



Staffordshire
Fire and Rescue Service
preventing • protecting • responding



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Statement of Assurance

2025/26

Period Covered: 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

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WELCOME

It is both an honour and a privilege to introduce my first **Annual Statement of Assurance** as Chief Fire Officer of **Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service**. Having taken up the role of Chief Fire Officer in June 2026, I am proud to lead a Service that is well positioned for the future.

I would also like to recognise the contribution of my predecessor, Rob Barber, who retired after 29 years' service, including four and a half years as Chief Fire Officer. Under Rob's leadership, the Service delivered significant transformation and achieved national recognition, including an **HMICFRS** Outstanding grading for responding to major and multi-agency incidents. On behalf of the Service, I thank Rob for his leadership and dedication to the people of Staffordshire.

As we reflect on the year from **1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026**, it is clear that the role of a modern fire and rescue service continues to evolve. While responding to emergencies remains at the heart of what we do, much of our work is focused on preventing harm, protecting vulnerable people, strengthening community resilience and preparing for the risks and challenges of the future.

Delivering for Communities

Throughout the year, our staff responded to more than **10,000** incidents, completed over **15,000 Home Fire Safety Visits**, supported over **3,600** vulnerable residents through our **Fire and Health Partnership** services and continued to invest in the people, saving equipment and technology needed to protect people, property and communities across Staffordshire.

The year has been one of continued progress. From investing in new operational equipment and digital technology to strengthening workforce wellbeing and delivering inspection-led improvements, we have remained focused on the risks that matter most to Staffordshire while ensuring public resources are used effectively and responsibly.

Our People

What continues to impress me most is the **dedication of our people**. Whether on the frontline, supporting vulnerable residents, educating young people or delivering vital support services, our staff and volunteers consistently demonstrate professionalism, compassion and commitment. Their efforts are the reason our Service continues to earn the trust and confidence of the communities we serve.

Looking Ahead

I am confident that **Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service** is well placed to meet the challenges and opportunities ahead. By investing in our people, strengthening partnerships and embracing innovation, we will continue delivering excellent services and **making Staffordshire the safest place to be**.



Thank you for taking the time to read this **Annual Statement of Assurance** and for your continued support.

Glynn Luznyj KFSM
Chief Fire Officer

GOVERNANCE AND ASSURANCE

Being Open, Accountable and Transparent

Every year, **Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service** publishes a **Statement of Assurance** to explain how we are performing, how public money is being used and how we are delivering services that help keep Staffordshire safe. It is one of the ways we remain open and accountable to the communities we serve.

This Statement covers the period **1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026** and provides assurance that we continue to meet our legal responsibilities, manage risks effectively and deliver the priorities that matter most to our communities.

Everything we do is guided by our **Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2025-2028**, which sets out how we will use our people, resources and investment to make Staffordshire the safest place to be.

Statement from the Staffordshire Commissioner for Police, Fire & Rescue and Crime

*"During 2025/26, **Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service** has continued to demonstrate strong governance, sound financial management and a clear commitment to continuous improvement.*

The Service has remained focused on protecting communities, supporting its workforce and responding effectively to both current and emerging risks. Independent inspection, audit and performance review activity has provided assurance that appropriate arrangements are in place to manage risk, use public resources responsibly and maintain high standards of service delivery.



*I am satisfied that **Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service** continues to operate in an accountable, transparent and effective manner, and remains well placed to meet the challenges and opportunities ahead."*

Ben Adams

Staffordshire Commissioner for Police, Fire & Rescue and Crime

How We Are Governed

Strong governance helps ensure decisions are made openly, resources are used responsibly and the Service remains focused on delivering the best possible outcomes for local communities.

The **Staffordshire Commissioner for Police, Fire & Rescue and Crime** acts as the **Fire and Rescue Authority**. The Commissioner sets the strategic direction for the Service, approves budgets and holds the Chief Fire Officer to account for delivering safe, effective and efficient services.

Within the Service, leaders and managers monitor performance, manage risk, oversee resources and ensure that priorities are translated into action. Regular reviews help identify opportunities to improve and ensure we remain responsive to emerging challenges.

What this means for you

Regular oversight and scrutiny help ensure you receive services that are safe, effective and focused on what matters most to local communities.

How We Gain Assurance

We use a range of internal and external processes to understand how well we are performing and to identify where improvements are needed.

These include:

- ✓ Performance monitoring and public accountability meetings
- ✓ Independent inspection by **HMICFRS**
- ✓ Internal and external audits
- ✓ Risk management and business continuity arrangements
- ✓ Health and safety reviews
- ✓ Operational assurance and learning from incidents
- ✓ Feedback from communities, partners and staff

Together, these processes help provide confidence that we are managing risks appropriately, using resources responsibly and continuing to improve.

What this means for you

Independent scrutiny helps ensure you receive a safe, effective and value-for-money service.

Independent Scrutiny and Inspection



Independent organisations regularly review our performance, governance and use of public resources. This includes **His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)**, internal and external auditors, and independent scrutiny panels.

Our most recent HMICFRS inspection recognised considerable progress across the organisation and awarded **Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service** an Outstanding grading for responding to major and multi-agency incidents. Inspectors also highlighted examples of good practice, including our **Fire and Health Partnership** and our arrangements for major incident preparedness.

Further national recognition was received through the **State of Fire and Rescue Report 2025**, which highlighted Staffordshire's **Fire and Health Partnership** as an example of positive practice. The report also recognised the significant progress made in addressing previous **Areas for Improvement**, reflecting the Service's commitment to learning, improvement and strong leadership.

During 2025/26, we continued to implement improvements arising from inspections, audits and national reviews. All outstanding **Areas for Improvement** from our previous **HMICFRS** inspection were completed, alongside all recommendations arising from the national **Values and Culture and Misconduct thematic reviews**.

What this means for you

Independent inspection provides assurance that the Service is performing effectively and using public resources responsibly.

Looking Ahead

In the period leading up to the publication of this **Statement of Assurance**, **Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service** is undergoing its latest **HMICFRS** inspection. As this activity falls outside the reporting period covered by this Statement, the outcomes are not included within this year's assurance assessment.

The Service welcomes the opportunity for independent review and challenge and will consider any findings and recommendations through its established governance and improvement arrangements once the inspection report is published.

Leadership and Organisational Resilience

The year marked an important period of leadership transition for the Service. Following the announcement that Chief Fire Officer Rob Barber would retire in June 2026, the Staffordshire Commissioner appointed Glynn Luznyj as the Service's new Chief Fire Officer following a robust recruitment process.

This planned transition supports organisational resilience and ensures the Service remains well placed to deliver its priorities, maintain effective governance and respond to future challenges.

What this means for you

Strong leadership helps ensure the Service remains reliable, resilient and prepared to meet future challenges.

Learning and Continuous Improvement

We are committed to learning from incidents, inspections, audits and national inquiries to continually improve how we deliver services.

During the year, all Service-owned actions arising from the **Grenfell Tower Inquiry** and **Manchester Arena Inquiry** were completed and formally signed off, ensuring lessons identified have been embedded into operational procedures, training and preparedness arrangements.

Station Assurance Visits were introduced to identify good practice, support local learning and development and provide additional assurance that operational standards, training and equipment remain at the required level across the Service.

The Service also continued to review health and safety performance, cyber resilience and operational practices to ensure our arrangements remain effective and fit for the future.

What this means for you

Learning from major incidents and national events helps us continually strengthen safety and emergency preparedness.

Legal and Regulatory Compliance

The Service has reviewed its activities during 2025/26 and is satisfied that it operated in accordance with its statutory responsibilities, including those contained within:

- Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004
- Civil Contingencies Act 2004
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Fire and Rescue National Framework for England
- Relevant health and safety, employment and governance legislation

Overall Assurance

The Authority is satisfied that effective governance, risk management and internal control arrangements operated throughout 2025/26. Supported by robust assurance processes, independent scrutiny and external review, the Service has demonstrated that it is well governed, financially sustainable and focused on delivering safe, effective and efficient services for the communities of Staffordshire.

Independent inspections and reviews have recognised the progress made across the organisation, including sustained improvement and areas of good practice. This provides confidence that the Service is managing risk effectively, using public resources responsibly and remaining focused on delivering positive outcomes for Staffordshire's communities.

Assurance at a Glance

- ✓ Effective governance, financial management and accountability maintained
- ✓ All **HMICFRS Areas for Improvement** completed
- ✓ National recommendations, including **Grenfell** and **Manchester Arena** actions, completed
- ✓ Independent inspection, audit and scrutiny provided assurance and challenge
- ✓ Strategic risks actively monitored and managed
- ✓ Nationally recognised good practice and continuous improvement maintained

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Staffordshire is constantly changing, and so are the risks faced by the communities we serve. Population growth, new housing developments, advances in technology, climate change and increasing levels of vulnerability all influence the demands placed on our Service. To remain effective, we must not only respond to today's risks but also anticipate and prepare for the challenges of the future.

Our **Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2025-2028** sets out how we will do this. Developed using local risk data, evidence, community feedback and staff insight, it provides the framework for how we prevent incidents, protect people and property, respond to emergencies and invest in the future.

At the heart of the Plan is our vision: **Making Staffordshire the Safest Place to Be**



This vision guides every decision we make and every service we provide. To deliver it, we focus on **three Priorities** that shape our activities, investment and improvement programmes.

OUR PRIORITIES

Supporting our People



Everything we achieve starts with our people - We are committed to creating a workplace where staff feel safe, supported, valued and able to perform at their best. This means investing in wellbeing, leadership, training, development and modern equipment whilst fostering a culture built on fairness, dignity and respect.

By developing a skilled, healthy, diverse and inclusive workforce, we can continue to provide the professional and compassionate service our communities expect and deserve.

We will:

- Support the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of our workforce.
- Develop confident, capable and ethical leaders.
- Provide opportunities for learning, development and career progression.
- Promote equality, diversity and inclusion (ED&I) across the organisation.
- Ensure our people have the equipment, resources and support they need to work safely and effectively.

Keeping our Communities Safe



Protecting people is at the heart of our purpose - We work every day to reduce risk, prevent emergencies and respond effectively when incidents occur. Our approach combines prevention, protection and emergency response activities, ensuring support is focused where it can make the greatest difference.

We recognise that some people and communities face greater levels of risk than others. By using data, evidence and local knowledge, we can better identify vulnerability and target our services towards those who need them most.

We will:

- Help people stay safe through prevention and education.
- Protect businesses, public buildings and communities through effective fire regulation and enforcement.
- Respond quickly and effectively to emergencies.
- Strengthen partnerships to support vulnerable people and reduce harm.
- Learn from incidents and embed lessons into the services we provide.

Protecting our Environment



The risks associated with climate change are becoming increasingly significant for both communities and emergency services - As a modern fire and rescue service, we have a key role to play in helping Staffordshire adapt to these challenges while also reducing our own environmental impact.

We are committed to building resilience to future environmental risks, including flooding, wildfires and extreme weather, whilst embedding sustainability into the way we operate.

We will:

- Reduce our environmental impact through sustainable practices and investment.
- Improve the efficiency of our fleet, buildings and equipment.
- Prepare for the increasing risks associated with climate change.
- Support communities to become more resilient.
- Consider environmental impact when making decisions about the future of the Service.

Delivering Our Vision Fairly and Inclusively

Our priorities are underpinned by our commitment to equality, diversity, inclusion and the **Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services**.

We recognise that different communities face different challenges and may require different forms of support. By understanding and responding to those needs, we can deliver services that are accessible, inclusive and responsive to the people who rely on them.

The same principles apply within our workforce. We want Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service to be a place where everyone feels respected, valued and able to contribute.



Working Towards a Shared Ambition

Our CRMP is supported by the Staffordshire Commissioner's **Fire and Rescue Plan 2024-2028**, ensuring that our priorities, investment decisions and performance measures remain focused on the issues that matter most to local communities.

The remainder of this **Statement of Assurance** demonstrates how we have delivered against these priorities during 2025/26 and how we continue to make Staffordshire the safest place to be.

YOUR FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

More Than Emergency Response

When most people think of the fire and rescue service, they think of firefighters responding to emergencies. While emergency response remains a vital part of what we do, much of our work takes place long before an emergency occurs. Every day, our staff work with residents, businesses and partner organisations to reduce risk, improve safety and support those who need our help. Through prevention, protection, education and community engagement, we help prevent emergencies and make communities safer.

Serving Every Community

Staffordshire is a diverse county, encompassing urban centres, rural villages, industrial sites and growing communities. By understanding local risks and community needs, we can target support where it will have the greatest impact. This helps ensure our services remain fair, accessible and responsive.

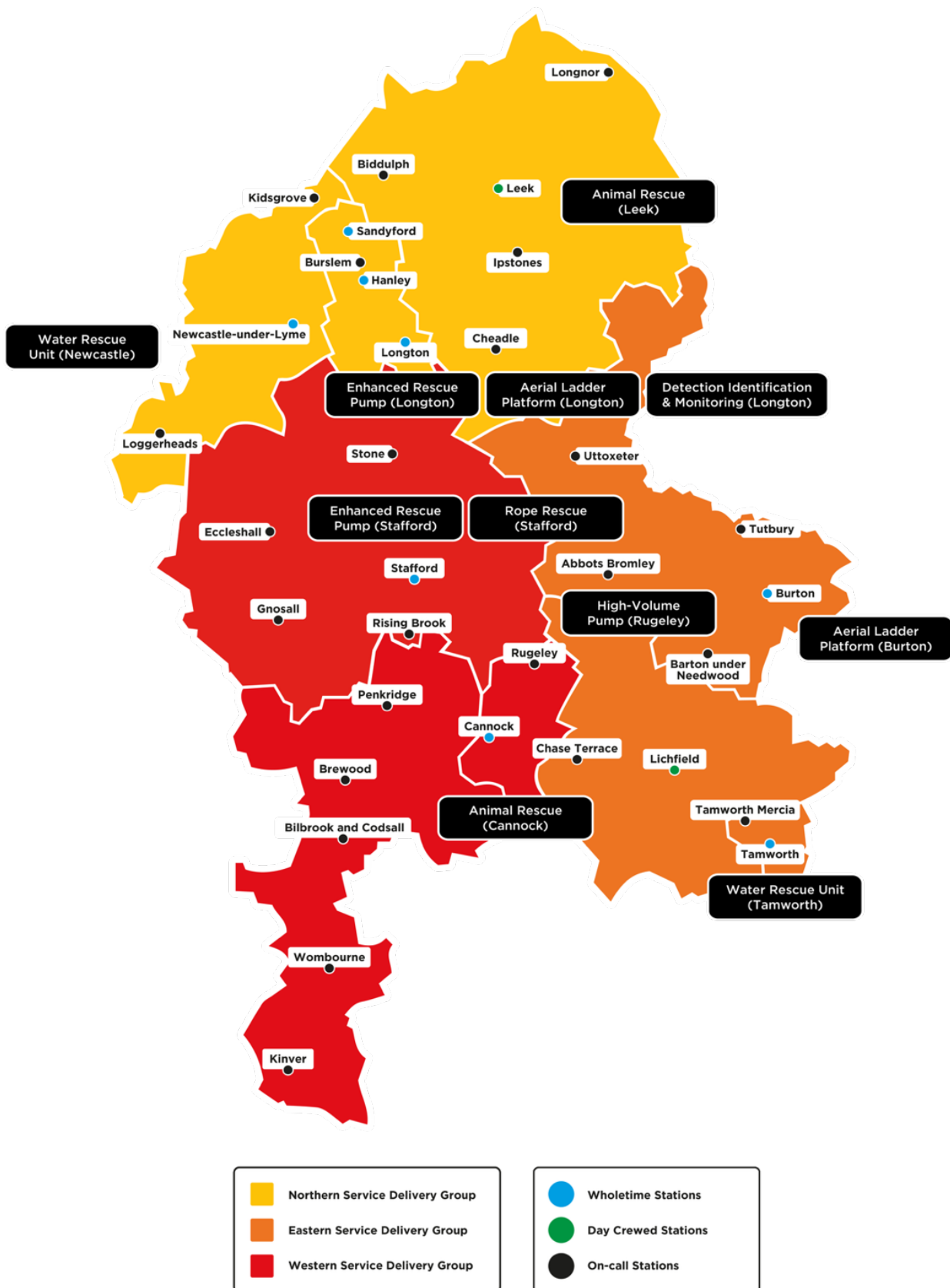
Working Together

Keeping people safe is a shared responsibility. We work closely with a range of partners to support vulnerable residents, reduce risk and improve community safety. Our award-winning **Fire and Health Partnership** is one example of how collaboration can make a real difference to people's lives.

We are committed to learning and improving

Feedback from communities, partners, staff and independent inspection helps us understand what is working well and where improvements can be made. By listening and learning, we continue to adapt our services to meet changing needs and risks.

This commitment to learning and improvement helps ensure **Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service** remains effective, efficient and focused on delivering the best possible service to the people of Staffordshire.



OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

THE DIFFERENCE WE MADE

Behind every statistic is a person, family, business or community that benefitted from our services during 2025/26.

 Emergency Response	 Prevention & Protection	 Supporting Vulnerable People	 Education & Community Safety
10,391+ incidents attended Providing a professional emergency response when lives, property and communities are at risk	15,213 Home Fire Safety Visits completed Helping people stay safe at home through personalised advice and practical support	3,657 Fire and Health Partnership mobilisations Helping vulnerable residents remain safe, independent and connected to the support they need	Thousands of children and young people reached through safety education Helping the next generation understand risks and make safer choices
441 accidental dwelling fires attended Responding quickly to protect people and minimise the impact of fires in the home	546 Fire Safety Audits completed Helping ensure businesses and public buildings meet fire safety requirements	1,158 Falls Response mobilisations Providing timely assistance that helps people avoid unnecessary hospital admissions	9,500+ visitors attended Service Open Days Building stronger community connections while promoting important safety messages
927 road traffic collisions attended Helping rescue casualties, support emergency partners and make roads safer	94% Risk Based Inspection Programme completion Focusing resources on the buildings and premises where risks are greatest	2,499 Home from Hospital mobilisations Supporting people to recover safely and confidently in their own homes	Fire, road and water safety programmes delivered across Staffordshire Raising awareness of everyday risks and helping prevent avoidable incidents

Building a Strong and Sustainable Service

 Our People	 Modernising Our Service	 Environment & Sustainability	 Community Impact
16 new firefighters joined the Service Strengthening frontline capacity and supporting future service resilience	Continued investment in digital systems and ICT infrastructure Providing staff with modern tools to support efficient and effective service delivery	Electric and hybrid fleet expanded Reducing environmental impact while maintaining operational capability	£11,500 raised for The Fire Fighters Charity Supporting the wellbeing of current and former members of the fire service community
New breathing apparatus system fully implemented Enhancing firefighter safety and operational capability	Command and Control modernisation programme progressed Improving the systems that help mobilise resources and manage incidents	Environmental and Sustainability Strategy delivered Supporting long-term resilience and responsible use of resources	3,995 volunteer hours contributed Extending our reach into communities through dedicated volunteer support
Disability Confident Level 2 achieved Demonstrating our commitment to creating an inclusive workplace for all	Investment in stations, fleet and operational equipment Ensuring crews have the facilities and resources needed to keep communities safe	Carbon monitoring and environmental reporting enhanced Helping us better understand and reduce our environmental footprint	Strong partnerships supporting safer communities Working with others to reduce risk and improve outcomes for local people

OUR PROGRESS

The following sections describe how these achievements were delivered through the priorities set out in our Community Risk Management Plan.

Supporting Our People



Our people are at the heart of everything we do. Whether responding to emergencies, helping prevent incidents, supporting vulnerable residents or providing specialist support services. It is their professionalism, commitment and expertise that help reduce risk and protect our communities.

During 2025/26, we continued to invest in the safety, wellbeing, development and inclusion of our workforce. Helping ensure our people have the skills, support and resources needed to meet both current and future challenges.

Keeping Our People Safe and Well

Supporting the physical and mental wellbeing of our workforce remains a key priority - During the year, we completed the rollout of our new breathing apparatus system, providing firefighters with modern equipment designed to enhance both safety and operational effectiveness. We also continued to embed our **Clean Concept** approach, helping reduce exposure to contaminants through improved decontamination facilities, equipment and working practices.

Alongside physical safety, we continued to strengthen our wellbeing offer through **Occupational Health** support, **Mental Health First Aiders**, **Trauma Risk Management (TRiM)** practitioners, wellbeing resources and our **Employee Assistance Programme**. Investment in digital wellbeing resources has further enhanced the support available to colleagues, helping promote positive physical and mental wellbeing across the workforce.

We also strengthened support for operational fitness and workforce health through expanded fitness advisor provision, personal trainer development and proactive health initiatives focused on prevention, rehabilitation and maintaining operational readiness.

Following a review of welfare provision at incidents, a range of improvements were introduced to enhance firefighter welfare during prolonged operational incidents, including improved hydration, rest and welfare arrangements.

What this means for you

A healthy, supported workforce is better equipped to provide safe, effective and resilient services for our communities.

Developing Skills and Future Leaders

Investing in learning and development helps ensure we have the skills and leadership capability needed both now and in the future - During the year, 16 new firefighters successfully completed their training and joined fire stations across Staffordshire. Enhanced people-management training was introduced for new and aspiring managers, while development pathways and promotion processes continued to evolve to support career progression and succession planning.

Operational staff also benefited from specialist training, including fire safety and safeguarding programmes, helping develop expertise across prevention, protection and response activities.

What this means for you

By investing in our workforce, we are building a capable and resilient Service that can continue meeting the needs of Staffordshire's communities.

Promoting Inclusion and Positive Culture

We are committed to creating a workplace where everyone feels valued, respected and able to contribute - We want **Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service** to be a workplace where everyone feels respected, supported and able to reach their full potential. Throughout the year we continued to embed the **Core Code of Ethics** across the organisation. Our **Recognition scheme** celebrated those who demonstrated our values, leadership and commitment to serving communities, helping reinforce a culture of professionalism, respect and learning.

During 2025/26, we achieved **Disability Confident Level 2 accreditation**, demonstrating our commitment to attracting, retaining and developing disabled people within our workforce.

We also reported a further reduction in our gender pay gap, reflecting continued progress in promoting equality and creating opportunities for all employees to develop and succeed within the Service.

We also formally launched five staff networks covering women's issues, multicultural inclusion, LGBTQ+ colleagues and allies, neurodiversity, and the Armed Forces community. These networks help strengthen the staff voice, promote understanding and support an inclusive workplace culture.

Active Bystander training, positive action initiatives and a continued focus on our organisational values have further supported our work to create a safe, respectful and inclusive working environment.

Positive action initiatives, community engagement events, taster sessions and a dedicated women's recruitment conference helped encourage applications from a broader range of backgrounds and communities.

What this means for you

A diverse and inclusive workforce brings a wider range of skills, experiences and perspectives, helping us better understand and serve our communities.

Listening to Our People

Understanding how our employees feel about working for the Service helps us identify what is working well and where improvements are needed - Through our "Your Service, Your Voice" staff survey and ongoing engagement activities, colleagues continued to provide valuable feedback on leadership, wellbeing, communication and career development. The results were positive overall, with staff engagement measures remaining strong and most indicators showing improvement.

Feedback from colleagues directly informed improvements to communications, recognition programmes, leadership visibility and career development opportunities.

What this means for you

Listening to our employees helps us create a stronger organisation and deliver better services for the public.

Safeguarding and Protecting Vulnerable People

Our people play a vital role in identifying vulnerability and helping protect those most at risk - The Service continued to strengthen safeguarding arrangements during 2025/26 through enhanced training, governance and partnership working. Safeguarding referrals made by our staff helped vulnerable adults and children access support from partner agencies, ensuring concerns were identified and appropriate assistance provided at an early stage. Training completion rates continued to improve, with all senior leaders achieving Level 3 safeguarding compliance.

This work supports our wider commitment to prevention, early intervention and protecting vulnerable members of our communities.

What this means for you

Strong safeguarding arrangements help ensure vulnerable people can access appropriate support when concerns are identified.

Supporting Volunteers and Community Involvement

Volunteers continue to play an important role in supporting the Service and strengthening our connection with local communities. During the year, volunteers contributed more than **3,995 hours** across a wide range of activities, including community engagement, education programmes, operational training exercises, **Safe+Sound** events and chaplaincy services.

Through their skills, experience and local knowledge, volunteers enhance our ability to engage with diverse communities, support prevention activities and contribute to the effective delivery of services across the county.

What this means for you

Volunteers help us reach more people, provide additional support to community safety initiatives and strengthen our presence within local communities. Their contribution enhances the services we provide and helps us deliver positive outcomes for the people we serve.

Our People Assurance

Through continued investment in workforce safety, wellbeing, leadership, inclusion and development, **Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service** remains committed to creating a workforce that is skilled, resilient, inclusive and prepared for the future.

Our People at a Glance

- ✓ New breathing apparatus system fully implemented
- ✓ Wellbeing, mental health and safeguarding arrangements enhanced
- ✓ **Disability Confident Level 2** accreditation achieved
- ✓ Staff networks and positive action initiatives supported inclusion and diversity
- ✓ New firefighters recruited to support frontline delivery
- ✓ Volunteers contributed over **3,900 hours** to support Staffordshire communities

Keeping Our Communities Safe



Keeping communities safe is at the heart of everything we do. While emergency response remains a vital part of our role, much of our work focuses on preventing emergencies from happening in the first place, protecting vulnerable people and helping communities become safer and more resilient.

During 2025/26, we continued to invest in prevention, protection, education and partnership working, ensuring our services are focused on the people and places most at risk. This activity was delivered during a year in which operational demand increased significantly, particularly during the summer months when prolonged dry weather contributed to a rise in outdoor fires.

Preventing Harm and Supporting Vulnerable People

Helping people stay safe in their homes remains one of our highest priorities - During 2025/26, we completed more than **15,000 Home Fire Safety Visits**, providing tailored advice and practical support to residents across Staffordshire. We also began transitioning to the national **Home Fire Safety Visit (HFSV)** framework, which places greater emphasis on individual needs, vulnerabilities and risks.

To improve accessibility, we introduced an online **Home Fire Safety Check**, enabling residents to assess their fire risk and access personalised safety advice. We also strengthened quality assurance arrangements to help ensure visits continue to be delivered consistently and effectively.

For people facing more complex challenges, including mobility issues, hoarding, poor living conditions or health concerns, our enhanced prevention services continued to provide additional support through close partnership working with health, housing and social care organisations.

What this means for you

Support is increasingly tailored to individual needs, helping more people remain safe, independent and protected within their own homes.

Working Together to Support Communities

Strong partnerships continue to help us reach vulnerable residents and improve community wellbeing. During the year, our nationally recognised **Fire and Health Partnership** supported thousands of people while reducing pressure on health and care services.

Protecting vulnerable people also means recognising wider signs of risk and ensuring support is available at an early stage. We continued working with partner organisations to ensure vulnerable people receive support at the earliest opportunity.

What this means for you

Working closely with partners enables us to provide broader support to those who need it most and contribute to healthier, safer communities.

Educating, Engaging and Empowering Communities

Education and engagement are key to reducing risk and helping people stay safe. During 2025, we strengthened our prevention activity through the introduction of a **Water Safety Plan** and a **Secondary Fire Prevention Plan**, ensuring our approach remains targeted and responsive to local risks.

Through **Safe+Sound**, school education programmes and community events, we reached thousands of children, young people and residents with important fire, road, water and personal safety messages. Operational crews delivered **379 educational sessions**, reaching **7,789 Key Stage 1 pupils**, while **7,893 Year 5 pupils** from **192 schools** attended Safe+Sound events. The programme also achieved **111,891 online views**, including **50,384 from Staffordshire children**.

We continued to support young people through careers and road safety initiatives, with more than **700 young people** taking part in events designed to improve **road safety awareness**, **develop employability skills** and **provide insight into careers within the Fire and Rescue Service**.

Community events also provided valuable opportunities to promote safety, engage with local people and showcase the work of the Service. More than **9,500 people** attended our Open Days, raising over **£11,500 for The Fire Fighters Charity**. The introduction of a sensory hour at Stafford Open Day also helped make our events more inclusive and accessible for neurodiverse visitors and their families.

What this means for you

By providing practical safety education and engaging directly with our communities, we help people make safer choices, prevent incidents and build stronger, more resilient communities.

Protecting People Through Fire Safety

Alongside prevention activity, our Protection Teams continued to focus on buildings where the consequences of fire could be greatest - Through our **Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP)**, we prioritised higher-risk premises, including care homes, hospitals, hotels and high-rise residential buildings. During the year, protection activity included hundreds of fire safety audits, building regulation consultations and licensing consultations.

Considerable progress was made in ensuring high and very high-risk premises remained compliant with fire safety requirements, helping keep residents, workers and visitors safe while providing greater assurance that legal responsibilities are being met.

What this means for you

Our protection work helps make buildings safer and reduces the risk of serious fire incidents within Staffordshire.

Prepared and Ready to Respond

Being ready to respond to emergencies remains a core responsibility of the Service - Throughout the year firefighters and officers took part in training, operational development and multi-agency exercises to maintain skills, test capabilities and strengthen partnership working.

Exercise Staffordshire Knot brought together emergency service partners from across Staffordshire and the wider region to test responses to complex and high-risk incidents. These exercises help ensure agencies can work together effectively during major emergencies.

We continued to modernise operational systems through our digital transformation programme, including progress on a new command and control system with **West Midlands Fire Service**, alongside improvements to operational risk information, mobile data technology and mobilising arrangements. These developments will provide crews and control staff with better information to support decision-making and firefighter safety.

We also continued to learn from national incidents, public inquiries and sector best practice, using this learning to strengthen procedures and improve operational preparedness. Work began to establish Staffordshire as an **approved water rescue training centre**, while our participation in **national resilience** arrangements and **mutual aid agreements** ensured support is available during large-scale or complex incidents.

Alongside this, we strengthened our hydrant inspection and maintenance programme through enhanced testing, mapping and recording processes, providing greater assurance that operational water supplies are available when needed.

What this means for you

Through regular training, investment in technology and continuous improvement, we ensure our firefighters have the skills, equipment and information needed to respond safely and effectively when people, property and communities are at risk.

Our Communities Assurance

Through prevention, protection, education, partnership working and operational preparedness, **Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service** continues to reduce risk and help communities remain safe, resilient and well supported.

Our Communities at a Glance

- ✓ Over **15,000 Home Fire Safety Visits** delivered
- ✓ Prevention services expanded through new digital and targeted initiatives
- ✓ Partnerships supported vulnerable residents and community wellbeing
- ✓ More than **9,500 people** engaged through **community events**
- ✓ Protection activity targeted higher-risk premises
- ✓ Emergency preparedness and operational resilience strengthened

Protecting Our Environment



Protecting the environment is an increasingly important part of how we plan, invest and deliver services. As the impacts of climate change become more evident, fire and rescue services have a growing role to play in reducing their environmental impact and helping communities prepare for future environmental challenges.

During 2025/26, we continued to deliver our **Environmental and Sustainability Strategy 2022-2027**, taking practical steps to improve sustainability, reduce emissions and strengthen our understanding of environmental risk.

Reducing Our Environmental Impact

We continued to make progress in reducing the environmental impact of our operations through improvements across our fleet, estate and everyday working practices - During the year, the use of electric and hybrid vehicles continued to expand where operationally appropriate, including the ongoing evaluation of the Service's first fully electric response vehicle. Investment in vehicle charging infrastructure and sustainable transport solutions is helping us better understand how low-carbon technologies can support future service delivery.

We also introduced enhanced carbon monitoring and reporting arrangements, providing greater visibility of environmental performance and helping teams identify opportunities for further improvement.

What this means for you

We are working to reduce our environmental footprint while ensuring services remain effective and sustainable for the future.

Creating More Sustainable Buildings and Workplaces

Improving the sustainability of our buildings and workplaces remains an important part of our environmental programme - During 2025/26, we continued exploring opportunities to improve energy efficiency across our estate, including consideration of renewable energy technologies and measures to reduce energy consumption. Enhanced recycling arrangements, waste reduction initiatives and local environmental projects have also contributed to improving the sustainability of our sites.

Biodiversity projects, green spaces and environmental improvements at fire stations continue to create more attractive and sustainable workplaces while supporting staff wellbeing.

What this means for you

By improving how we manage our buildings and resources, we can reduce environmental impacts and ensure better value for public money.

Preparing for Climate Change

Climate change is already influencing the type and frequency of incidents attended by fire and rescue services - During the summer of 2025, prolonged periods of hot and dry weather contributed to a significant increase in secondary fires across Staffordshire, highlighting the growing effect of extreme weather on operational demand.

We continue to work closely with partners to understand emerging climate risks, including wildfires, flooding and extreme temperatures, and to ensure our planning, training and response arrangements evolve alongside those risks.

What this means for you

We are preparing for the environmental challenges of the future so that we can continue protecting communities during periods of increased risk and severe weather.

Building Long-Term Resilience

Environmental sustainability is about more than reducing carbon emissions. It is about ensuring that our Service, our communities and our infrastructure remain resilient in the face of future challenges.

Through continued investment, monitoring and partnership working, we are helping to build a more sustainable organisation while supporting wider efforts to create safer, healthier and more resilient communities across Staffordshire.

What this means for you

Protecting the environment today helps create safer and more resilient communities for future generations.

Our Environment Assurance

The Service continues to integrate environmental considerations into planning, investment and operational decision-making. Through the delivery of our **Environmental and Sustainability Strategy**, we are reducing our environmental impact, improving sustainability and preparing for the challenges that climate change presents.

Our Environment at a Glance

- ✓ **Environmental and Sustainability Strategy** delivery progressed
- ✓ Electric and low-emission vehicles expanded across the fleet
- ✓ Carbon monitoring and reporting strengthened
- ✓ Energy efficiency improvements explored across the estate
- ✓ Recycling, waste reduction and biodiversity initiatives enhanced
- ✓ Preparedness for climate change, wildfires and extreme weather strengthened.

TRANSFORMING FOR THE FUTURE

The way we live, work and respond to emergencies is constantly changing. To meet new challenges and make the best use of public resources, we continue to invest in the people, technology, equipment and facilities that will help keep Staffordshire safe the people, technology, equipment and facilities that will help meet future risks and support community resilience.

During 2025/26, we made significant progress through our transformation programme, strengthening resilience, improving efficiency and supporting the long-term sustainability of the Service.

Digital Innovation

Technology continues to play a vital role in our transformation journey. During the year, we introduced **FireCal**, an in-house productivity and training platform designed to improve the management of operational activity, training and competence. The system has helped reduce duplication, improve data quality and strengthen workforce development and operational readiness.

We also continued to modernise our digital infrastructure through the development of the **Community Fire Risk Management Information System (CFRMIS)** and progress towards replacing critical command and control systems, including our **Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD)** and **Integrated Communications and Control System (ICCS)** platforms. These investments are helping staff access information more easily, make informed decisions and maintain effective services around the clock.

Investing in Operational Capability

Continued investment in fleet, equipment and operational facilities is ensuring firefighters have the tools they need to respond safely and effectively.

During the year, three new **Pump Rescue Ladders (PRLs)** were ordered for delivery in 2026, building on the successful introduction of our **Enhanced Rescue Pumps (ERPs)**. Designed with input from operational crews, these vehicles include improvements that enhance both operational effectiveness and firefighter wellbeing.

Strengthening Resilience

We continued to strengthen operational resilience through investment in specialist vehicles and equipment. New reserve appliances introduced by the **Emergency Response Team** will help maintain frontline availability while operational vehicles undergo maintenance.

Future fleet replacement programmes will further support our ability to respond effectively to emergencies across Staffordshire.

Embracing New Technology

Innovation is helping to improve the way incidents are managed. During the year, we continued to strengthen our drone capability, enhancing resilience and providing valuable aerial intelligence during complex incidents.

This capability improves situational awareness and supports more effective decision-making at emergency scenes.

Delivering Long-Term Value

Every improvement delivered through our transformation programme has a clear purpose: to provide better services, better value for money and greater resilience for the future.

By embracing innovation, investing in operational capability and continually seeking more efficient ways of working, **Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service** is ensuring it remains modern, adaptable and ready for the challenges ahead.

Transforming for the Future at a Glance

- ✓ **FireCal** productivity and training platform introduced
- ✓ Digital infrastructure and command systems modernised
- ✓ New **Pump Rescue Ladders** ordered to enhance operational capability
- ✓ Specialist vehicles and reserve appliances strengthened resilience
- ✓ Drone capability expanded to support incident management
- ✓ Transformation programme continued to deliver efficiency, value and sustainability

EMERGING RISKS AND CHALLENGES

The communities we serve are constantly changing, and so are the risks they face. As a modern fire and rescue service, we must continue to adapt to emerging challenges while maintaining the high standards of service our communities expect.

Climate and Environmental Resilience

Climate change continues to influence the frequency and severity of incidents attended by the Service. Periods of extreme weather, including heatwaves, flooding and wildfires, are creating new demands on emergency services and increasing the importance of preparedness and resilience.

We continue to strengthen planning arrangements, undertake multi-agency exercises and provide specialist training to ensure our staff can respond safely and effectively to these evolving risks.

Adapting to New and Emerging Risks

Advances in technology, including electric vehicles, lithium-ion batteries and **Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS)**, are creating new operational challenges that require specialist knowledge, equipment and response tactics.

At the same time, changes in building design, construction methods and materials continue to shape the risks faced by fire and rescue services. We work closely with partners to understand these risks, maintain operational plans and ensure we remain prepared to respond effectively.

Digital and Organisational Resilience

As technology becomes increasingly important to service delivery, maintaining secure and reliable digital systems remains a key priority. Investment in cyber security, business continuity and information management helps ensure critical services remain resilient and protected.

We also continue to invest in workforce planning, leadership development, recruitment and wellbeing to ensure we have the skills, capacity and capabilities needed to meet future challenges.

Supporting Vulnerable Communities

We recognise the strong link between vulnerability and community safety. Factors such as poor health, social isolation, financial hardship and an ageing population can increase the likelihood of people experiencing fire and other emergencies.

Through prevention activity, safeguarding arrangements and strong partnerships, we continue to identify and support those most at risk, helping to reduce harm and improve community resilience.

Maintaining Safe and Effective Operations

The Service continues to monitor emerging health, safety and operational risks, learning from national events and regulatory developments to strengthen local arrangements.

The Service continues to monitor emerging health, safety and operational risks and invest in capability to ensure staff and visitors remain safe.

Looking Ahead

The challenges facing fire and rescue services are becoming increasingly complex and interconnected. Through effective planning, strong governance, partnership working and building on our strengths, **Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service** remains well placed to adapt to change and continue protecting the people and communities of Staffordshire.

Emerging Risks Assurance

The Authority has robust arrangements in place to identify, assess and manage emerging risks. Strategic risks are regularly reviewed through established governance processes, providing assurance that the Service can respond proactively to changes in the operating environment while continuing to deliver safe, effective and efficient services.

Emerging Risks at a Glance

- ✓ Preparedness for climate change and extreme weather strengthened
- ✓ New operational risks from emerging technologies addressed
- ✓ Building safety and risk information arrangements maintained
- ✓ Cyber security and digital resilience enhanced
- ✓ Vulnerable people supported through prevention and partnerships
- ✓ Strategic risks actively monitored through governance processes

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Maintaining a financially sustainable fire and rescue service is essential to ensuring we can continue protecting people, supporting vulnerable residents and responding to emergencies both now and in the future.

Like many public sector organisations, **Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service** continues to operate in a challenging financial environment. Rising costs, changing national funding arrangements and increasing demand for public services mean careful planning and responsible management of public money remain more important than ever.

Despite a challenging financial environment, the Service continues to invest in frontline capability, workforce wellbeing, digital transformation and community safety initiatives.

Managing Public Money Responsibly

Throughout 2025/26, the Service continued to maintain strong financial controls and regular financial monitoring arrangements. These processes help ensure resources are directed towards the areas of greatest risk and community need while delivering value for money for taxpayers.

The Service also continued to realise financial and operational benefits through its membership of the **Fire and Rescue Indemnity Company (FRIC)**. By working collaboratively with other fire and rescue services, **FRIC** supports effective risk management, improved insurance arrangements and greater value for money, helping ensure public resources are used efficiently while maintaining organisational resilience.

Our financial position remained stable throughout the year despite significant operational demand, including increased activity associated with extreme weather and outdoor fires.

What this means for you

We aim to make the best possible use of public money to deliver community safety and value for taxpayers.

Planning for the Future

The financial outlook for fire and rescue services remains challenging. Changes to national funding arrangements, including the **Fair Funding Review**, are expected to reduce the level of government funding available to the Authority over the coming years. Through its **Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)**, the Service continues to assess future financial risks, funding pressures and investment requirements, ensuring that resources remain aligned to community risk and organisational priorities.

The **MTFS** provides a structured approach to maintaining financial resilience while identifying opportunities to improve efficiency, modernise services and deliver value for money. Building on a strong track record of transformation and savings delivery, the Service continues to develop plans to address future funding challenges while protecting frontline service delivery.

What this means for you

Careful financial planning helps protect frontline services and ensure they remain available when communities need them.

Delivering Transformation and Efficiency

Over recent years, the Service has delivered significant improvements through its transformation programme, helping modernise services, improve efficiency and strengthen financial resilience.

By March 2026, transformation activity had delivered more than **£2.3 million** of recurring savings, while continuing to invest in operational capability, firefighter safety, technology and community services. These savings have been achieved through a combination of workforce efficiencies, process improvements, strategic investment and service modernisation initiatives. These achievements provide a solid foundation for the next phase of transformation activity, which will help address future financial pressures while maintaining service delivery.

Collaboration also continues to play a key role in delivering value for money. The Service works closely with **Staffordshire Police, local authorities, health partners** and **neighbouring fire and rescue services** to share resources, expertise and facilities where appropriate. Shared estates, joint services and collaborative approaches help maximise the value of public investment while maintaining high-quality services.

What this means for you

Working with partners helps reduce costs, improve efficiency and protect frontline services.

Investing in our services

Throughout the year, we continued to invest in our people, operational equipment, digital technology and estate to ensure firefighters and staff have the resources needed to provide safe, effective and efficient services.

Key investments included improvements to fire stations and operational facilities, enhancements to critical ICT infrastructure, continued development of digital systems and investment in operational equipment and fleet replacement programmes. These investments help maintain operational capability, improve firefighter safety and ensure the Service remains resilient and prepared to meet current and future risks.

What this means for you

Investment in equipment, technology and facilities helps firefighters respond safely and effectively when emergencies occur.

Financial Assurance

The Authority remains committed to managing public money responsibly and maintaining a sustainable financial position. Through sound fiscal management, long-term financial planning, ongoing transformation and continued investment in services, the Service remains well placed to meet future challenges while continuing to deliver high-quality services for the communities of Staffordshire.

Financial Sustainability at a Glance

- ✓ Strong financial governance maintained
- ✓ Financial performance closely monitored
- ✓ Long-term financial sustainability strengthened
- ✓ Over **£2.3 million** in savings delivered
- ✓ Efficiencies achieved through transformation and collaboration
- ✓ Continued investment in frontline capability and value for money

For more detailed financial information, the **Annual Statement of Accounts 2025/26** is available on our website www.staffordshirefire.gov.uk. Printed copies can be requested by contacting our finance team on **0300 330 1000**.

WORKING WITH OUR COMMUNITIES

Everything we have achieved during the year has been made possible by the dedication of our people and the support of the communities we serve.

Join Our Team

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service offers a wide range of rewarding careers, from wholetime and on-call firefighting roles to prevention, protection, control room and professional support positions. Whatever the role, every member of our workforce plays an important part in reducing risk and supporting community safety.

We are committed to attracting talented people from all backgrounds who share our values and want to make a positive difference. By building a workforce that reflects the communities we serve, we can better understand local needs and deliver inclusive, effective services for everyone.

Whether you are considering a career in the fire and rescue service for the first time or looking for a new challenge, we encourage you to explore the opportunities available through our website.

Have Your Say

Listening to our communities helps us learn, improve and ensure our services continue to meet local needs. We welcome feedback from residents, businesses, partners and visitors about their experiences of **Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service**. Whether it is a compliment, suggestion or concern, what you tell us helps shape future improvements and ensures we remain responsive to the communities we serve.

Feedback from communities, partners, staff and independent inspection helps us understand what is working well and where improvements can be made. By listening and learning, we continue to adapt our services to meet changing needs and risks.

This commitment to learning and improvement helps ensure **Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service** remains effective, efficient and focused on delivering the best possible service to the people of Staffordshire.

BUILDING A RESILIENT FUTURE

As we look ahead, **Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service** remains focused on delivering the priorities set out in our **Community Risk Management Plan** while adapting to changing risks and community needs.

A Changing Public Service Landscape

Public services continue to operate in an increasingly complex environment. Alongside the challenges presented by climate change, emerging technologies and increasing vulnerability within our communities, significant reform is expected across local government, policing and fire governance.

The Government's devolution agenda and local government reorganisation are likely to influence how public services are governed and delivered in the years ahead. While the detail continues to emerge, we are working with partners and stakeholders to understand the implications for Staffordshire and help shape future arrangements.

Whatever changes lie ahead, our focus will remain on protecting people, strengthening resilience and delivering value for money.

Leadership for the Future

A new **Principal Officer Team** will provide strategic leadership and direction. Chief Fire Officer Glynn Luznyj, supported by Deputy Chief Fire Officer Michelle Hickmott and Assistant Chief Fire Officer Jim Bywater, will lead the organisation through the opportunities ahead.

The team is further strengthened by the appointment of Sarah Wilkes as Finance Director, supporting organisational capacity and long-term financial sustainability.

Continuous Improvement and Assurance

During 2026, the Service participated in its latest **HMICFRS inspection**. Although the final report is not expected until autumn 2026, the inspection provided an important opportunity to demonstrate progress made since the previous inspection and to identify areas where further development could strengthen future performance.

Delivering Our Priorities

During 2026/27, we will continue investing in technology, transformation, prevention and protection activity, workforce development and operational capability. We will also strengthen on-call availability, develop partnerships that support vulnerable residents and continue investing in our estate, fleet and environmental sustainability.

Building on Our Success

Supported by dedicated staff and volunteers, strong partnerships and clear strategic direction, **Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service** is well placed to build on its successes and continue **making Staffordshire the safest place to be.**

ANNUAL ASSURANCE STATEMENT

Based on the evidence presented throughout this Statement, **Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service** is satisfied that, throughout the period **1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026**, it maintained effective arrangements for governance, operational preparedness, fiscal management, risk management and continuous improvement.

The Service operated in accordance with the **Fire and Rescue National Framework for England** and relevant statutory responsibilities. No significant governance, financial control or operational assurance issues were identified during the reporting period that would materially affect the Service's ability to discharge its statutory responsibilities.

While recognising the challenges presented by increasing operational demand, financial pressures, climate change, technological change and wider public sector reform, **Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service** remains well placed to deliver its **Community Risk Management Plan** priorities.

The Authority remains confident that the Service is well governed, financially sustainable and prepared to meet both current and future risks while continuing to make Staffordshire the safest place to be.

GLOSSARY

Acronym	Meaning
ACFO	Assistant Chief Fire Officer
AFI	Area for Improvement
BA	Breathing Apparatus
BESS	Battery Energy Storage System
CAD	Computer Aided Dispatch
CFRMIS	Community Fire Risk Management Information System
CFO	Chief Fire Officer
CRMP	Community Risk Management Plan
DCFO	Deputy Chief Fire Officer
EAP	Employee Assistance Programme (confidential wellbeing and support service)
ED&I	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
ERP	Enhanced Rescue Pump
EV	Electric Vehicle
HFSV	Home Fire Safety Visit
HMICFRS	His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services
ICCS	Integrated Communications and Control System
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
JESIP	Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles
KFSM	King's Fire Service Medal
MHFA	Mental Health First Aider
NFCC	National Fire Chiefs Council
OH	Occupational Health
PFCC	Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
PRL	Pump Rescue Ladder
RAAC	Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete
RBIP	Risk-Based Inspection Programme
RTC	Road Traffic Collision
Safe+Sound	Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service's community safety education programme
TRiM	Trauma Risk Management



Staffordshire
Fire and Rescue Service
preventing • protecting • responding

We Want to Hear From You

Your feedback matters. If you have any thoughts, ideas, or suggestions about our Statement of Assurance, **we would love to hear from you.**

Drop us an email at **consultation@staffordshirefire.gov.uk**
Or visit us online at **www.staffordshirefire.gov.uk/contact-us**

While you are there, explore more about what we do - from fire safety advice to community initiatives. There is plenty more to discover on our website.

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www.staffordshirefire.gov.uk