



# Our Safety Plan 2020-2024



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**Staffordshire**  
Fire and Rescue Service  
preventing • protecting • responding

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#### French

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#### Urdu

یہ دستاویز اگر آپ کو کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہو، یا اگر آپ کو ترجمان کی خدمات چاہئیں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے رابطہ کیجئے۔

#### Bengali

যদি আপনি এই ডকুমেন্ট অন্য ভাষায় বা ফরমেটে চান অথবা যদি আপনার একজন ইন্টারপ্রেটারের প্রয়োজন হয়, তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন।

#### Punjabi

ਜੇ ਇਹ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਾਂ ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਗੱਲਬਾਤ ਸਮਝਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਕਿਸੇ ਇੰਟਰਪ੍ਰੀਟਰ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

#### Arabic

إذا أردت هذه الوثيقة بلغة أخرى أو بطريقة أخرى، أو إذا كنت بحاجة إلى خدمات مترجم، فنرجو أن تقوم بالاتصال بنا.

#### Chinese

本文件可以翻譯為另一語文版本，或製作成另一格式，如有此需要，或需要傳譯員的協助，請與我們聯絡。

#### Farsi

اگر این مدرک را به زبانی دیگر یا در فورمتی دیگر می‌خواهید و یا اگر احتیاج به سرویس مترجم دارید، لطفاً با ما تماس بگیرید

## Welcome to our **Safety Plan**

Our Safety Plan for 2020-2024 sets out our priorities for protecting Staffordshire over the next four years. We look to build on the success of our previous plans, whilst recognising the challenges we have yet to face. We have been able to deliver an effective and efficient service during the last three years due to good financial planning and the implementation of numerous changes across the organisation. We are one of the best performing fire and rescue services in the country, with a positive culture of embracing change and looking after our people.

We have worked hard to transform our service and the way we operate to ensure we continue to deliver a first-class emergency response to fires and other emergencies. This transformation will need to continue as public sector finances are set to carry on reducing over the lifetime of this Safety Plan.

The number of deaths and injuries caused by fire have fallen in recent years. As such, we will continue to invest in proactive activities that help prevent fires and other emergencies happening in the first place. However, we cannot be complacent as demand on the fire and rescue service has started to rise, both locally and nationally, with new risks emerging, including terrorism and incidents caused by extreme weather. With these comes increased pressure on our people and our resources. The fire safety work we do with building owners and other partners has increased in the aftermath of the Grenfell Tower fire.

We continually need to review all aspects of the work we do and how we do it. Consideration of new technologies, equipment and training will allow us to explore alternative approaches to how we deliver an effective and efficient service. To meet future demands we need to make sure that we continue to invest in our people, their development and wellbeing, as they are our most valuable asset.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services recently rated us 'good' at making best use of our resources and providing an effective service. We were also rated 'good' at looking after our people and 'outstanding' at promoting the right culture and values.

Our new governance arrangements, under the Staffordshire Commissioner, also offer us new opportunities to collaborate more with other emergency services and partner organisations. Over the next four years, we will actively explore different ways of working where this will help reduce the burden on other public sector services, provide greater value for money and increase public confidence by making our communities safer.

The issues we are likely to face in the years ahead further reinforces the need to work together with our communities, our people, businesses, and many other partners to continue delivering an excellent service in what are likely to be the most challenging times we have faced.



**Becci Bryant**  
Chief Fire Officer

 **0300 330 1000**



# Keeping **Staffordshire Safe**

## Identifying and Understanding our Risks

As required by the government’s Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, every fire and rescue service must produce a high-level Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) which explains how they use their resources to respond to and reduce the risks they have identified in their local area.

Listening to feedback from our people and our communities, we now call the IRMP for Staffordshire our Safety Plan.

We identify and assess all foreseeable fire and rescue-related risks across Staffordshire and use this information to plan how to control these risks, respond to emergencies and deliver our fire prevention and protection activities in the most efficient and effective way. This means we can make sure we have the right people and resources in the right places at the right time to protect our communities, our buildings, our people and the environment.



Our resources are placed so that we are able to respond to incidents as quickly and as safely as possible. As part of our planning process, we monitor and review the risks within Staffordshire to ensure we remain flexible in our approach and are best placed to suggest improvements where they will benefit the safety of our firefighters and our communities.

**This helps us to:**

- Improve our knowledge of vulnerability and identify those most at risk
- Better understand the needs of our diverse communities
- Prepare for the challenges ahead.

We continue to use and develop a range of data-driven tools, techniques and modelling programmes to help us monitor, assess and anticipate the impact of future changes in risk and levels of demand. These are key to supporting our risk planning processes. They involve the use of both social and demographic data, consideration of local strategic infrastructure plans, industrial strategies and, information and learning from previous emergency incidents.

The next four years are likely to be the most challenging and uncertain we have known. When planning how we combine our prevention, protection and response activities in the most effective and efficient way possible, we will need to take into account a range of issues, including:

- The changing face of Staffordshire in terms of the risks faced by our communities and our firefighters
- The impact of increased demand upon our services coupled with reduced public sector funding

- The sustainability of our buildings and other assets
- The benefits of new and emerging technologies and tactics.

We will continue to invest in the level of operational training for our staff to ensure that it is effective and meets the foreseeable risks that our firefighters are likely to face in the future.

In planning our response to risk, we work closely with partners including Staffordshire Police, West Midlands Ambulance Service and the Environment Agency. We contribute towards the risk assessment process in the Staffordshire Local Resilience Forum, which produces a community risk register drawing upon local and regional risks set against a national risk framework. Through the Staffordshire Civil Contingencies Unit, we are part of the Staffordshire Resilience Forum and regularly take part in joint exercises and training, testing our Joint Emergency Service Interoperability Principles to ensure we are adequately prepared when crisis hits.

We work with other fire and rescue services and partner organisations to identify new and emerging risks, such as naturally occurring hazards (extreme weather), pandemic illnesses and malicious threats (including terrorism) and use this intelligence to prepare our firefighters for the types of emergencies they may face.

- In recent years, the number of waste fires and wildfires has increased with several large waste fires at illicit sites and fires involving fly-tipped materials. Extreme weather conditions have already seen hundreds of hours spent tackling wildfires in the Moorlands, which destroyed hundreds of acres of countryside and threatened homes. We have specially-trained waste and wildfire tactical advisors

- Climate change causing wide-scale flooding across Staffordshire and further afield. We have high-volume fire engines and enhanced logistical support vehicles (used during the Cumbria and Thames Valley floods and more recently at the collapse of Whaley Bridge dam)
- As well as aiming to cause physical harm, terrorist attacks now seek to disrupt services by preventing access to buildings or damaging computer systems. We have measures in place involving physical and cyber security, but we must continue to be vigilant and develop our buildings, systems and staff knowledge to keep pace with the threat.

This Safety Plan sets out the priorities, which support our vision of making Staffordshire ‘the safest place to be’ and are driven by our assessment of the risks across the county. Ensuring that our communities are protected by a first-class fire and rescue service is at the heart of everything that we do. We recognise that delivering these priorities will depend on collaboration, co-operation and effective communication.



# Making it Happen

## Our Priorities

### 1 Prevention and early intervention

**What we aim to do** - Develop a detailed community risk profile of Staffordshire, so that we can use our resources in the most efficient and effective way.





**To prevent fires and respond promptly and effectively to fires and other emergencies we will:**

-  Work together with our partners across the county to share information and create a more detailed understanding of the risks to our communities and identify the people and properties most at risk
-  Prioritise these risks to ensure our activities have the most positive impact on community safety
-  Develop targeted activities to make the most efficient use of our resources and minimise our impact on the environment
-  Work with partners to educate our communities and share goals to reduce duplication and inefficiencies in the public sector.

### 2 Protecting Staffordshire and its people

**What we aim to do** - Reduce and remove risks in our communities using a combination of prevention, protection and response activities and help make Staffordshire a safer place to live, work and visit.





**To protect our people, buildings, the environment and reduce local risk we will:**

-  Continue to modify and develop our activities to embrace the changing needs of the county and use advances in technology and techniques to ensure our response to emergencies is efficient and effective
-  Contribute to building communities which are fit for the future – resilient, healthy and sustainable
-  Contribute to ensuring that buildings in Staffordshire are safe for residents and visitors for generations to come
-  Ensure that we have the capability to meet new and emerging risks from incidents that may involve flooding, wildfire, terrorism or supporting other emergency services.

### 3 Public confidence

**What we aim to do** - 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.

**To maintain public confidence and trust in the service we will:**

-  Ensure plans and resources are in place to provide a flexible efficient and resilient response to emergency incidents
-  Consult with our communities and listen to our people when developing our plans and services
-  Provide evidence that our activities are based on a recognised need and are targeted where they are needed most
-  Adopt a transparent and easily understood approach to planning and reporting throughout the service.

### 4 Service reform

**What we aim to do** - Develop and support a diverse, healthy and highly professional workforce who are motivated and empowered to improve our service.

**To ensure we are effective, efficient and able to transform the service to meet the challenges ahead we will:**

-  Invest in our people by providing them with the right equipment, training and skills to keep them safe, encourage innovation and inspire our future leaders
-  Continue to strive to improve the services we provide
-  Be honest and open, encouraging people to be themselves and treat each other with kindness and respect
-  Promote a positive and supportive culture committed to improving the health, fitness and wellbeing of our people
-  Work with our communities and partners to improve the diversity of our workforce.



# Our Priorities

## 1 Prevention and early intervention

Develop a detailed community risk profile of Staffordshire so that we can use our resources in the most efficient and effective way to help prevent fires and protect the most vulnerable people in our communities.

You know that, in an emergency, when you dial 999, we will respond. However, what most people do not realise is that part of our job is to prevent incidents before they happen. We carry out a number of activities, all aimed at making our Staffordshire communities safer and stronger. We know that responding to emergencies is our first duty, but we do not want people to need us in an emergency. We would much rather help prevent fires and other emergencies from happening in the first place. We run a number of services designed to inform and help members of the community to protect their homes and business premises. Whether it is educating children or raising awareness of fire safety among business owners, we know that what we do can have a significant impact - reducing risk and saving lives.

We deliver around 25,000 Safe and Well visits each year. This is part of a nationally-recognised approach taken by fire and rescue services, whereby considering health, social and lifestyle factors alongside fire risks, we will be able to provide support and advice where needed. We work with partners and other agencies to identify the most vulnerable people in our communities and this helps us to be more efficient and effective by targeting our resources where they are needed most.

During these visits, we speak to residents about a wide range of topics, such as fire safety, physical and mental health, wellbeing and general lifestyle choices, in addition to fitting smoke detection where required. We work closely with many partner organisations who can also contribute to improving the wellbeing of an individual, following a referral

from us. In addition to this, we deliver a range of preventative campaigns and interventions such as reducing small deliberate fires (our Flames Aren't Games campaign), focusing on road and water safety, supporting businesses and reducing fire deaths and injuries in accidental dwelling fires by highlighting risks associated with smoking, alcohol, mobility and the elderly (SAME factors).

We also visit around 400 business and other non-domestic premises each year, as it is our legal duty to enforce fire safety legislation. These visits help keep people safe in their homes and the buildings they visit. We know that the tragic fire in Grenfell Tower has highlighted the need to enforce fire safety laws and we want to increase our work in this area.

We know that the structure and use of many buildings has been altered since they were built. Unfortunately, we know that these changes can increase the risk from fire for building users and our firefighters. We have a responsibility and duty to ensure that building owners are keeping their buildings safe and complying with their legal duties. We are increasing the size of our teams who focus on this work and want to increase the number of buildings we inspect.

**We would like to target the most vulnerable people to visit and support them with our Safe and Well visits and increase the number of premises we visit to help with their fire safety procedures.**

We will also explore the use of new technology to improve the way we deliver our messages to ensure they have the maximum impact. This has already proved successful with our Safe+Sound interactive pods, which provide an interactive and immersive learning experience for children, young people and other groups to encourage them to be safe and make positive lifestyle choices.

Our Safer Communities, Communities Interest Company (CIC) aims to continue its work within the community and increase its delivery of Prince's Trust programmes in order to help more young people achieve their goals and be safe and healthy. Working with the Prince's Trust, the CIC helps young people aged between 11 and 30 to improve their employability skills and secure further training and education. The CIC also aims to increase the capacity and membership of the Youth Commission so that it can help influence and improve services for children and young people.

We work with partners and share information, data and intelligence to help us improve our understanding of the risks and understand likely vulnerability in our diverse communities. This also allows us to identify current and emerging risks to our organisation and prepare our firefighters for the emergencies they may face. We use information from groups including other emergency services, the Staffordshire Resilience Forum, local authorities, National Health Service and numerous other public and business sector partners where possible to give us a 'joined up' view and richer picture. This helps us all to develop more relevant, efficient and effective public services. We will be reviewing how we can deliver all of our prevention services more efficiently and effectively.

We will be looking to refocus the activities of our teams and assessing how we can deliver the most impact in terms of improving community safety and reducing operational demand.

Where appropriate, and possible, we will explore opportunities for working with partners such as the police, local authorities and other emergency services to deliver some of these activities jointly where we can prove it adds real value to our communities. We will continue to seek opportunities to share premises and information where this will be mutually beneficial and contribute to improving community safety whilst reducing demand on public services and our impact on the environment.

**We propose to continue exploring ways of working collaboratively with partners, such as police and health, to improve our effectiveness and efficiency. The focus of this work will be to improve the safety, health and wellbeing of our people and our communities rather than looking primarily to save money.**





# Our Priorities

## 2 Protecting Staffordshire and its people

Reduce and remove risks in our communities using a combination of prevention, protection and response activities and help make Staffordshire a safer place to live, work and visit.

We will work with businesses and other non-domestic premises to help them comply with the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order) 2005. We will use intelligence systems and data provided to form a risk profile of non-domestic premises within Staffordshire. We plan our inspection programme around those premises that are at most risk of having a fire, and where a fire is likely to create a risk to life.

We will also use information gathered from visiting premises to plan our response should an emergency occur. Our fire safety teams aim to reduce the risk those premises pose to both members of the public and our firefighters. Where fire safety deficiencies pose an obvious risk to life, we will take formal enforcement action, which can include prosecuting irresponsible business owners.

We will continue to review the findings and outcomes of the independent enquiry following the Grenfell Tower fire. We use any learning from this and other recent incidents to inform and improve our fire safety strategy

and policies and ensure that our teams are suitably trained and resourced. We will continue to work with planning authorities, local authority building control, approved inspectors and architects to ensure buildings are designed with fire safety in mind. This includes ensuring that the potential risks presented by buildings constructed using modern methods of construction such as cladding or timber framed are addressed.

We will promote the use of sprinklers at every opportunity and consider how new technologies and modern methods of construction, e.g. timber framed buildings, can influence building stability and integrity. Sprinklers reduce the risk of large-scale fires developing or spreading, helping to safeguard both residents and firefighters. Our Community Sprinkler Project aims to have sprinklers fitted in all mid to high-rise buildings in Staffordshire by 2026. Our fire engineers will work with the owners of premises housing those most at risk in case of fire to promote the use of sprinklers.

We will continue to develop ways of assessing how we perform operationally, identifying learning to ensure that where appropriate any changes to policy, guidance, equipment and training are implemented in a co-ordinated way. Stations and crewing arrangements will be based on analysis of risk and demand within our communities and taking into account the needs of the whole county. We will explore more flexible ways of working and continue to review how we prepare for and respond to emergencies, including working and learning with others and making the most of technology.

**We propose to look at the way we crew our fire engines and review our on-call firefighter duty system to see how we can maximise our availability for responding to emergency calls. Currently, we require on-call firefighters to live or remain within five minutes of a fire station whilst on-call. This restricts the pool of talented people we can recruit. We would like to expand the areas we recruit from, as this will help us to keep our fire engines available.**

We will plan to respond to all reasonably foreseeable events and ensure that when we experience periods of high demand we can meet the expectations of the public and sustain our efforts without increasing risks to our firefighters. We have arrangements in place to share fire engines and crews across our neighbouring county's borders if the need arises; each arrangement ensures that our neighbours will also help us if our demand rises.

**We currently have a range of different vehicles, equipment and crewing systems. We would like to increase the range of options available to us so that we can tailor our approach to best suit each emergency. We believe this would make us more efficient and effective.**

We support the Staffordshire Civil Contingencies Unit, which co-ordinates multi-agency training, planning for and response to complex incidents that would have a large impact on our county, e.g. pandemic illnesses, wide-scale flooding or terror-related incidents. We have robust business continuity plans in place to deal with major disruption such as floods, cyber-attack, pandemics and loss of a building. We test these regularly to ensure we are resilient and able to respond and carry on should a catastrophic event occur.

The national resilience programme was developed to provide equipment and trained staff which could be sent anywhere in the country to incidents that would otherwise overwhelm local resources. We have high-volume pumping equipment, and enhanced logistical support vehicles (used most recently at the Whaley Bridge dam incident) and detection identification and monitoring teams (to identify unknown chemicals). We also have trained waste fire and wildfire tactical advisors who provide expertise within Staffordshire and can respond nationwide if needed.





# 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](http://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk)





# Our Priorities

## 4 Service reform

Develop and support a diverse, healthy and highly professional workforce who are motivated and empowered to improve our services.

We recognise that our people are our most valuable assets. The people who work and volunteer for us work hard to make sure we are delivering our services efficiently and in the most effective way. We currently have circa 626 firefighters (whole-time and on-call), over 200 support staff and 78 volunteers working in various roles around Staffordshire, all with one common goal; to ensure the people of Staffordshire are as safe as possible. We will ensure our people are equipped and trained to carry out their roles to the best of their ability and to encourage them to reach their full potential.

Our headquarters provides fantastic training facilities using the most real-life scenarios possible. We continue to develop the training and capabilities of firefighters to make sure that we can meet the changing demand caused by new and emerging risks. For example, we have developed and delivered a course dedicated to the incident command of complex waste fires. We provide core prevention training to firefighters and new prevention staff through our accredited community safety module.

The service needs to continually improve, adapt and evolve to be able to thrive in a time of unprecedented change and financial challenge. Our people are at the heart of that. We encourage our people to explore new ways of working and embrace new technology.

We have a strong and enviable record in keeping our people and our communities safe. Over the life of our last Corporate Safety Plan (2017-2020) we made a number of significant changes and

transformed the way in which our services are delivered across Staffordshire, to improve how efficient and effective we are and, to ensure our help is directed where it is needed most, such as:

- Where practical and cost effective, offering and providing shared facilities and response hubs for fire, police, ambulance, health, local authorities and free space for voluntary groups at our community fire stations
- Collaborating with Staffordshire Police to deliver shared services including supplies, logistics, occupational health and a joint transport and engineering facility. Our communications, estates, finance, human resources and procurement teams moved to the police in 2019 creating more shared functions
- The introduction of 11 new fire engines in 2019 equipped with new technology and state-of-the-art equipment helping to improve firefighter safety and the way we respond to incidents

- Developing our multi-agency schools and community safety education programmes with the introduction of our interactive Safe+Sound pods. These offer immersive sessions aimed at encouraging people to make informed and positive lifestyle choices helping to improve their health, safety and wellbeing
- Funding our Community Sprinkler Project, which aims to have sprinklers fitted in all mid to high-rise buildings in Staffordshire by 2026
- Delivering a range of programmes in partnership with the Prince's Trust and our Safer Communities (Community Interest Company) to young people, many whom who have problems associated with a lack of confidence, stress, social isolation, mental issues, and alcohol/substance misuse.
- Working with partners to transform our successful home fire risk checks into Safe and Well visits, which now focus on health and wellbeing, as well as fire safety. These visits help to protect the most vulnerable people in our communities and assist in reducing demand upon other public services.

We have achieved all this in the context of reduced funding by remodelling our operational duty systems and crewing methods, reducing the amount of management positions in the organisation and re-designing our staffing models, allowing us to focus on valuable prevention and protection work.

We are confident that our positive approach to transformation and better understanding the needs of our communities places us in an excellent position to continue working in a way that best protects Staffordshire, its people and the environment.

Although our funding for the future is uncertain, we hope to continue to employ the right people who embody the ethos of the service. Our cultural message is at the heart of all we do. We strive to be inspirational role models who motivate each other and promote values of trust and integrity. Treating each other with respect and considering the wellbeing of others is key. Together, with our cultural message underpinning our activities, we aim to ensure Staffordshire is the safest place to be now and in the future.

We put health and wellbeing at the centre of everything we do. As part of our Wellbeing Strategy, we provide a number of ways in which our people can access further support should they need it. We adopt the 'safe person' concept for our operational crews who work in inherently hazardous dynamic environments to ensure their safety at all times.

**We propose to continue to strengthen our culture of openness, trust and inclusivity. We will seek to ensure that the makeup of the service reflects the communities we serve.**

We want our workforce to be more reflective of society at all levels in the organisation. Having a range of perspectives, cultures and experiences brings a greater understanding to our organisation, which contributes to decision making. We will take positive action to help encourage recruitment from under-represented groups. We want to create an inclusive, welcoming environment for our employees, the communities we serve and our partners as we understand these are mutually beneficial relationships.





# Our Funding

## and how we spend it

Our aim is to identify the financial challenges we may face and demonstrate how we intend to mitigate the impact of these and to manage our budgets to deliver services to our communities.

The Staffordshire Commissioner is ultimately responsible for the finances of Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service. Our two main sources of funding are:

- Settlement Funding Assessment from central government (this includes a share of local business rates)
- Council Tax, collected on our behalf by the nine local authorities in Staffordshire.

The draft Local Government Finance Settlement for 2020/21 was received on 20 December 2019. The provisional settlement, issued by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, included protection for vital services by increasing core settlement resources, which includes Revenue Support Grant and business rates baseline funding levels, in line with inflation; and by continuing other key grants from 2019/20.

The Settlement Funding for the Staffordshire Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority included an inflationary increase in Revenue Support Grant (RSG) set at 1.63%. This is the first increase for a number of years, with RSG reducing by £9.0m during the period 2012/13 to 2019/20 following a number of years of reduced funding across the public sector.

The decision by the Staffordshire Commissioner to increase the local council tax funding for the service by 1.99% was supported by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel at its meeting on 10 February 2020. A 1.99% increase in Council Tax is equivalent to an additional £1.51 per annum (three pence per week) and would increase Band D Council Tax for the Staffordshire Commissioner to £77.24 (circa £1.48 per week).

The decision will provide a small increase in funding which will help us to make further progress to deliver on our priorities for protecting people across Staffordshire. Over the last three years, due to good financial planning and the implementation of numerous changes across the organisation to transform our services and the way we operate, we have continued to deliver a first-class emergency response to fires and other emergencies. We are continually exploring our options for developing and improving the services we provide to ensure that we are as efficient and effective as possible and fit for the future.

**We have been able to deliver an effective and efficient service during the last three years due to good financial planning. We have also implemented a number of changes across the organisation, such as remodelling our operational duty systems and crewing methods, reducing the amount of management positions in the organisation and re-designing our staffing models allowing us to focus on valuable prevention and protection work.**

**Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services has rated us 'good' at making the best use of our resources and making our services affordable.**

Whilst we are confident that our positive approach to change and our understanding of the needs of our communities places us in an excellent position to continue working in a way that best supports the people of Staffordshire, funding cuts combined with additional pay and pension pressures may mean we have some difficult choices to make in the future. The way in which we respond to emergencies will have to change in order to meet the financial challenges of a reducing budget.





# Our **Future**

## Your opinion matters to us

We are accountable to you for the services we provide, so we aim to involve as many people as possible when we are developing our Safety Plan. These conversations with our communities, our people, partners, representative bodies and other stakeholders will help us to improve our understanding about your expectations and the services you require from us.

We will use the feedback from these conversations to help influence and develop our plans as we look to deal with future challenges and ensure that we deliver the best outcomes for our people and the communities of Staffordshire.

**We will be exploring ways in which we can continue to improve how we do things and look to transform the service to make best use of our people, places and resources. We will consider:**

- The way we crew our fire engines
- Our on-call firefighter duty system to see how we can maximise our availability for responding to emergency calls
- Reviewing the way we use, and crew, our specialist vehicles and equipment so that we respond in the most effective and efficient way
- Working collaboratively with partners to improve the safety, health and wellbeing of our people and communities
- The range and scope of the fire safety work we do to help keep people safe in their homes and the buildings they work in and visit
- The way we share our estate with Staffordshire Police where it will benefit the service and our communities.

We would welcome your opinion about our future proposals and the way, in which we combine our prevention, protection and response activities to make Staffordshire safer, meet the challenges of reduced public sector funding and reflect the changing demands and risks placed on our people and resources.

When we have specific proposals to discuss, we will consult in a way that is proportionate and targeted so we best understand the effects of a proposal on those groups affected. The way we consult on proposals will depend on the issues being considered, who needs to be consulted and available time and resources.

**If you would like to take part in future consultation, or you are interested in providing us your feedback, thoughts or suggestions please email us at [consultation@staffordshirefire.gov.uk](mailto:consultation@staffordshirefire.gov.uk)**

**As our plans develop over the next four years we want you to help us to shape, improve and transform our prevention, protection and response activities to make Staffordshire safer, meet the challenges of reduced public sector funding and reflect the changing demands and risks placed on the service. When we have specific proposals to discuss, we propose that we will consult with you in more detail. We will do so in a way that helps us understand the effects of such proposals whilst making best use of our resources.**







**Staffordshire**  
**Fire and Rescue Service**  
preventing • protecting • responding

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