two application if the Chief Fire Officer has failed to send you a written notice of decision or an interim reply within three months from the date on which particulars of the disagreement were received, or where he or she has sent you an interim reply but has failed to send you a written notice of decision within one month from the date he or she said you could expect the decision.

11. How do I make a Stage Two application?

- 11.1 You should give the details set out at paragraphs 6.1 and 6.2 above, together with a statement that you wish the Fire Authority Appeals Committee to reconsider the matter put to the Chief Fire Officer and why you are dissatisfied with the Stage One decision. A form is at Annex B for your use.

- 11.2 You should submit your Stage Two application to

Deb Thompson
Scrutiny and Assurance Manager
Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service
Hinchingbrooke Cottage
Brampton Road
Huntingdon
Cambs, PE29 2NA

12. Stage Two decision

12.1 The Fire Authority Appeals Committee should issue a notice of their decision within two months of the date of receipt of your Stage Two application and, where this is not possible; an interim reply should be sent explaining why there is a delay and when a full reply can be expected. The full reply should include:

- a statement of the decision and an explanation whether, and if so to what extent, the original decision by the Chief Fire Officer has been replaced;
- a reference to any legislation relied upon;
- a reference to those parts of the legislation relied upon, including a reference to any legislation conferring discretion on the Fire and Rescue Authority where that has been exercised;
- a reference to any documentation on which the decision is based;
- a statement that T PAS (The Pensions Advisory Service) is available to assist you in connection with difficulties you have failed to resolve with the Fire and Rescue Authority, and the address at which T PAS may be contacted; and
- a statement that the Pensions Ombudsman appointed under section 145(2) of the Pension Schemes Act 1993 may investigate and determine any complaint or dispute of fact or law in relation to the Scheme made or referred in accordance with that Act, and the address at which you may contact him.

13. Can I get help to resolve my dispute?

13.1 At any time, if you are having difficulties in sorting out your dispute, you may wish to contact The Pensions Advisory Service (T PAS) for help. T PAS can provide free advice and information to explain your rights and responsibilities.

13.2 To get information or guidance, their helpline phone number is 0300 123 1047. Lines are open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm. In addition, through their website <http://www.pensionsadvisoryservice.org.uk/contacting-us> they offer both a Web Chat service which is available Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm and 7 pm to 9pm on Tuesdays, and an online enquiry form. Alternatively, you can write to them at:

TPAS
11 Belgrave Road
London
SW1V 1RB

13.3 A TPAS adviser cannot force a pension scheme to take a particular step but, if they think your dispute is justified, they will try to resolve the problem through conciliation and mediation.

14. Where can I obtain further information about the IDR Procedures?

- 14.1 You can ask for further information and obtain further forms from Deb Thompson, Scrutiny and Assurance Manager, Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue Service on 01480 444556 or via email to deb.thompson@cambsfire.gov.uk



Firefighters' Pension Scheme 1992

IDRPIF - STAGE 1 APPLICATION UNDER THE INTERNAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

You should use this form to apply to the Chief Fire Officer at stage 1 of the internal dispute resolution procedure if you want them to investigate a dispute concerning your pension.

Please write clearly in ink, and use capital letters in sections 1, 2 and 3.

Section 1 - Member's Details

If you are the member (the person who is or was in the Scheme), or a prospective member (a person who is eligible to be a member of the Scheme), please give your details in this Section. You can then go straight to Section 4.

If you are the member's dependant (for example, their husband, wife, or child), please give the member's details in this Section, and then go to Section 2.

If you are representing the person with the complaint, please give the member's details in this Section, and then go to Section 3.

Title: Surname: Forenames:

Previous Surname: Date of Birth:

Address:

Postcode: National Insurance Number:

Section 2 - Dependant's Details

If you are the member's dependant and the complaint is about a benefit for you, please give your details in this Section and then go to Section 4.

If the complaint is about a benefit for a dependant and you are the dependant 's representative, please give the dependant 's details in this Section and then go to Section 3.

Title: Surname: Forenames:

Previous Surname: Date of Birth:

Address:

Postcode: National Insurance Number:

Relationship to member:

Section 3 - Representative's Details

If you are the member's or dependant's representative, please give your details in this Section and then go to Section 4.

Title: Surname: Forenames:

Previous Surname: Date of Birth:

Address:

Postcode: National Insurance Number:

Section 4 - Your Complaint

Please summarise your complaint in this Section and then, on an attached sheet, give details of exactly why you are unhappy.

Section 5 - Your Signature

- I wish to apply for a decision to be made, under section 50B of the Pensions Act 1995, in respect of the disagreement set out in this application.
- I understand that an application may not be made where, in respect of a disagreement, a notice of appeal has been issued under Rule H2 of Schedule 2 to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme 1992 (i.e. appeals to a board of medical referees against a decision on an issue of a medical nature).

I am a:

- ☐ Scheme member / former member / Dependant of a former prospective member *
- ☐ Member's representative / dependant's representative
- ☐ Dependent of a former member*

* Tick one box and delete words as appropriate

Signed:

Dated:

Please enclose a copy of any notification of the decision you are complaining about which has been issued by or on behalf of the Fire and Rescue Authority. Also enclose any other letter or notification that you think might be helpful.

The information which is collected on this form will be held and processed in line with the Data Protection Act.

Once completed, please return to: The Chief Fire Officer, Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service, Hinchbrook Cottage, Brampton Road, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE29 2NA



Firefighters' Pension Scheme 1992

IDRP2F STAGE 2 APPLICATION UNDER THE INTERNAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

You should use this form to apply to the Fire Authority Appeals Committee at stage 2 of the internal dispute resolution procedure if you want them to investigate a dispute concerning your pension, having been through stage 1 of the process. Please write clearly in ink, and use capital letters in sections 1, 2 and 3.

Section 1 - Member's Details

If you are the member (the person who is or was in the Scheme), or a prospective member (a person who is eligible to be a member of the Scheme), please give your details in this Section. You can then go straight to Section 4.

If you are the member's dependant (for example their husband, wife, or child) please give the member's details in this Section and then go to Section 2.

If you are representing the person with the complaint, please give the member's details in this Section, and then go to Section 3.

Title: Surname: Forenames:

Previous Surname: Date of Birth:

Address:

Postcode: National Insurance Number:

Section 2 - Dependant's Details

If you are the member's dependant and the complaint is about a benefit for you, please give your details in this Section and then go to Section 4.

If the complaint is about a benefit for a dependant and you are the dependant's representative, please give the dependant's details in this Section and then go to Section 3.

Title: Surname: Forenames:

Previous Surname: Date of Birth:

Address:

Postcode: National Insurance Number:

Relationship to member:

Section 3 - Representative's Details

If you are the member's or dependant's representative, please give your details in this Section and then go to Section 4.

Title: Surname: Forenames:

Previous Surname: Date of Birth:

Address:

Postcode: National Insurance Number:

Section 4 - Your Complaint

Please summarise your complaint in this Section and then, on an attached sheet, give details of exactly why you are unhappy.

Section 5 - Your Signature

- I wish to apply for a decision to be made, under section 50B of the Pensions Act 1995, in respect of the disagreement set out in this application.
- I understand that an application may not be made where, in respect of a disagreement, a notice of appeal has been issued under Rule H2 of Schedule 2 to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme 1992 (i.e. appeals to a board of medical referees against a decision on an issue of a medical nature).

I am a:

- ☐ Scheme member / former member / Dependant of a former prospective member *
- ☐ Member's representative / dependant's representative
- ☐ Dependent of a former member*

* Tick one box and delete words as appropriate

Signed:

Dated:

Please enclose any notification of the decision you are complaining about which has been issued by or on behalf of the Fire and Rescue Authority, together with a copy of the Stage 1 decision made by the Chief Fire Officer for Cambridgeshire.

Also enclose any other letter or notification that you think might be helpful.

The information which is collected on this form will be held and processed in line with the Data Protection Act.

Once completed, please return to: Deb Thompson, Scrutiny and Assurance Manager, Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue Service, Hinchingsbrooke Cottage, Brampton Road, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE29 2NA

TO: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

FROM: Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer - Matthew Warren

PRESENTING OFFICER: Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer – Matthew Warren

Telephone: 01480 444619
email: matthew.warren@cambsfire.gov.uk

DATE: 13 February 2025

ANNUAL (FIREFIGHTERS PENSION SCHEME) PENSION BOARD - UPDATE

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Fire Authority with the latest position relating to immediate detriment and the Firefighters Pension Scheme (FPS) now that the enabling legislation has been passed.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Authority is asked to;
- 2.1.1 note the contents of this report,
 - 2.1.2 approve the latest position regarding immediate detriment claims and the timetable for processing.

3. Risk Assessment

- 3.1 **Economic** – the liability associated with paying pensions is to be underwritten by central government.

4. Background

- 4.1 Following the 2018 Court of Appeal judgment in Sargeant, an interim order was made by the Employment Tribunal on 18 December 2019 which provided members of the FPS (who had brought claims) entitlement to be treated as if they remained in the FPS 1992, as long as they were in the scheme between 31 March 2012 and 31 March 2015.
- 4.2 In January 2020, the Government position regarding the judgment was that all entitlements, including immediate ones, should proceed under the 2015 scheme rules. This included those that were due to taper into the 2015 scheme and those due to retire.

- 4.3 In August 2020, the Home Office issued a note to fire and rescue authorities about immediate detriment. The note was labelled as informal guidance and highlighted that the issues raised within it were still subject to ongoing litigation and a UK government consultation. The note was issued at the request of the Fire Brigades Union (FBU).
- 4.4 Whilst the note did provide a useful update from the previous government position communicated in January 2020, several questions (below) remained for each fire and rescue authority that were detailed in the Local Government Association (LGA) immediate detriment note issued in October 2020;
- what the position is for fire and rescue authorities if members make decisions without all the correct information, such as pension tax relief,
 - how auditors might treat such payments under legacy terms and on what basis a fire and rescue authority can rely on the guidance to satisfy the auditor,
 - what risk the member accepts by having benefits paid out before the consultation has concluded, although the note does state that **all** cases will need to be revisited once the remedy is finalised.
- 4.5 Further to the guidance, legal advice was sought by the LGA. The legal opinion, which was subject to legal privilege, did not provide the necessary reassurance needed for the Authority to proceed with all cases.
- 4.6 Further to this advice, the LGA and FBU worked to agree a position that would allow fire and rescue authorities to process immediate detriment cases. The memorandum of understanding (MOU) was agreed in October 2021. At this time, based on advice from the Service, the Fire Authority approved a process to begin paying immediate detriment cases.
- 4.7 Shortly after this decision was taken, the Government withdrew the guidance note that was being relied upon within the MOU. This left the Authority and individuals potentially vulnerable to additional costs and tax charges because of government, through Treasury, not having the appropriate legislative safeguards in place. Given this position the Authority Treasurer, as Scheme Manager, took the decision to suspend all immediate detriment payments, whilst further guidance was sought.
- 4.8 Subsequently, the Home Office issued clear advice that immediate detriment claims should not be processed until legislation was enacted, which was to be no later than 1 October 2023.

5. Update on Position Post 1 October 2023

Sargeant (wholetime) – Current Legislative Deadline is 31 March 2025

- 5.1 Due to legislation implemented in October 2023 requiring significant updates post implementation running through into 2025 for example, the unresolved tax scenario for those who took the maximum lump sum and where lump sums are split when an individual retired, ongoing discussions between HMRC, the Home Office and the

LGA to identify and implement a resolution to the issue and set up a compensation scheme from where members can claim back any excess tax paid have been required. The critical factor here is that the retired member will pay additional tax, and it will be up to the member to reclaim this tax from the compensation scheme which is not currently in place.

- 5.2 This is all still under review; the Service and the fire sector are now awaiting a ministerial statement to be issued as the current estimate is that the required legislation will not be in place until after April 2025. This has directly caused issues with the administrators updating their computer software systems (CIVICA) to process the claims.
- 5.3 Based on the legislative delays and issues with our pension administrators (WYPF) software, the Service has been required to report WYPF to the Pensions Regulator in December 2024 under the rationale that they have not been able to meet the timelines for the completion of the Annual Benefit Statements. This has been replicated by the other 21 fire and rescue authorities who have WYPF as their administrator. Subsequently WYPF has categorised members into green and red cases.
- 5.4 The latest statement from WYPF to members dated 17 January 2025, regarding the processing of cases and providing the Immediate Choice – Remedial Service Statements (RSS) is detailed below:

Green Cases - Member took up to HMRC tax free limit lump sum.

We apologise that we have been unable to meet the deadline quoted in our letter to you (members). We are endeavouring to work towards the deadline of 31 March 2025.

Red Cases - Member took maximum scheme lump sum.

The actual legislation that will cover the processing of the red cases will not be available until after 1 April 2025 and this has been confirmed by HMRC. The Government Actuaries Department (GAD) are working with pensions administrators to provide additional guidance on how to deal with these cases following the publishing of HMRC's September 2024 newsletter.

Administrators are currently waiting for this guidance to be made available. GAD are also working with HMRC as they feel that the guidance does not cover all scenarios and as such there will still be cases that will not be able to be processed. Once the additional GAD guidance is made available, meaning WYPF will be able to process certain cohorts, WYPF will require confirmation from each fire and rescue authority that they want WYPF to process before the legislation is in place.

- 5.5 Please note that if the Service instructs WYPF to process cases without relevant legislation being in place, it runs the significant risk of being financially liable should

there be any changes prior to legislation being implemented on which members based their decision.

- 5.6 We also have retired members of staff who were fully protected in their legacy scheme 1992 and these are deemed amber cases; they will be given the option to purchase the 2015 scheme for the remedy period which we are currently working on but we do not expect any to take this option up as the benefits are better in their legacy scheme.

6. Current Position

- 6.1 All staff not affected by Matthews who have retired from 1 October 2023 have been processed for remedy and their pension is currently being paid based upon their option choice.
- 6.2 The current Sargeant position, which does not include any retirements post October 2023 (for the reasons given in Paragraph 5 above), is as follows;

Figures completed and sent to WYPF - 27

Figures ready to send - 6

Data Sharing Agreement with other fire and rescue services implemented -
8

All figures requested by other fire and rescue authorities have been completed and sent.

- 6.3 At present there is one member of staff who has retired this year (2025) who is affected by the Matthews 2nd options exercise which may impact on their remedy period.

Matthews (On-Call)

- 6.4 Running in parallel to 'Sargent,' legislation relating to the 'Matthew's' remedy was also enacted on 1 October 2023. This legislation relates to On-Call firefighters employed between 7 April 2000 and 5 April 2006 and their ability to buy back service.
- 6.5 The process is very intensive for services and requires significant input from our in-house payroll team. The Service employed ITM tracing company to undertake a mortality screen and tracing process of past employees so we could contact ex-employees directly relating to the Matthews 2nd option. Of 138 ex-employee's details which were sent to ITM, 117 were traced to a new address, however unfortunately, 21 were unable to be traced. Since that initial tracing we have subsequently identified another 124 ex-employees who have been written to twice by us with no response. These have subsequently been sent to ITM for tracing to ensure due diligence.

6.6 The current Matthews position is therefore as follows;

Total number of staff relating to Matthew's 2nd options exercise - 400
Calculations completed and sent to WYPF - 91
Did not wish to join - 15
Out of scope - 32
Deceased - 17
Further tracing with ITM (two letters sent no response) or previously traced - 124
Previously traced (no further action) - 5
Requested figures to be resent to individual - 2
Letters and Direct Debit Mandate for contributions sent to individual - 6
Commenced paying for contributions - 11
Paid in full - 11
Reminder letters/email sent December 2024 and queries (including ill health and GAD) - 86 Matthews Current Consultation

	Deceased individuals <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Missed Pension lump sum payments• Missed survivor pension payments• Additional death grant• Extended death grant
	Conversion options <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Special deferred members• Special pensioner members who are in receipt of a member initiated early payment of pension
	Restrictions on opt out cases
	Flexibility to new provisions beyond 31 March 2026
	Deadline extension

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 The Service has and will continue to, work to protect the Authority and for the benefit of members; as an organisation we are committed to ensuring that all members receive the benefits to which they are entitled.
- 7.2 This work has and continues to be challenging primarily due to incomplete legislation, regular delays in the required updates (highlighted during the period of purdah relating to the general election and subsequent change of government) and

current ongoing consultation with HMRC, the Home Office, Treasury and the LGA which has resulted in completed work being revisited. This is alongside the software implementation delays experienced by our pension administrator WYPF.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Document	Location	Contact Officer
The Firefighters Pension Scheme (England) (Amendment) Order 2023	Hinchingsbrooke Cottage Brampton Road Huntingdon	Matthew Warren Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer 01480 444619 matthew.warren@cambsfire.gov.uk

TO: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

FROM: Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer – Matthew Warren

PRESENTING OFFICER(S): Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer –
Matthew Warren

Telephone: 01480 444619

email: matthew.warren@cambsfire.gov.uk

DATE: 25 June 2025

RATIFICATION OF APPOINTMENT OF NEW ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to report to the Fire Authority the outcome of the Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) assessment process and seek ratification of the appointment of the new ACFO.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Authority is asked to;

2.1.1 note the ACFO assessment process outlined in Paragraph 5 below,

2.1.2 ratify the appointment of Stuart Smith as the new ACFO as required by the current Authority Scheme of Delegation.

3. Risk Assessment

- 3.1 **Economic** – the appointment was made in line with the current Pay Policy and the outgoing ACFO salary. No increase in budget was required.
- 3.2 **Legal** – our safeguarding safer recruitment responsibilities and Equality Act 2010 responsibilities were built into the process.
- 3.3 **Reputational** – the substantive appointment of a new ACFO brings further stability and resilience to the senior leadership team and wider organisation. This positions the Authority and the Service well to lead the organisation through the challenges ahead.

4. Equality Impact Assessments

- 4.1 These were completed to ensure both the recruitment and assessment processes were compliant with applicable legislation.

5. Background

- 5.1 At its meeting on 20 June 2024, the Authority approved the appointment of Matthew Warren as the next Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer (CFO/CEO) as recommended unanimously by its Appointments Committee (Agenda Item 9, Minute 123 refer).
- 5.2 On taking up his appointment, Matthew put in place a temporary structure that enabled the Service to continue to deliver the Principal Officer operational rota, stating that he wished the new chief officer structure to be himself, with a Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) and ACFO. Jon Anderson moved into the DCFO position and an internal process to appoint an ACFO culminated in Stuart Smith, then an Area Commander, moving into that position. Both these posts were temporary to enable full recruitment processes to take place.
- 5.3 In late 2024 the recruitment process for a substantive DCFO took place; Jon Anderson was offered and accepted the post. This appointment was ratified by the Authority at its meeting on 13 February 2025 (Agenda Item 11, Minute 151 refer).
- 5.4 The final substantive post in the new chief officer structure was that of the ACFO which went out to advert in March 2025. The advert attracted a total of six applicants, three were shortlisted to the first assessments stage and two for the final stage. This later stage involved an interview with the Assistant Directors, a media interview with a journalist and a final interview, conducted by a panel consisting of the CFO/CEO, DCFO, Head of People and Daryl Brown, the Chief Executive of MAGPAS.
- 5.5 Stuart performed consistently high throughout the process and scored the highest in objective scoring criteria. The process was both challenging and probing, and Stuart was offered the post; an offer he accepted.
- 5.6 The current Authority Scheme of Delegation states that as CEO and Head of Paid Service Matthew has specific delegated authority;

to make all personnel appointments up to and including the level of Principal Officer and to determine the remuneration and conditions of service of each post. The appointment of a Principal Officer will be subject to ratification by the Fire Authority
- 5.7 It is therefore requested that the Authority ratify the ACFO appointment.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Documents	Location	Contact Officer
Fire Authority Reports and Minutes – various	Hinchingbrooke Cottage Brampton Rad Huntingdon	Deb Thompson Scrutiny and Assurance Manager deb.thompson@cambsfire.gov.uk

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting

Date: 15 January 2025

Time: 2.00 p.m. – 3.22 p.m.

Venue: Fire Service HQ

Present: Councillors C Rae (Chair), S Taylor (Vice-Chair), A Bond, I Gardener, J Gowing and R Hathorn.

105. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

Apologies were received from Councillors Fitzgerald and Dew.

There were no declarations of interest.

106. Minutes – 9 October 2024 and Action Log

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2024 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

The Action Log was noted.

107. Community Risk Management Plan 2024-29 Performance Measures

The Committee received a report on the Service's performance against the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) performance measures.

Individual Members raised the following points in relation to the report:

- questioned if arson was a concern to the Service as there had been three incidents in the Member's division recently. Members learnt that when the cause of a fire was uncertain the necessary work was undertaken to find the cause. Officers agreed to discuss this with the community safety team to ensure the causes of fires were understood as well as possible – **action required.**
- asked if new cars decreased the number of people killed in road traffic collisions (RTCs). Members learnt that education regarding road safety contributed to the numbers decreasing along with the reduction in speed limits. There was no data from which any conclusions could be drawn as to the impact on safety of newer vehicles. Officers agreed to ask Vision Zero for further information – **action required.**
- questioned if there was further information regarding traffic accidents between Ellington and the county boundary on the A14. Members noted that the Service had

not seen a trend, however that did not mean accidents had not been attended by other emergency services. Members learnt there was a desire to create a heat map to try and identify hotspots on major roads, but the information would be provided by Vision Zero.

- queried if on-call fire fighters being moved to other sites at the weekends had increased availability to attend fires. Officers agreed to review the data and inform Members, however there had been a positive uptake from the on-call team – **action required.**
- questioned what approaches had been taken to increase House Fire Safety Visits (HFSV). Members learnt that colleagues worked with families and care providers to help provide support. Referrals could be made to MASH so the right support could be provided. Members noted that letters were sent to houses to notify residents that the visit would take place.
- learnt that when a DBS check does not come back clear, risk assessments would be undertaken which would consider factors such as the age when offended and any offending trends. There would then be a discussion with the individual and further options would be discussed. This would all be verified by the Head of Safeguarding. The Deputy Chief Executive stated that there had been very few issues so far.
- questioned how crews could refill their water bottles when out. Members learnt there were a few options being considered and highlighted that, although there would always some need for plastic, these would help reduce the use of single use plastic.
- noted that there were concerns from the unions when the crews of three were first introduced and questioned if there had been any feedback or concerns. Members learnt that there had been positive responses from crew members. There had been no feedback or comments from unions or other representative bodies. The ambition was to have crews of four in the future. Having looked at the data, there were benefits of crews of three and this had been adopted by other fire services.
- learnt that the control room was using the Systel system. The project team were preparing for the split from Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS). The Deputy Chief Executive stated they were recruiting temporary positions in the control room. It was noted that SFRS stated they would have their own standalone fire control centre in April 2025.

It was resolved unanimously to:

Note the contents of the performance report in Appendix 1 which covered the first two quarters of the year 2024/25 (1 April to 30 September 2024).

108. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority Internal Audit Progress Report

The Committee received an internal audit report which provided an update on the progress against the audit plan. One final report had been issued for Key Financial Controls – Treasury Management and had received substantial assurance. The

Management of IT Assets report was in draft which was a joint review with Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service (BFRS). The Follow Up report was in progress which looked at the implementation of previous actions.

It was resolved unanimously to note the contents of the report.

109. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority Internal Audit Strategy 2025/26

The Committee received the proposed audit strategy for 2025/26. The presenting officer stated that there was an error on page 33 of the agenda pack; the total audit fee should state £41,054.

Individual Members raised the following points in relation to the report:

- learnt that every year a different area of key financial controls was audited.
- confirmed that Asset and Fleet Management would be audited this financial year, 2024/25.
- sought clarification on the new management checks listed on page 41 of the agenda pack. Members were informed that these were risk areas and therefore would be included in audits.
- questioned if the reorganisation of Local Government should be included as an audit area. Members learnt that the auditors were already aware of this, and the audit plan could be changed if there were signs of progress which should be considered.

It was resolved unanimously to note the contents of the report.

110. Update on Culture Related Work at Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS)

The Committee received an update report on culture related work at CFRS following His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) report titled 'Standards of Behaviour – The Handling of Misconduct in Fire and Rescue Services' which made 15 recommendations to all Fire and Rescue Services. Attention was drawn to the establishment of the Professional Standards Board.

Individual Members raised the following points in relation to the report:

- questioned Recommendation 13b 'Fire and Rescue Authorities and Chief Fire Officers should make sure all Service Managers and Members of Fire and Rescue Authorities who hear appeals receive appropriate training. Chief Fire Officers should make sure services have a consistent approach to hearing appeals.' What training would be given to Members and how frequently. Members learnt that this was a generic recommendation but would not apply in CFRS as appeals were heard by the Chief Fire Officer. Training was due to be delivered to relevant staff involved in investigation and hearings within the next year.

- queried Recommendation 2 'Chief Fire Officers should make sure a policy for probationary staff is in place. The policy should make clear that services can immediately dismiss probationers who fail to meet the required standards of behaviours set out in the Core Code of Ethics and the Code of Ethics Fire Standard.' CFRS already had a policy, and work was being undertaken with the Monitoring Officer to update and streamline the process. The Monitoring Officer informed Members that the recommendations were sent to all fire and rescue services so some recommendations would be more relevant than others and CFRS already had a probation policy.
- learnt that the Professional Standards Board would meet on a six-weekly basis.
- sought further clarification on Recommendation 3b 'Chief Fire Officers should also make sure firefighters who are promoted are posted to a different watch or station, including when the promotion is temporary for two months or more. If this isn't possible, Chief Fire Officers should show how the risks of reinforcing a negative culture have been addressed.' Members learnt that this could negatively impact the culture and could deter people from promotion opportunities. The Service believe it was better to resolve any negative cultural issues on a Watch, rather than move individuals. Members learnt there was already a transfer process in place which would ensure that appropriate moves to different stations occurred.

Having scrutinised and noted the Service's approach to issues of culture, it was resolved unanimously to:

- 1) Agree to receive a six-monthly report (to this Committee) reporting on issues of misconduct with analysis of any trends, outcomes and learning opportunities. This would supplement the annual culture report and would provide Member level oversight and scrutiny as recommended by HMICFRS.
- 2) Agree that Councillor Taylor would be the culture lead Member from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee who the Professional Standards Board would liaise with relating to culture.

111. Member-Led Review – TRiM Replacement (Trauma Welfare Support Provision)

The Committee received a report which presented the findings of a Member-led review into the provision of trauma welfare and support within CFRS.

Members learnt that the previous TRiM system was introduced in 2016 as a result of the introduction of co-responding. Following feedback in July 2022, there was a lack of engagement with TRiM. There were a number of shortfalls with the process which meant it was no longer fit for purpose.

The new process was peer support supplied by Professor Stephen Regel who provided training. The new process meant that after a critical incident, the officer in charge would have a debrief meeting with those involved. If necessary, a second meeting would take

place a few days later facilitated by a trained person, called a diffuser, who understood the trauma process. Attention was drawn to the importance of training and education for trauma response. An app had been introduced which enabled people to register when they had been involved in an incident. The app would allow the person to say when and where they could be contacted regarding the incident.

The Service recognised the concern that this option was delivered by a single person, therefore there was a single point of failure. Professor Regel was undertaking work to establish the Centre for Trauma, Resilience and Growth.

Individual Members raised the following points in relation to the report:

- were grateful for the update as TRiM was previously thought to be an effective system so welcomed the scrutiny.
- highlighted the importance of the debrief meeting.

Having reviewed and commented on the overall review, attached at Appendix 1, it was agreed unanimously to:

Agree the conclusions at paragraph 8.2 to 8.4 inclusive and agree that a follow up review would be undertaken by Members, commencing in December 2025, to evaluate the new provision.

112. Member-Led Reviews Update

The Committee received a verbal update on 'Employee Recruitment and Retention (On-Call)'.

Members had already had a meeting with relevant officers and had scheduled a subsequent meeting. A report would be brought to the March meeting.

It was unanimously resolved to note the update.

113. Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

Members learnt that the EY external audit report, which was due to be presented at the meeting, would be presented at the February Fire Authority meeting.

The Committee noted its work programme.

Chair

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting

Date: 26 March 2025

Time: 2.00 p.m. – 2.55 p.m.

Venue: Fire Service HQ

Present: Councillors S Taylor (Vice-Chair), A Bond, W Fitzgerald, I Gardener, and R Hathorn.

114. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

Apologies were received from Councillors Rae, Gowing and Dew.

There were no declarations of interest.

115. Minutes – 15 January 2025 and Action Log

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2025 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

While noting the Action Log, Members:

- learnt that whilst availability figures were still awaited, the On-Call trial had received positive feedback from the crews and anecdotally availability had increased by two additional appliances at the weekend. Once availability figures were available, they would be circulated with Members – **action required**.

116. Community Risk Management Plan Performance Measures

The Committee received a report on the Service's performance against the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) performance measures.

While discussing the report, individual Members:

- noted that battery fires in e-scooters were increasing and queried if the recent vehicle fires were from electric cars. Officers agreed to provide the information in future reports but informed Members that they could not report historic data – **action required**.
- suggested that officers attend Parish Council Annual General Meetings to inform residents on fire safety in their homes. Officers agreed to review – **action required**.

- queried the aim of the safeguarding training. Members learnt that there would be an increase in reporting due to increased awareness. This would allow MASH referrals, where necessary, to provide the assistance required.
- requested additional information regarding the safety audits. Officers agreed to include the target audience in the next report and would share a document with Members to explain who was audited and why – **action required**.
- questioned what happened to used tyres. Officers believed that information regarding used tyres was included in the contract but would check this – **action required**.
- established that there was an increase in sickness in Quarter 3, with the highest increase in the Combined Fire Control due to the stress and uncertainty of the future arrangements. Members were informed that work was being undertaken to calculate the number of staff needed in the control room following Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service's (SFRS) departure. Staff had been hired on fixed term contracts in the control room to avoid the need to make permanent staff redundant. Officers were offering assurances to staff, but understood it was an uncertain time.
- queried the number of associated deaths and injuries from fires in non-domestic properties, boarding houses for homeless people or asylum seekers. Members were informed that they were involved in the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) for fire protection. The buildings would become higher risk premises due to any language barriers and risk assessments would be undertaken. The Vice-Chair stated that following the election, new Members may be interested in hearing about the partnership work.

It was resolved unanimously to:

note the contents of the performance report in Appendix 1 which covered the first three quarters of the year (1 April to 31 December 2024).

117. Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service Community Safety Activities Update

The Committee received an update on the breadth of community safety activities currently being undertaken by the Service, outlined future activities and requested Member support of one collaboration in particular.

While discussing the report, individual Members:

- sought further information on the older driver workshops and asked how residents were informed. Members learnt that they were advertised on social media, but officers would review magazines and other mediums to ensure the right target audience were aware of the workshops. A Member suggested contacting village magazines or parish councils; officers agreed to review this – **action required**.

- asked for guidance on how to instigate conversations with older drivers regarding when to stop driving. Officers agreed to ask the relevant officers and would circulate information – **action required**.
- welcomed the Biker Down course and hoped to see positive outcomes.
- learnt that the East of England Ambulance Service (NHS) Trust (EEAST) community wellbeing officer trial was extended for a further 18 months with the cost divided 60/40 (EEAST/CFRS).
- queried potential partnership work regarding mental health needs. Members learnt that this had been discussed between the police, ambulance service and fire service. There was the Right Care, Right Person (RCRP) model which aimed to ensure the most appropriate agency attended where necessary.

Having provided views and comments on the current and future community safety activities detailed at Paragraphs 4 and 5, it was resolved unanimously to:

acknowledge the success to date of the trial with East of England Ambulance Service (NHS) Trust (EEAST) and support the extension of the provision for a further 18 months as detailed at Paragraphs 5.7 and 5.8.

118. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority Internal Audit Progress Report

The Committee received the internal audit progress report. The presenting officer stated that one report had been issued in the area for IT Asset Management with partial assurance. Two pieces of work were currently in progress. The Control System review had been postponed until June 2025 as the new system went live in September 2024 and the postponement would allow the embedding work for the new system to be completed before being audited.

It was resolved unanimously to note the contents of the report.

119. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority Auditor's Annual Report

The Committee received the Fire Authority Auditor's annual report. No significant weaknesses were identified. The certificate could not be issued until National Audit Office (NAO) had confirmed no further assurances would be required.

It was resolved unanimously to note the contents of the report.

120. Member-Led Review

The Committee received a verbal update on the Member-Led reviews.

'TRiM Replacement' had been delivered at a previous meeting.

'Employee Recruitment and Retention (On-Call)' the final report would be presented at the July meeting.

'Impacts of Planning and Growth on the Service' had been paused and would reassessed once the proposed Growth and Planning Officer had been appointed.

It was resolved unanimously to note the update.

121. Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

The Committee noted its work programme.

Chair

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee Meeting

Date: 28 November 2024

Time: 4.00pm - 4.35pm

Place: New Shire Hall

Present: Councillors: S Kindersley (Chair) M Black, N Boyce, S Bywater, E Murphy, K Reynolds and P Slatter

Officers: Matthew Warren, Jon Anderson, Ursula Bird, Stuart Smith, Tamsin Mirfin, Shahin Ismail, Tamar Oviatt-Ham and Rachel Brittain (BDO LLP).

88. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

Apologies were received from Councillor Smith

There were no declarations of interest.

89. Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee held 23 October 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 October 2024 were approved as a correct record.

90. Overview and Scrutiny Committee Minutes – 9 October 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2024 were noted.

91. Policy and Resources Committee Action Log

The action log was noted.

92. External Audit Annual Report 2021 to 2023 and External Audit Planning and Completion Report for 2021/22 and 2022/23

Members received the External Audit Annual Report 2021 to 2023 and External Audit Planning and Completion Report for 2021/22 and 2022/23.

Presenting the report, the Director of Public Sector Assurance/Audit Quality Improvement Team from BDO LLP explained that there had been a significant backlog in public sector audits and measures had been taken by the new government to restore the audit system to a timely manner. Government had given a backstop date of getting all 2022/23 audits completed and certified by 13 December 2024. The Chief Fire Officer stated that he was comfortable with the quality of the accounts.

Individual Members raised the following points in relation to the report:

- Queried what the Members were being asked to do in relation to the sign off of the reports as there was no covering report attached. The Monitoring Officer clarified that the Members were being asked to review and approve the reports.
- Raised concern in relation to the caveat in the report as the auditors stated that there had not been enough time to perform all necessary audit procedures. The auditors explained that this had been in relation to the backstop imposed by government but that the Authority did have the information that they required, there was however not enough time to audit it before the deadline. The Chief Fire Officer stated that the audit reports were being signed off on the basis that the accounts had been prepared following the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) guidelines and he gave his assurance that he was happy with the accounts and that the Assistant Director Finance, in her professional opinion, was also happy that the accounts were signed off as accurate at the time to the best of our knowledge.
- Questioned whether the time delay in getting the 2021/22 was in relation to the Authority or government. The Director of Public Sector Assurance/Audit Quality Improvement Team from BDO LLP stated that the last set of Fire Authority accounts had been signed off two years ago and that the delay was in relation to a number of factors in relation to the auditors' resources including the pandemic and difficulty recruiting auditors to undertake the work and that this was a common position for authorities across the country. The Chief Fire Officer stated that the Fire Authority had met all of the deadlines that they had been set by the auditors. He explained that the new external auditors had attended the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and outlined the challenges the market had faced in terms of recruitment and skills shortages and that they were trying to recover some of the ground but that this would take time.
- Queried if the disclaimer would include all of the factors that had resulted in the delay as they had not been included in the executive summary of the report. Members requested an explanatory note be included on the Fire Authority's website that outlined these factors alongside the reports.

Action Required

It was resolved unanimously to approve the reports.

93. Exclusion of the Press and Public

It was resolved unanimously:

that the press and public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that the following item contains exempt information under Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and that it would not be in the public interest for this information to be disclosed - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

94. Purchase of New St Ives Community Fire and Rescue Station

Members considered a report that provided an update for decision on the purchase of a preferred site for the new St Ives community fire and rescue station.

It was resolved unanimously to approve the recommendations on the report.

Chair

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee Meeting

Date: 22 January 2025

Time: 2.00pm - 3.04 pm

Place: New Shire Hall

Present: Councillors: S Kindersley (Chair) M Black, N Boyce, S Bywater, E Murphy, K Reynolds and P Slatter and M Smith

Officers: Matthew Warren, Jon Anderson, Ursula Bird, Stuart Smith, Tamsin Mirfin, Shahin Ismail, Vicky Best, Tamar Oviatt-Ham and Sophie Rankine

95. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

No apologies for absence or declarations of interest.

96. Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee held 28 November 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2024 were approved as a correct record.

97. Action Log

The action log was noted.

98. Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service - Community Safety Activities Update

Members received an update on the breadth of community safety activities currently being undertaken by the Service and an outline of new options for approval.

Officers highlighted the following points in relation to the report:

- The Service had delivered over 7,000 safe and well visits in the year to date and could evidence a yearly increase over the past five years.

- The Service had recently delivered courses for young people identified through serious violence duty practitioners. These had been well received and had a significant impact on reoffending rates.
- The Service sat on a number of partnership boards including the National Fire Chiefs Council Regional Prevention Committee, National Fire Chiefs Council Fire Kills Group, Water Safety Partnership (Chair) and Vision Zero (Tactical and Strategic Board).
- A number of proposals had been identified to be taken forward including:
 - o The current safe and well visits were being replaced by home fire safety visits (HFSVs) which were a standard approach to home fire safety outlined by the NFCC Person Centred Framework Community
 - o Education activities were recommencing in schools with a ward-based system and crews responsible for one particular area.
 - o Serious Violence Duty Groups. Officers were currently working out what this would look like.
 - o An Enhanced Fire Break Model was being trailed in South Cambridgeshire.
 - o Fire-P, intervention for adult fire setters before release from prison
 - o Extending the Community Wellbeing Officer trial.

Individual Members raised the following points in relation to the report:

- Queried how the catchment areas for fire stations would work in relation to community education activities. Officers explained that this would be reviewed on a geographical basis. A Community Education Board would agree quarterly objectives based on incident trends and specific calendar risks. In addition to schools' education, the Service was exploring options to further support serious violence duty through attending diversionary groups and delivering a suitable training provision.
- Sought further detail on the progress of activities proposed in relation to adult fire setters. Officers explained that Fire-P was an intervention scheme for adult fire setters. The Service had two trained members of staff and were in the early stages of communications with partners (police, probation and prison service) around how the scheme could be embedded within prisons prior to release therefore reducing the risk of arson in the community. Officers explained that they were in discussions to extend the trial with EEAST for a further 12 months to fully understand the costs and benefits to both organisations. The Chief Fire Officer commented that EEAST had recently appointed a new Chief Executive, and discussions had been slower than anticipated.
- Welcomed the links with the Community Safety Partnerships (CSP's) across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.
- Highlighted the good work of the Firebreak programme. A Member queried if it would be possible for someone that had undertaken the

programme, to apply to be a firefighter in the future. The Chief Fire Officer explained that that the young people that were engaged with the programme faced many barriers as many were not engaged with education and qualifications were required in order to apply to the Service. He explained that it was a fine balance and that recruitment requirements needed to be looked at as a whole in terms of the barriers faced without underselling the professionalism of the Service.

- A Member commented that he was supporting a project within Peterborough schools for all year 9 students bringing together the Fire and Rescue Service, Police and Air Ambulance to run workshops for schools every two months on a wide range of topics.
- Queried whether the Fire and Rescue Service were picking up community safety work that other services should be carrying out and whether there was a sense of what the boundaries were in terms of the work undertaken by the Service. Officers explained that they had to constantly review the priorities and focus of their community safety activities, and this was also linked to available funding. The Service had recently lost the funding for a role in the Road Safety Partnership.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- Provide views and comments on the community safety activities including future options
- Approve progression of the future options

99. Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report 2024/25 (Including Mid-Year Treasury Management Review)

Members received an update on revenue and capital spending and a mid-year Treasury Management review as of 31 December 2024.

Officers highlighted the following points in relation to the report:

- The budget for full-time firefighters continued to be overspent in the third quarter, but the variance had reduced as expected as other firefighters had retired and sickness levels had reduced. A slight increase in costs was expected over the next couple of months relating to a further intake of new recruits.
- The operational On-Call firefighter expenditure remained underspent. The Service were yet to see the impact of the new pay bandings on budgets, and this would be better understood by the end of this financial year and would be closely monitored and reviewed.
- The premises underspend continues to be due to gas and electricity costs being significantly less than those budgeted. The overspend relating to the business rates on the old Huntingdon site would remain

as the completion of the sale was still pending; it was hoped this will complete by the end of this financial year. The underspend in property maintenance was not expected at the end of the year.

- A mid-year Treasury Management review had been prepared in compliance with CIPFA's Code of Practice on Treasury Management. It provided Members with, amongst other information, an economic update for the first half of the 2024/25 financial year. Borrowing rates had remained higher than investment rates and there were no immediate plans for external borrowing. The long-term forecast was that the Bank of England rate would reduce, and it currently fluctuated between 2 and 2.5%.
- The pay negotiation process for 2025 was about to commence and would not be concluded until after the budget is set. Bandings were a significant pressure on the overall budget that had to be covered.

Individual Members raised the following points in relation to the report:

- Queried if the staffing levels in the control room had been reviewed pending the joint arrangements with Suffolk coming to an end. Officers explained that currently the control room was understaffed due to sickness levels, so some temporary contracts had been put in place. The Service wanted to avoid any redundancies after the end of the joint arrangements and a restructure of the control room would take place following the departure of Suffolk. A Member queried if Suffolk were still contributing to the costs of the Control Centre. The Chief Fire Officer explained that they were paying 50% of the costs and that he was still struggling to get a direct response in terms of when they would be leaving.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- Note the position on revenue and capital spending,
- Review and provide comment on the mid-year Treasury Management review

100. Strategic Risk and Opportunity Management Register – Monitoring Report

Members received an updated strategic risk report, as of January 2025, highlighting those risks that were considered above the risk appetite of the Authority. Officers explained that report format had been changed so that risks were now grouped into themes to make the register easier to navigate.

Individual Members raised the following points in relation to the report:

- Queried if any thought had been given on the potential financial impact on the authority in relation to local government reorganisation. Officers stated that this was an emerging risk and would be reflected in the register going forwards.

- Questioned if Artificial Intelligence would have an impact on the production of data and patterns that could be used going forwards. Officers explained that the shared service team were looking into this further. The Chief Fire Officer also commented that there would be a confidential report to the Fire Authority on Cyber Security later in the year.
- Queried if the Service had reviewed the Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service Risk Register to see if they also had a risk in relation to the termination of the fire control collaboration. The Chief Fire Officer explained that he would continue to pursue an update in relation to when they would be leaving the control centre.
- Questioned if the Service was engaging with Parish Councils to ensure that Fire Safety Information was disseminated particularly in rural areas where there were increasingly aging populations. Officers explained that the Community Safety and Wellbeing Officers engaged with Parish Councils to disseminate information.

It was resolved unanimously to:

review and provide comments on the strategic risk register

101. Policy and Resources Committee Work Programme

The Chief Fire Officer stated that the next meeting was due to be held on 3 April 2025. As this would be in the pre-election period he would discuss with the Chair and Officers to review if there was anything critical that needed to go to the meeting or if it could be cancelled. **Action Required.**

Chair

