

Objectives for the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service plan 2011 to 2014

Objective one – We will have community facilities at our stations

What and why?

We will identify community facilities which people consider to be 'essential'. These are likely to include community libraries, post offices, village stores and so on. We will work with Hampshire County Council and others to introduce a community facility at at least one of our retained (on-call) stations.

Our retained stations are often in communities that are losing community facilities. Usually, the people who use these facilities are the people that we are trying to work with to reduce the risks that they face. By having community facilities at our stations, we can work directly with the community and earn money to improve our own services.

How and when?

We will work with Hampshire County Council and others to find suitable stations. We will use this information to test the community facility at.

From April 2011, we will look for ways of identifying stations so we can share our facilities.

Objective two – We will respond to small fires more effectively in rural areas

What and why?

In rural areas, we will respond to small fires in the open using a crew of two firefighters in a Land Rover or a Small Fires Vehicle. Most small fires do not need the same number of firefighters or the same amount of equipment as needed for a major fire. By better matching our resources to the type of incident, we have a better chance of making sure that our full-size fire engines are immediately available to tackle life-threatening incidents.

How and when?

We plan to test this idea with a Small Fires Vehicle in Waterlooville and a Land Rover in Ringwood and Fleet using our retained (on-call) firefighters. We will run the trial from May 2011 to October 2011. We will use the information from the trial to decide whether it would be possible and effective to introduce this idea at other stations.

Objective three – We will respond differently to automatic fire alarms which are in non-domestic properties

What and why?

We will develop more efficient ways of responding to automatic fire alarms (AFAs) in non-domestic properties throughout the county. In city areas, an incident commander (called a 'responder') will respond in a small vehicle to certain AFAs at specific times of the day, according to the risk and need. We will send the normal resources (people, vehicles, equipment) to incidents that are a risk to life, which we call the pre-determined attendance (PDA). In rural areas, an incident commander from a retained (on-call) station will respond in a small vehicle to certain AFAs (we will send extra vehicles and equipment if needed).

This idea has come from the staff involved in our 'four station review' of stations in Botley, Bishop's Waltham, Droxford and Wickham.

Most AFAs are false alarms and they take up the time of our firefighters and equipment unnecessarily. By developing other ways of responding, we will be able to make better use of our firefighters. This will also help us to:

- improve our response times in rural areas;
- make better use of our resources;
- match our resources to the risk;
- respond more effectively and safely to calls;
- give full-time crews more time for training and community safety activities; and
- have our resources available for emergencies.

How and when?

We will run a trial in Portsmouth and Southampton using staff and resources from elsewhere in the service.

In rural areas we will trial a scheme at two stations – Botley and Romsey.

We will start the trial in a town or city by April 2011, and in rural areas by October 2011. We will evaluate how effective they have been after 12 months.

Objective four – We will respond to road-traffic accidents in rural areas more effectively

What and why?

In rural areas, as well as the normal pre-determined attendance (PDA), we will have an incident commander from the local retained (on-call) fire station who will respond in a suitable small vehicle directly to road-traffic accidents. This will allow us to reach accidents earlier. This responder will gather information, carry out a risk assessment and decide what resources we need to deal with the accident.

This will only operate in areas where we work with the ambulance service and provide co-responders. We will also send a co-responder as well as the PDA.

This idea has come from the staff involved in our 'four station review' of stations in Botley, Bishop's Waltham, Droxford and Wickham.

How and when?

We will carry out a trial at Botley and Romsey, as these are the most suitable locations, based on our risk information.

We will introduce this scheme by October 2011, and evaluate it after 12 months. If the scheme is successful, we will introduce this way of working in other suitable rural areas across the county.

Objective five – We will use energy more efficiently at our buildings**What and why?**

We know we can do more to reduce the negative effect we are having on the environment. This includes reducing the amount of energy and water we use in all of our buildings. The problem is that some of the things we want to do involve spending money up front so that we can identify the problems and then make savings in the long term.

How and when?

We need to invest to save. But, over the next few years, we know that our budget will be under severe pressure. It will be difficult to justify spending money on building improvements. So, from April 2011, we will use some of our current income to pay for energy-saving schemes, and find new funding where possible. We will use the money we save to carry out further work which will help us reduce the effect we are having on the environment.

Objective six – We will improve ‘Operational Diversity’ to help reduce the different risks people face in the community**What and why?**

The main aim of our equality agenda, which we call ‘Operational Diversity’, is to keep local people safe and improve their quality of life. In particular, we want to reduce the risks people face because of their personal circumstances and lifestyle. By having better ways of collecting information and understanding these risks, we will be able to make sure our services better meet people’s needs. When we attend incidents, some people can be affected more than others due to their circumstances. We aim to reduce these kinds of effects on individuals and groups.

We will be looking for ways to better communicate with people in Hampshire. We want to improve the way we work with other organisations who work in the community, and we will improve the way we collect and use information to help make sure our services better meet people’s needs.

How and when?

Our main aim is to better understand the different risks people face and how that risk changes because of personal circumstances and lifestyle. This will not be the same for everyone. We will improve the way we collect information about the incidents we respond to and we will have closer contact with people in the community and our partners. We will then be able to use this information to better understand and identify what risks people face, and how these risks could affect people in different ways. We will then make our future plans based on our improved understanding, which will help us to keep the community safe.

We will start collecting our information from April 2011, and we will use it to help us make our plans for April 2012.