

Our Priorities

3 Public confidence

Report regularly on our progress and communicate openly about our plans so that, they are clearly understood, meet our legal duties and provide assurance to the public in a way which is transparent and easy to scrutinise.

From 1 August 2018, in addition to overseeing Staffordshire Police, the Staffordshire Commissioner became responsible for the governance of Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service with responsibility for ensuring the local community is protected by an effective fire and rescue service and holding the Chief Fire Officer to account for delivering that vision.

The commissioner must produce a Fire and Rescue Plan setting out the strategic vision, priorities and objectives for the fire and rescue service in the county. Whilst our plans could be combined, we have agreed to develop separate plans. In line with the Staffordshire Commissioner's term of office, we now look to plan up to four years ahead having a long-term vision of the emerging issues that need to be addressed based on our assessment of the risks faced across Staffordshire. In developing the objectives in our Safety Plan, we have taken into account the four strategic priorities set out in the commissioner's Fire and Rescue Plan.

We propose to publish our Safety Plan as a 'live' document on our website rather than publish in printed format, as this is more efficient and better for the environment. Readers will be able to print their own hard copy for reference if they wish to do so. By doing this, we will also be able to demonstrate the clear links between the priorities in our Safety Plan, the risks we face across Staffordshire, and how our local station plans support our prevention, protection and response activities. This means we can also adapt our plan in line with the changing needs of our communities and clearly show you the impact, or effect, of any changes we make.

Underneath this Safety Plan sits a hierarchy of more detailed directorate and departmental plans. We ensure that our plans are simple to understand, revised annually and based on realistic and achievable expectations. Through our planning process, we should be able to evidence and clearly demonstrate why something should be done and importantly to identify how it will make a difference. Public and firefighter safety is paramount, using our finances and resources to deliver better outcomes for our communities. These plans will be available on our website and will show how we use prevention, protection and response activities to prevent fires and other incidents and reduce the impact of identified risks on our communities.

It is important that we review our plans and performance regularly to ensure that we are targeting our activity appropriately and consistently improving and innovating our prevent, protect and response activities.

Our local service delivery groups ensure that best practice is identified and shared by scrutinising our performance at a very detailed level.

Oversight of our performance is provided by a number of strategic scrutiny boards (both internally and via the Staffordshire Commissioner's office), which provide challenge ensuring we continue to deliver the most efficient and effective service whilst keeping our communities and firefighters safe. Both the commissioner's plan and this Safety Plan are subject to scrutiny by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel. Regular public performance meetings are held which include reports on our performance ensuring progress against local and national performance indicators remains on track.

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England requires us to provide assurance on financial, governance and operational matters. We do this by publishing an annual Statement of Assurance, which we use as a reporting mechanism to let you know how we are doing and tell you about progress against the objectives in our Safety Plan. We will continue to do this and we will also use it as an opportunity to keep you informed about our plans once we fully understand the impacts of the challenges we face.

The next four years are likely to be the most challenging and uncertain we have known. Therefore, we will continue to work through various scenarios, which will help us understand and prepare for the possible issues that we may face. This work will help to inform how we consult, engage and where necessary negotiate in order to allocate resources and shape our service to ensure we maintain the best possible outcomes for our staff and our communities.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) carries out its own independent inspections of all 45 fire and rescue services in England. In addition to carrying out all national policing assessments.

These inspections focus on three key themes:

- Effectiveness (how effective we are at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks)
- Efficiency (how efficient we are at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks)
- People (how well we look after our people).

HMICFRS ratings are similar to those used by OFSTED for school inspections: outstanding, good, requires improvement or inadequate. HMICFRS rated us **'good'** at providing an effective service to the public and making the best use of our resources in its latest report, published 17 December 2019. We were also rated **'good'** for looking after our people and **'outstanding'** at promoting the right values and culture.

As part of our planning and performance processes, we consider any findings resulting from these inspections to make sure we continue to drive improvement in everything we do. Inspection reports are available to the public via the HMICFRS website: www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk

