

Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority plan 2013 to 2018

Proposed corporate priorities and aims

Making life safer

We have a duty as an emergency service to reduce risks within our communities. There is a diverse range of risks within Hampshire. We have identified a number of areas we see as a priority in the coming years. Planning to reduce these risks will help us achieve our aspiration to be the best Fire and Rescue Service in the Country.

Priority – Responding to incidents

We continue to work hard to protect our communities from fire and prevent incidents from happening through education and safety measures. However, we acknowledge that incidents will still occur, and in the event of a call to an emergency, we must have robust strategies in place to respond to numerous types of incidents effectively.

Aim – Improving the way we respond to and support incidents

Risks around the county are changing constantly which means we need to be smarter in how we adapt to these. We seek to achieve continuous improvement in all aspects of operational response. This involves the review of what pumping and special appliances we need, and ensuring that we have the most appropriate vehicles and equipment in the relevant locations around the county for an effective response. We also want to improve our operational effectiveness by focusing on the skills, knowledge, and experience of all of our personnel in relation to the risks in their area. We will ensure that all firefighters are thoroughly trained and prepared to carry out the roles required of a fire and rescue service that seeks to be the best.

The first action from the Service improvement plan will be to:

- Reposition three special appliances in Southampton, from April 2013, to better match our resources to the risk. These vehicles are the aerial ladder platform (ALP) and small fires vehicles (SFV) currently based at Redbridge Fire Station. Because the majority of small fires and high rise buildings are in the city centre area we propose moving both of these vehicles to St Mary's Fire Station. Conversely the special equipment unit (SEU) currently at St Mary's would be better placed at Redbridge Fire Station where it can continue to provide cover across the city as well as westwards out to the New Forest. Positioning it at Redbridge gives this vehicle much better motorway access enabling it to respond quicker anywhere in the county.

Priority – Fires in the home

One of the greatest risks to our communities is a fire in the home. These can have a devastating impact on the victims and local communities. We have a duty to reduce the risk of these happening making Hampshire a safer place to live.

Aim – Targeting our efforts to reduce accidental fires in the home

Our understanding of those most at risk from fire and our ability to access those people is continually improving. We are now identifying a distinction between groups who are most at risk of having a fire in the home and the characteristics of an individual who is more likely to die in such a fire.

Whilst we continue to make information and advice available for all, including the development of new routes to such information, we will target resources on those we know to be most at risk.

We will continue to develop joint working relationships with key partners that include the sharing of information and raising the awareness of those partners of the risk associated with fire and how they can support reduction of this risk.

Priority – Business fire safety

When a fire occurs in a business it has a potentially huge impact on profitability, productivity and the local economy suffers leading to loss of income and jobs whilst also causing damage to the environment. Incidents such as these can often mean the business is unable to recover, hence permanently affecting the local economy and labour market.

Aim - Increasing community safety with sprinklers

Sprinklers can add clear value and are proven to save lives and property; they improve firefighter safety; minimise environmental damage and reduce the economic cost of fire. They also assist in ensuring business continuity and rapid recovery from fire. Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority proactively endorse the installation of sprinkler systems in high risk premises.

We seek to encourage building owners, developers, and planners to install these systems where there is a case for doing so, for example, where there are risks to people, or where there is a clear business case in terms of cost and benefit.

We will seek opportunities where community risk can be reduced by participating in significant joint-funded sprinkler installation projects by within identified (risk assessed) high-risk and high potential loss properties.

We recognise there is a time in every person's life when they will inevitably become vulnerable for some reason. Our ambition is to ensure that people live independently and safely for as long as possible within their own homes. Once it has been established that our prevention activity will no longer provide effective safety for individuals as a result of their vulnerability then the

effective installation of domestic sprinkler systems will reduce the potential for serious injury or loss of life.

Aim – Improving economic sustainability through effective business support

Historically the Fire and Rescue Service has been a regulatory agent in relation to fire safety by enforcing the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

Our new community fire protection approach will be to provide more effective support to commerce and industry to assist them to reduce the risks that they face from fire in a practical and cost effective way. We will ensure we are much more proactive in supporting businesses to comply with fire safety regulations with the minimum of financial burden. In the current economic climate we need to do as much as possible to assist in ensuring economic sustainability whilst also minimising risk and keeping people safe.

Priority – Community incidents

There are a wide range of incidents which can affect whole communities; from fires to severe weather, all of which can have huge consequences. Working with local communities is extremely important to improve safety.

Aim – Improving how our communities are able to respond to and support incidents (community resilience)

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 places a statutory duty on local authorities to work with other agencies and the community to identify risks in their community and to develop emergency and business continuity plans to mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from these risks. This requirement is highlighted within the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework for England 2012.

Furthermore, the National Risk Register's resilience priorities are listed as:

- Pandemic influenza
- Severe flooding
- Humanitarian assistance
- **Community resilience**
- Telecommunications resilience

We will work closely with partner agencies in a number of areas to assist communities and local businesses to be prepared to deal with incidents and are able to recover from their effects quickly.

Priority – Safer road users

Each year we attend some of the most serious road traffic collisions (RTCs) that occur on our county's roads. The number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads far outweighs those who are affected by fire. As well as the human impact of RTCs they can also have a massive economic impact through disruption to the road network.

Aim – Working with partners to create safer road users in Hampshire

The Fire Service provides a unique ability to influence public behaviour that can integrate well with the work of partners. We will renew our work in road safety education with a strategy based on our understanding of the risks.

We will support partnership working across geographic and statutory borders to ensure a common understanding of the risks and to ensure a coordinated commitment to road safety education and safer drivers.

The emphasis of our initiatives will be on education and we will strengthen the connection between our stations, our specialist teams, and those working on road safety across partner organisations to maximise the impact of these initiatives.

Making our Service stronger

A number of priority areas have been identified for development to support the delivery of our services. We will improve our capacity and capability of each priority to achieve the vision for the Service up to 2020. The following priorities and aims have been analysed against key Service evaluation tools to ensure we are on the right track, helping us to make Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service a stronger organisation in the future.

Priority – Our people

Our people are extremely important to us. They deliver the vast majority of the services we offer to the public and to each other within the organisation. In order to consistently provide excellent services and to be operationally effective at all levels, the people who work in the service need to invest in themselves, supported by the organisation.

Aim: Help people develop so they are able to respond to the changing needs of the Service

It is important members of our Service have the most relevant skills and are able to be flexible and responsive in a rapidly changing environment. We need to instil a confidence in people to continually assess our systems and effectiveness. In doing so, everyone helps to support our improvement journey.

Priority - Communications and engagement

Two-way and targeted communication with internal and external audiences is essential for the Service. Communication is currently delivered in a number of ways. This is to ensure that all audiences are kept well informed and aware of safety advice. It also ensures we are able to understand and gauge the needs of our staff, communities and partners. We want to use that insight to help us to shape the services we deliver and direction of our Service.

Aims: Develop targeted communications and engagement opportunities with key stakeholders to our improve services

We will keep at the forefront of modern communications techniques to reach a range of audiences to ensure they are kept informed of what we are doing and the services we offer. We will also identify and use the most appropriate methods of communication to reach the Service's identified vulnerable and priority groups. We will build on this communication and the interactions our staff and stations have with their local communities to develop opportunities for greater external participation and involvement in shaping our services.

Through our two-way communications we will continue to build a participative and inclusive culture where staff feel informed and they have a positive impact on corporate decision making.

Priority - Working with partners

We recognise the benefits of working in partnership with other organisations to deliver best value to the communities that we serve, sharing knowledge, skills and opportunities is key to development.

Aim: Work with partner organisations to exploit development opportunities for the Service

We will build working relationships with partners to support our service by spreading costs, increasing resilience and improving service quality. They will help us to develop by making use of spare capacity and introduce innovation by exposing the organisation to knowledge, skills, markets, and resources that may not otherwise be available. By extending the relationships to include potential commercial opportunities we can strengthen the financial resilience of the Service and bring new perspectives to our service provision.

Priority - Leadership

Leadership at all levels is a vital factor in bringing people together to achieve a common aim or vision. Our vision is to become the best fire and rescue service in the country. To achieve this, we must have the best leadership possible throughout the organisation.

Aim: To support elected members and managers in the Service to provide the best possible leadership and management

To ensure we have strong leadership in the Service we must develop our future leaders, identifying talent and managing succession.

Increasing the involvement of our members in reaching strategic decisions and the long term future direction of the Service is critically important whilst we are continually scrutinised on our work to seek improvement.

Priority - Information and technology

Technology can assist in how services are delivered and is fundamental to the way data is captured. Effective collection and analysis of relevant data can provide important information informing strategies and plans.

Aim: Strengthen our use of information in decision making, taking advantage of the opportunities technology offers

We will improve the way we collect, store and analyse data, and use the resulting intelligence to ensure we make informed decisions about the service. We will be proactive and innovative in assessing and applying new and existing technologies appropriately.

Priority - Assets and money

Our physical assets support and enable our excellent service. In a challenging economic environment it is important to control costs, operate efficiently, and plan for events we may face in the future. By doing so we will be a stronger organisation which is able to deliver a high performing service.

Aim: To improve the return on our physical assets and use medium term financial planning to ensure we effectively prioritise our resources

Our physical assets are strategically located throughout the county; primarily our response vehicles, the equipment they carry and the buildings which accommodate them. We must determine that our vehicles are deployed in the most effective way to respond to the risks we have identified. We can then develop strategies which ensure our vehicles and buildings are effectively utilised, well maintained, operating efficiently, and replaced when appropriate.