

# Public Document Pack



## **Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority - Meeting of the Authority**

**Date:** Friday, 16 September 2022      **Time:** 10.30 am

**Venue:** Dunkirk and Beeston Suites - Highfields Fire Station, Hassocks Lane,  
Beeston, Nottingham. NG9 2GU

**Members are requested to attend the above meeting to be held at the time, place and date mentioned to transact the following business**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. P. Lane'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

**Clerk to the Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority**

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**Any councillor who is unable to attend the meeting and wishes to submit apologies should do so via the Personal Assistant to the Chief Fire Officer at Fire Services Headquarters on 0115 8388900**

**If you need any advice on declaring an interest in any item above, please contact the Governance Officer shown on this agenda, if possible before the day of the meeting.**

**Governance Officer: Cath Ziane-Pryor  
0115 8764298  
catherine.pryor@nottinghamcity.gov.uk**

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<https://committee.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=224&Year=0>

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## **Nottinghamshire & City of Nottingham Fire & Rescue Authority**

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Joint Fire / Police HQ, Sherwood Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PP on 22 July 2022 from 10.31 am - 11.48 am**

### **Membership**

#### Present

Councillor Michael Payne (Chair)  
Councillor Patience Uloma Ifediora (Vice Chair)  
Councillor Callum Bailey  
Councillor Steve Battlemuch  
Councillor Robert Corden  
Councillor Eddie Cubley  
Councillor Sybil Fielding  
Councillor Nicola Heaton  
Councillor Gul Nawaz Khan  
Councillor John Lee  
Councillor Nick Raine  
Councillor Mike Quigley MBE  
Councillor Dave Trimble  
Councillor Roger Upton  
Councillor Jonathan Wheeler

#### Absent

Councillor John Clarke  
Councillor Tom Hollis  
Councillor Jason Zadrozny  
Commissioner Caroline Henry

### **Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:**

Craig Parkin – Chief Fire Officer  
Becky Smeathers – Head of Finance and Treasurer to the Authority  
Malcolm Townroe – Clerk and Monitoring Officer to the Authority  
Candida Brudenell – Assistant Chief Fire Officer  
Catherine Ziane-Pryor – Governance Officer

### **11 Apologies for Absence**

Councillor John Clark - other County Council business  
Councillor Tom Hollis  
Councillor Jason Zadrozny – leave  
Commissioner Caroline Henry

### **12 Declarations of Interest**

None.

## 13 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 May 2022 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

## 14 Chair's Announcements

- a) Former Councillor and Fire and Rescue Authority member Vaughan Hopewell.  
It was with sadness that the Chair informed the meeting that former Councillor and Fire and Rescue Authority member Vaughan Hopewell, had passed away on 18 June 2022. Vaughan was a popular Councillor and well-respected by all political groups, particularly for his dedication to communities and good sense of humour. The sympathies of the Chair and members of the Authority are extended to his family, friends and colleagues.  
  
Those in attendance respected a minute's silence in memory of Vaughan Hopewell.
- b) Heat Wave and High Service Demand.  
The extreme heat of the past few days and heightened emergency response demands on the Service has emphasised the valuable service provided. Some fires are suspected to have been deliberately set and there have even been incidents of firefighters being attacked whilst attending, which is absolutely outrageous. Fire and Rescue Service employees undertake heroic work, particularly on the front line with the requirement to wear protective kit and equipment during a 40°C heat wave whilst fighting fires. Control Room staff were also extremely busy and worked exceedingly hard.  
  
**Action:** The Chair expressed thanks and gratitude on behalf of the whole Authority and requested that the Chief Fire Officer ensure that staff receive a formal acknowledgement appreciating the outstanding and valuable work they undertake, particularly in such challenging circumstances.
- c) New Joint Service Headquarters Official Opening.  
The official opening of the new Joint Service Headquarters is scheduled for Thursday 28 July 2022, the details of which have been circulated to members.
- d) New Incident Command Training Suite.  
A new Incident Command Training Suite has been established at Mansfield Fire Station as just one element of Service improvement. An opening date is yet to be confirmed.
- e) Reform White Paper Consultation.  
Members of the Authority are reminded that the Reform White Paper Consultation closes on 26 July 2022, so there is still time if members wish to respond as individuals.
- f) HMICFRS Inspection report.  
Following Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspection at the end of 2021, the formal report will be issued on 27<sup>th</sup> of July 2022 and will be circulated to members.
- g) The National Joint Council Pay Award.  
The National Joint Council has proposed a pay award of 2%, on which Trade's Unions have consulted members, and unsurprisingly it has been rejected. It is too early to gauge the impact on the Service, but resilience planning is in process.

Members of the Authority commented;

- h) the national pay offer is out of the control of the Authority, but it would not be unreasonable to place on record that members feel that the offer of 2% in current circumstances of significant rises of inflation and the cost of living is unacceptable. Industrial action is not wanted, so this situation needs to be resolved;

The Chair responded that whilst in London he had been making the exact same point to the interim Secretary of State who had indicated that they did understand the issues around pay and that recommendations would be put forward that suggested something is done. Frustration is understood, especially coming from the public sector, but employees and employers need to come together in discussion;

- i) it is noted that the military is no longer available to provide cover as it had in previous disputes.
- j) a 2% pay offer is disrespectful, particularly following the national appreciation of our emergency services during the height of the pandemic. It's not surprising that firefighters feel undervalued and it's a concern that this will impact on staff morale. The Service needs to be properly funded;

The Chief Fire Officer added that the Service still has the ability to request military assistance, although this was usually related to national incidents such as flooding, as the military firefighting appliances no longer exist. Business continuity arrangements are in place should firefighters withdraw their service, but service would be at a significantly reduced capacity. The Fire Chiefs Council is lobbying Central Government and urging caution as firefighters understandably feel undervalued in their role.

## **15 Committee Membership**

**Resolved to approve the following changes to membership of Authority Committees:**

- i. Councillor Eddie Cubley replaces Councillor Jonathan Wheeler on the Human Resources Committee;**
- ii. Councillor Jonathan Wheeler replaces Councillor Eddie Cubley on the Personnel Committee.**

## **16 Annual Governance Statement 2021/22**

Becky Smeathers, Head of Finance and Treasurer to the Authority, presented the report.

The following points were highlighted:

- a) this report is usually submitted alongside the Statement of Accounts, but given the delay in submitting the Audit, and with it being a statutory requirement to report how the Service has complied to its Code of Governance, it is being presented now;

- b) the Statement is attached to the report and includes an analysis of the effectiveness of the Governance Arrangements;
- c) the Service continues to develop following Covid and will continue to develop further following the recent extreme heat which has led to some areas of business continuity being reviewed;
- d) assessments of budget monitoring and efficiency processes are set out, along with the significant future issues identified which may impact on the Service;
- e) the External Audit opinion was received by the Finance and Resources Committee at its meeting in June, for which the external auditors' opinion concluded substantial assurance with regard to the Governance arrangements which are considered well developed, evolving and fit for purpose, including standards, policies, strategies, planned and reviewed budget.

Members of the Authority commented that with so much changing so rapidly, even since the beginning of the year, it is important to closely monitor and respond where necessary where there may be impacts on the Service.

**Resolved to approve the Annual Governance Statement 2021/22.**

## **17 Annual Statement of Assurance 2021/22**

Candida Brudenell, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the Annual Statement of Assurance 2021/22, seeking approval from the Authority to publish the statement which sets out how the Service has performed against the year three strategic actions of the Integrated Risk Management Plan (strategic plan), including specific information relating to the past year.

The following points were highlighted:

- a) the Service has launched a new public website which is even easier to use and more accessible;
- b) the key achievements of the past year are listed as either holding steady or improving and productivity has returned to pre-Covid levels;
- c) recognition of the Service included:
  - i. National Fire Chiefs Council acknowledging the work of the Service during Covid to support communities and the East Midlands Ambulance Service;
  - ii. OFSTED stating that the Service had made significant progress in meeting the requirements to provide the accessible firefighter partnership programme;
  - iii. the Service has been awarded a gold standard and placed amongst the top 100 employers list within the UK with regard to inclusion in the workplace LGBT+;

- d) a summary of the range of key achievements against the Strategic Plan 2019 to 2022 are listed in the report and presented as an easy access infographic within the Statement document;
- e) citizens should feel assured that the Service is performing well and operating with transparency and accountability.

Members' questions were responded to as follows:

- g) the height of the pandemic did impact on Service activity as the Service responded to additional social priorities whilst the demand for normal response reduced, but the Community Safety Committee will consider the comparative information with previous year's activity;
- h) it is an ongoing challenge to make citizens understand that the Service is no longer just a fire brigade but undertakes much broader roles, including prevention work and its cost effectiveness, which is evidenced by the work of the National Fire Chiefs Council and Nottingham Trent University with regard to the value for money of preventative investment;
- g) with regard to collaboration, to improve community outcomes the Service has been working with Nottingham Trent University on several strands of work including the examination of how effectively the Service is targeting and conducting safe and well visits. The results were reported to Community Safety Committee and stated that the Service is correctly targeting the CHARLIE profile of vulnerable citizens. This approach and nationally valuable work was noted by HMICFRS;
- h) with regard to the Cadet Scheme, discussions around finance are ongoing. An update will be available at the September member's seminar.

Members' comments included:

- i) the style of the easy-to-read and understandable document is welcomed as being accessible to more citizens, regardless of the language they speak;
- j) there's a lot for the Service to feel proud about and this needs to be more readily shared with our communities;
- k) there needs to be consistency of reporting figures in each format presentation, even if the complete information is included elsewhere in the document;
- n) we need to promote the broad activity of the Service more thoroughly to our communities so they can better understand the value of the Service;
- o) the Worksop Station staff provided a good turnout and presence at Worksop Pride event and promoted the Service well;
- p) the Service will also be attending the Nottinghamshire Pride event in Nottingham on 30 July 2022.

**Resolved to approve the Annual Statement of Assurance 2021-22 for publication.**

## **18 Closure of the 'Areas for Improvement' from the 2019 HMICFRS Inspection**

Candida Brudenell, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which updates Authority members on the progress to address all Areas For Improvement (AFI) identified by Her Majesty's Inspectorate Of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspection in 2019.

All 24 AFI have now been addressed and formal closure is now requested.

The Chair, Councillor Michael Payne, and Councillor Jonathan Wheeler, the Lead Spokesperson for the Opposition, welcomed the closure and congratulated everyone for their work in achieving completion of all AFI, including members who had participated in scrutiny at a level which needs to be maintained.

**Resolved to approve the closure of the Areas for Improvement from the 2019 HMICFRS inspection.**

## **19 Statement of Pay Policy**

Craig Parkin, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which is required to be published each financial year.

The following points were highlighted and questions from members responded to:

- a) the main changes since the last Statement of Pay Policy are identified in the report and summarised as follows:
  - i. a gender pay difference in median pay of 8.2%;
  - ii. mean average pay is £35,199 per annum;
  - iii. confirmation of the national pay awards;
  - iv. a national increase in Chief Officer Pay;
  - v. the cost of the corporate health care scheme membership;
  - vi. no compulsory redundancy compensation payments made in 2021/22;
  - vii. two settlement payments made in 2021/22;
  - viii. no early pension payments were made as a result of compulsory redundancy;
- b) the Service is committed to paying the living wage, and has been since 2016;
- c) with regard to gender and pay, most of the Service's appliances are on-call and not whole-time, this does tend to influence the range of applicants so the Service is aware that further positive work is required to broaden appeal;
- d) it is appreciated that gender pay figures are impacted by the lack of female middle managers at the level of Station to Area Manager, but an initiative led by the National Fire Chiefs Council of Direct Entry is being trialled. This Service isn't currently taking part but will consider doing so in the future;
- e) race representation is considered with regard to pay and the Ethnic Minority Alliance and BAME Advisory Group can provide guidance on engaging with and responding to BAME communities;

- f) information which does not compromise the confidentiality of settlement payments is reported in the budget and can be shared with members;

Members' comments included:

- g) the detail of this report is welcomed;
- h) it needs to be emphasised that active firefighter roles attract a higher level of pay than the stated median pay level;
- i) the gender pay gap for the average and mean pay are respectively 8.2% and 15% which remains too high;
- j) the gender pay gap is big but members need more information on the gender representation for the lower wage bracket roles to gain a better understanding;

**Resolved to approve the Statement of Pay Policy at Appendix A to the report.**

## **20 Constitutional Update**

Malcolm Townroe, Clerk and Monitoring Officer to the Authority presented the report which provides an update on:

- i. the ongoing work of the Independent Remuneration Panel, with further information to be submitted to the September 2022 meeting of the Authority;
  - ii. proposed amendments to the overarching governance arrangements to ensure the constitution remains relevant and up to date. The approved document will be published on the Service's website.
- a) Accompanying the covering report are two versions of the scheme of delegation, one of which includes the proposed amendments to update the scheme of delegation track changed.
  - b) The amendments proposed are:
    - i. Scheme of Delegation 1(d) The Chief Fire Officer shall be empowered, *in consultation with the Chair of the Authority*, to appoint, *establish and disestablish* and manage *all staff positions* within *agreed budgets* Establishing Scheme approved by the Fire & Rescue Authority and in accordance with Personnel regulations, but shall not appoint staff at the level of Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, or to act in the statutory roles of Treasurer or Monitoring Officer without the approval of the Fire & Rescue Authority;
    - ii. Scheme of Delegation Section 2(i) *(Inclusion of powers relating to the newly revised Building Safety Act 2022)*.
    - iii. Scheme of Delegation Section 2(iv) Ex-Gratia Payments. The Chief Fire Officer may determine claims for ex-gratia payments, etc up to £1000 *(previously £250)* in respect of incidents affecting both employees and volunteers whilst they are carrying out

duties at the request of the Fire & Rescue Authority and where damage is caused to their personal belongings;

- iv. Scheme of Delegation Section 2(vii) Conversion of Posts. The Chief Fire Officer has delegated authority *in consultation with the Chair of the Authority* to approve the conversion of *uniformed posts to non-uniformed posts*;
- v. Scheme of Delegation Section 2(viii) Claims against the Authority. The Chief Fire Officer has delegated authority to settle:
  - Any claim against the Authority up to a maximum level of £25,000 (*previously £15,000*);
  - Any claim against the Authority in excess of £25,000 (*previously £15,000*); following consultation with the Chair, Vice Chair and Opposition Spokesperson(s).
- c) Craig Parkin, Chief Fire Officer, explained that this is part of the process to enable more operational flexibility whilst maintaining accountability and preventing delays. Fire Authority members will maintain scrutiny and delegations will be reported to the relevant committee. Within the pay budget the revised delegation will support the CFO in responding flexibly to the needs of the Service in a timely manner, whilst maintaining member involvement;
- d) Becky Smeathers, Head of Finance and Treasurer to the Authority, assured members that with regard to Pensions, where powers are not set by the Firefighter's Pension Scheme, there are some local powers of delegation which have been approved by the Authority. However, where previously some blanket delegations were in place, the LGA has now advised that issues should be dealt with on an individual basis. Revision to the delegations will better enable this so it is intended to submit a revised delegation framework to the Finance and Resources Committee in due course for consideration;
- e) the Chair commented that in the simplest of terms, the revision would enable the CFO to undertake the duties which every other Head of Paid Services does within all other Local Authorities;

Due to the presentation of the report shortly prior to the meeting, some members of the Authority requested that consideration of the report is deferred to the next Authority meeting to enable thorough consideration.

Whilst most members supported the recommendations in principle, a short adjournment between 11.38am and 11.44am was called to enable Lead members and Officers to discuss how the Authority should progress regarding this report.

Following an informal discussion between the Chair, Chief Fire Officer, Clerk and Lead Opposition spokesperson, a revision to recommendation 2 was proposed and seconded as follows:

‘to approve the updated and revised Scheme of Delegation attached as Appendix 1 to this report, subject to a review of the Scheme of Delegation being submitted to the Authority at its December 2022 meeting.’

Members of the Authority requested that all further reports are submitted in a timelier manner to enable Authority members, citizen and Trades Union Representatives to read, digest and effectively respond.

A regular review of the constitution is welcomed.

**Resolved:**

- 1) to note the update on the work being undertaken in respect of the Constitutional Framework and by the Independent Remuneration Panel;**
- 2) to approve the updated and revised Scheme of Delegation attached as Appendix 1 to the report, subject to a review being submitted to the Authority at its December 2022 meeting.**

**21 Committee Outcomes**

The report provides the minutes of the following meetings:

Community Safety Committee 01 April 2022; 17 June 2022

Finance and Resources Committee 22 April 2022; 24 June 2022

Human Resources Committee 29 April 2022; 01 July 2022

Policy and Strategy Committee 13 May 2022; 24 June 2022

**Resolved to note the report.**

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**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**  
**Fire & Rescue Service**  
*Creating Safer Communities*

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham  
Fire and Rescue Authority

# **ANNUAL REPORT OF INFORMATION GOVERNANCE 2021/22**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

**Date:** 16 September 2022

**Purpose of Report:**

To give the Fire Authority an update on information governance at Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service for the year 2021/22.

**Recommendations:**

That Members note the contents of this report.

## **CONTACT OFFICER**

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Assistant Chief Fire Officer

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## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Data protection and public sector transparency are continued priorities for the United Kingdom (UK) government and Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS). In May 2018 new data protection requirements entered UK law (the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation). Risks from non-compliance include significant fines from the Information Commissioner and potential harm to the reputation of NFRS.
- 1.2 NFRS shares information with other agencies to reduce fire risks and to protect communities. Members are aware of the continued need for multi-agency working and the role of technology in delivery of public services, including during the pandemic. These factors demand an ongoing focus on staff awareness and risk controls.
- 1.3 In 2017 the Policy and Strategy Committee agreed that NFRS would provide an Information Governance report annually to the full Fire Authority, covering:
- Overview of Freedom of Information requests;
  - Overview of Environmental Information requests;
  - Data protection areas of interest;
  - Report on Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) activity or inactivity.
- 1.4 This annual report covers Information Governance for April 2021 to March 2022.

## **2. REPORT**

- 2.1 In March 2020 the Information Commissioner's Office announced it recognised the COVID-19 pandemic may affect organisations' timescales of compliance with public information rights.

### **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION**

- 2.2 The Freedom of Information Act 2000 provides public access to information held by NFRS. It does this in two ways:
- NFRS must publish certain information about activities, for example, financial information and service performance;
  - Members of the public can request any information NFRS holds. There are limited reasons to refuse such requests, for example, national security or a high cost to comply with the request.
- 2.3 Transparency, and having the 'right to know', is widely acknowledged as a key part of ensuring public confidence and trust from communities.

- 2.4 Between April 2021 and March 2022 NFRS received 104 Freedom of Information requests. The previous year NFRS received 108 Freedom of Information Requests. At the time, this was a lower average than previously (139 the previous three years) and was assumed to be an effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. COVID-19 was still a factor during the majority of this period so it is likely that the continuing lower numbers are a legacy of that.
- 2.5 This year's Freedom of Information requests covered a wide range of information including:
- ICT Contracts;
  - Fleet information;
  - Incident data;
  - Procurement contracts;
  - Covid 19 absences;
  - Staffing and employment information.
- 2.6 88 out of 104 (85%) of Freedom of Information requests were replied to within 20 working days. This is outside the Information Commissioner's target of 90%. However, the Information Commissioner's Office recognised the COVID-19 pandemic may affect organisations' timescales of compliance with public information rights, including Freedom of Information.
- 2.7 NFRS publishes information about Service performance and finance of on the [NFRS public website](#) as well as a sample of freedom of information replies of wider public interest.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION REQUESTS**

- 2.8 The Environmental Information Regulations 2004 sit alongside the Freedom of Information Act to ensure public access to environmental information held by public bodies.
- 2.9 The Regulations affect NFRS in two ways:
- NFRS must make environmental information available proactively. For example, publish on the website policies, plans and programmes relating to the environment;
  - Members of the public can request environmental information NFRS hold. There are limited reasons to refuse such requests, for example, national security or it would cost too much to comply with the request.
- 2.10 No information requests received April 2021 - March 2022 were classified as Environmental Information requests.

## **DATA PROTECTION**

- 2.11 NFRS values the correct use of personal information as critical to successful operations and in keeping the confidence of the public, employees, and stakeholders.

- 2.12 Data protection responsibilities affect all staff at NFRS, as all teams potentially deal with information about people – whether it is information about fellow staff or the public.
- 2.13 Responsibilities for correct use of personal information about individual members of the public and members of staff are set out in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- 2.14 No NFRS data incidents needed reporting to the Information Commissioner's Office in the year 2021/22.
- 2.15 In the year 2021/22 work continued to support GDPR compliance. This included ongoing mandatory data protection eLearning for all staff. Every two years all staff need to complete data protection eLearning, with refresher activities in the alternate year. For the Data Protection course which has been run over this period, there were 510 users with 495 completions (97%) and 15 non completions.
- 2.16 With the increased homeworking due to the pandemic, sensible practices regarding data being used away from the workplace being held safely and securely is on-going.
- 2.17 Cyber-attack risks affect every organisation. Due to the importance of protecting information NFRS use, including personal information, work is continually undertaken to keep NFRS cyber security measures up to date. The ICT Security department has renewed Cyber Essentials Plus certification for NFRS. Work continues for the Emergency Services Network (ESN) communications system - replacement for the current Airwave service used by the emergency services in Great Britain. NFRS ICT policies and procedures help ensure continual maintenance of NFRS cyber security and the protection of information and data within NFRS ICT systems, including for remote access and home working.
- 2.18 As a public authority, NFRS requires a Data Protection Officer (DPO) under GDPR. Although at the time of writing this report, NFRS has seen the departure (and subsequent recruitment) of a new DPO, this was in place for the duration of the period addressed in this report. The Service's new Data Protection Officer starts with the service on 05/09/22 and can be contacted at [DataProtection@notts-fire.gov.uk](mailto:DataProtection@notts-fire.gov.uk)

## **REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000 (RIPA)**

- 2.19 NFRS is authorised by the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) to undertake some types of covert investigation for the prevention or detection of crime, the prevention of disorder, or in the interests of public safety. (The UK Government removed Fire and Rescue Services from access to Communications Data under RIPA in July 2020.)
- 2.20 Investigatory actions under RIPA for NFRS could include, for example, false persona used to get information in closed social media groups about events

with a high fire risk, unannounced photographs from an unmarked vehicle or non-identified staff to check use of a premises with a fire safety prohibition notice.

- 2.21 There were no applications for covert investigations at NFRS under RIPA from April 2021 to March 2022.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

### **4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS**

All NFRS staff are required to complete Data Protection training every two years, with an awareness activity in the alternate year to help manage information risks. Quarterly completion checks run for new and returning staff.

### **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken because this is an information report with no recommended changes.

### **6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

### **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

This report is designed to give the Fire Authority assurance that NFRS is meeting its legal duties under Freedom of Information, Data Protection and RIPA.

### **8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 The Information Governance Manager role helps ensure NFRS meets Freedom of Information requirements.
- 8.2 Work across the Service, supported by the Information Governance Manager in the role of Data Protection Officer, helps NFRS meet duties under Data Protection law. Measures include privacy impact assessments for new uses of data, privacy notices, information sharing agreements, training for all staff, and audits of data protection measures. These measures help NFRS protect personal information and help make sure personal information is available when needed. This reduces the risk of non-compliance with data protection requirements, reducing the risk of reputational damage to NFRS and

reducing the risk of fines under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018).

- 8.3 Procedures are in place to help identify any data loss or near miss, with clear incident response and risk assessment processes. As it is a 24-hour service NFRS ensures Data Protection Officer (DPO) advice is available within the statutory window of 72 hours to report a serious personal data breach. Bank holidays and DPO leave are covered Monday – Friday in collaboration with Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Service and South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service.
- 8.4 Regular RIPA training is provided for all NFRS staff potentially involved in applying or authorising covert surveillance under RIPA. This reduces the risk of non-compliance and reduces the risk of prejudicing the value of any evidence gathered under RIPA.

## **9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The DPA 2018 and UK GDPR include the duty for notification of serious personal data breaches to the Information Commissioner. NFRS has a nil-cost Service Level Agreement with Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service and South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service ensuring bank holiday and absence cover for information breach reporting to the Information Commissioner (where needed within 72 hours).
- 9.2 The Information Governance Manager continues to share good practice and sample documents, and explore future collaboration, with other Fire and Rescue Services, regionally and across England and Wales, and is a member of Nottinghamshire Information Officers Group.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Members note the contents of this report.

## **11. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)**

None.

Craig Parkin  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**  
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Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham  
Fire and Rescue Authority

# **ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY POLICY STATEMENT**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

**Date:** 16 September 2022

**Purpose of Report:**

To advise Members that the Service's Environment and Sustainability Policy Statement has recently been reviewed to ensure that it remains current in terms of content and signatories.

**Recommendations:**

That Members endorse the Policy Statement to reaffirm their commitment to matters relating to environment and sustainability.

**CONTACT OFFICER**

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## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This report presents the annual review of the Service's Environment and Sustainability Policy Statement. This was last considered and endorsed by the Fire Authority on 24 September 2021.
- 1.2 Since this time a new Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2022 – 2025 has been adopted by the Service.
- 1.3 Strategic Goal 6 within the CRMP defines the Service's goals with regards to environmental sustainability and the policy statement has been reviewed to ensure that these are reflected within the updated version.

## 2. REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to gain endorsement from the Fire Authority for the review of Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service's (NFRS) Environment and Sustainability Policy Statement.
- 2.2 The content of the current Environment and Sustainability Policy Statement communicates the commitment of both the Service and the Authority and it reflects NFRS's approach to discharging its duty of care to minimise its impact on the environment,
- 2.3 The statement has been revised to ensure the legislation is the most up to date, and fully reflects the services aspirations with regards to environmental sustainability.
- 2.4 The key commitments within the CRMP relating to environmental sustainability are that the Service will:
  - Include environmental and sustainability considerations in decision making, governance and procurement processes;
  - Ensure that all new build and property refurbishments are sustainable and energy efficient;
  - Review processes to understand where the Service can minimise its impact on the environment;
  - Invest in electric vehicles and infrastructure;
  - Engage with partners and other agencies for a collaborative approach to reducing impacts where possible.
- 2.3 Endorsement signatures of the Chief Fire Officer and the Chair of the Fire Authority will provide continued confirmation of the Service's high-level commitment to the management of environmental risk.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 Although not directly related to the endorsement of the Policy Statement, there may be financial implications arising from environmental risk management initiatives in the future.
- 3.2 It is anticipated that improved environmental risk management can be used to achieve efficiency savings, for example reduced spending on vehicle fuel and energy bills. Any implications that arise will be reported to the Fire Authority as they occur.

### **4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS**

One of the aims of the Policy Statement is to raise the awareness of employees to environmental issues. Training currently includes elements of environmental risk management for all operational employees and enhanced training for a core group of Officers who are available as environmental advisors during incidents.

### **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken because the Policy Statement does not introduce new policy or services.

### **6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

### **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

NFRS must comply with applicable environmental legislation. Non-compliance can result in criminal sanction. By following available good practice, the Authority can be assured of meeting its legal responsibilities.

### **8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

The policy statement provides a basis for Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service's commitment to identifying hazards, quantifying risk and applying proportionate risk controls as a means of reducing loss.

## **9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS**

NFRS owns and occupies a number of shared premises with a variety of partners. The Service will endeavour to collaborate with joint owners and occupiers to reduce environmental impact where possible.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Members endorse the Policy Statement to reaffirm their commitment to matters relating to environment and sustainability.

## **11. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)**

None.

Craig Parkin  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**



Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service [NFRS] is fully committed to minimising the impact that the organisational activities have on the environment. The Service is aware that factors such as changing climate, resource scarcity and the generation of waste will all have an effect on our local communities and that NFRS has a duty to reduce our impact on the environment where possible to do so.

Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service aims to minimise its impact on the environment by:

- Including environment and sustainability considerations in our decision making, governance and procurement processes
- Setting targets on key aspects of our environmental performance and monitoring these at a strategic level
- Reviewing our processes to understand where we can minimise our impact on the environment
- Reducing carbon emissions from our buildings by investing in energy efficient design and technology during construction and refurbishment projects, better managing energy consumption and influencing colleagues behaviour
- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles by managing business travel, reducing the need to travel by the use of video conferencing and other technology, encouraging the use of public transport and investing in electric vehicles and infrastructure
- Raising employee's awareness of environmental issues, encouraging environmentally responsible behaviour and providing appropriate training to enable them in playing a full role in implementing environmental objectives
- Reducing the volume of waste which is produced at our sites with an ultimate aim of sending zero waste to landfill
- Applying industry best practice when considering the environmental impact of our work at fires and other incidents to reduce the risk of contamination of air, land and water courses.
- Working with partners and other agencies for a collaborative approach to reducing environmental impacts

NFRS's duty extends beyond merely reducing environmental impacts to ensuring we fulfil our responsibility for 'creating safer communities' by responding to flooding and other events associated with a changing climate.

The Service will continue to:

Work with the Environmental Agency and other local organisations to review the areas of flood risk with Nottinghamshire and ensure appropriate equipment, resources and trained firefighters are available to respond to flooding when they are needed

Endorsed by the Combined Fire Authority at its meeting of 16 September 2022

Signed Chief Fire Officer

Signed Chair of CFA

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**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**  
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Fire and Rescue Authority

# HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT OF INTENT

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

**Date:** 16 September 2022

**Purpose of Report:**

To advise Members that Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service's Written Health and Safety Policy Statement of Intent has recently been reviewed to ensure that it remains current in terms of content and signatories.

**Recommendations:**

That Members endorse the content of the updated written Health and Safety Policy to reaffirm their commitment to effective health and safety risk management for employees and others who are affected by the Service's activities.

## CONTACT OFFICER

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Chief Fire Officer

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## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) is required to produce and then periodically review and revise a written Health and Safety Policy (HSP) which outlines its approach to identifying the hazards and associated risk to employees and others who may be affected by the work of the Service.
- 1.2 An important part of the HSP is its initial Statement of Intent which indicates the commitment of the organisation to a high standard of health and safety risk management.
- 1.3 The Statement of Intent must indicate the approach to be taken and be endorsed by signature by those who represent the organisation, its employees and its values.
- 1.4 The current Statement of Intent was last considered and endorsed by the Fire Authority on 24 September 2021.

## **2. REPORT**

- 2.1 The content of the current Statement of Intent accurately reflects the Service's approach to discharging its Duty of Care to its employees (and others affected by its work activities)
- 2.2 The document is underpinned by further details within NFRS's Written Safety Policy; together the two elements form an auditable approach to achieving and maintaining safe systems of work.
- 2.3 Endorsement signatures of the Chief Fire Officer and the Chair of the Fire Authority will continue to provide continued confirmation of the Service's high-level commitment to the management of health and safety.

## **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no human resources implications associated with the report. Current learning and development provision considers health and safety risk management issues as defined by the Statement of Intent.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken because equality issues arising have been previously identified and addressed.

## **6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The production of a Written Safety Policy - inclusive of the Statement of Intent, is a requirement under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

## **8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

The Statement of Intent provides a basis for NFRS's commitment to identifying hazards, quantifying risk and applying proportionate risk controls as a means of reducing loss to ensure it maximises its reducing budget.

## **9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS**

There are no collaboration implications arising from this report.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Members endorse the content of the updated Written Health and Safety Policy to reaffirm their commitment to effective health and safety risk management for employees and others who are affected by the Service's activities.

## **11. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)**

None.

Craig Parkin  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**



Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service [NFRS] is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all its employees - and the health and safety of those non-employees affected by its work activities - and has devised a Safety Management System which is detailed in its Written Safety Policy. Application of this Policy will contribute to improved service delivery.

This Statement of Intent forms part of the Written Safety Policy, the contents of which continue to be developed, discussed and adopted. They are audited, reviewed and then revised as necessary.

It is NFRS's intention to strive to ensure a safe and healthy working environment as part of its wider risk management initiatives and to pursue progressive improvements in health and safety risk management performance. Its employees are a key resource and have a vital part to play in implementing the Policy.

To achieve this the Service will consider:

- the equipment that is used by employees to do their work;
- the premises where they carry out their work;
- the information, instruction, training and supervision they receive;
- the substances they use and encounter;
- the suitable and sufficient risk controls they need to follow - as indicated by objective risk assessment;
- occupational health and fitness matters;
- the competence of employees in terms of health and safety;
- the need for effective communication of health and safety risk management information.

The following approach will be applied:

- constructive dialogue with employee representatives;
- recognition that legal requirements are the minimum;
- ultimate responsibility for matters of health, safety and welfare resting with the Chief Fire Officer with the Assistant Chief Fire Officer having delegated day-to-day responsibility;
- provision of the necessary expert advice when needed;
- inclusion of best practice as identified in other organisations;
- linkage of risk assessments to site specific risk information, incident monitoring and incident debrief.
- application of risk assessment to the procurement of equipment and services;
- identification of targets for improvements in risk management;
- inclusion of risk management aims in the organisation's Integrated Risk Management Plan;
- recognition of the importance of health and safety risk management objectives in relation to other service objectives;
- recognition that failures of health and safety risk management controls are not necessarily the fault of individual employees;
- integration of risk management considerations into all management decisions;
- auditing of compliance with the standards given in the Written Safety Policy;
- annual consideration of health and safety performance by the Combined Fire Authority.

All employees will play a part in the Safety Management System and resources will be made available to achieve the necessary safety culture based on risk assessment and the "safe person" concept.

The standards outlined in the Written Safety Policy will be applied in the spirit of fairness and dignity and the above Statement of Intent applies to future legal requirements as well as current ones.

Endorsed by the Combined Fire Authority at its meeting of 16 September 2022

Signed	Chief Fire Officer	Signed	FOA
Signed	Chair of CFA	Signed	UNISON
Signed	FBU		



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# HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY AND FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES INSPECTION REPORT

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

**Date:** 16 September 2022

**Purpose of Report:**

To update Members on the publication of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services' (HMICFRS) report of Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service.

**Recommendations:**

It is recommended that Members:

- Note the outcome of the HMICFRS inspection and the progress made by the Service;
- Acknowledge the four areas for improvement highlighted by HMICFRS and approve governance and scrutiny through the Fire Authority Committee structures.

**CONTACT OFFICER**

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## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) is the inspectorate body for fire service inspections in England.
- 1.2 In 2018, the Service was inspected by HMICFRS and graded as 'requiring improvement' in the three pillar areas of inspection; Efficiency, Effectiveness and People. This grading was accompanied by 24 'areas for improvement'.
- 1.3 The Service addressed the 'areas for improvement' through a structured improvement plan that was monitored by the Fire Authority with the final 'area for improvement' being completed in 2021.
- 1.4 HMICFRS started its second full round of fire service inspections in Spring 2021 with an aim to inspect all fire and rescue services in England over three tranches covering an 18-month period.
- 1.5 Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) was inspected during September and October 2021, in tranche two of the current inspection programme.
- 1.6 On 27 July 2022, HMICFRS published the reports from round two, tranche two, including the report for NFRS.
- 1.7 The judgement criteria for inspection is assessed across eleven areas of focus which fall under the three pillar areas.

## 2. REPORT

### REPORT FINDINGS

- 2.1 The HMICFRS report for Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service graded the Service as 'Good' in all eleven areas of assessment: resulting in 'Good' gradings for the three pillar areas and demonstrating significant improvement across all areas of the organisation.
- 2.2 NFRS is one of only four Services from round two (totalling 28 inspections to date), to receive 'Good' in each area of inspection.
- 2.3 Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) thanked the Service for the "*positive and constructive way*" that the Service engaged with the inspection and commented that "*The Service has clearly used the last report appropriately and worked hard on the areas for improvement*".
- 2.4 The HMI highlighted, in the report, that the Service has a "*well-resourced prevention department*" and that an evaluated method is used to understand the levels of risk to an individual.

- 2.5 The Service's performance management framework, which was an area for improvement in the round one inspection, was highlighted as providing *"several levels for reporting and ensures oversight is maintained"* and that the Service now has a robust performance management framework in place.
- 2.6 The report highlighted that the Service has put processes in place to ensure that firefighters always have up-to-date risk information available when at operational incidents. Whilst the inspection team highlighted there was still work to be done in this area, they acknowledged the Service has a plan in place to address this and progress was being made.
- 2.7 Another round one 'area for improvement' was for the Service to develop a wellbeing strategy and the report commented that the HMI was *"pleased to see this had been done"* with the Service having this and other wellbeing provisions in place.

## **AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

- 2.8 Across the 28 inspections carried out in English fire and rescue services so far in Round Two, a total of 481 'areas for improvement' (AFIs) have been issued by HMICFRS.
- 2.9 In NFRS's inspection report, four 'areas for improvement' are identified for the Service. This is the second lowest number of AFIs to be issued to any Service to date: the average number of AFIs being received by Services being 17.
- 2.10 The four AFIs identified in the report are:
- The Service should assure itself that its risk-based inspection programme prioritises the highest risks and includes proportionate activity to reduce risk
  - The Service should ensure that, when responding to a 999 call, mobile data terminals are reliable to allow staff to access risk information
  - The Service should make sure it effectively monitors, reviews and evaluates the benefits and outcomes of any collaboration activity
  - The Service should assure itself that staff understand how to get wellbeing support
- 2.11 To address these areas for improvement, the Service has undertaken a gap analysis against areas of work that were already being progressed under the current Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). This has assured that work to address the AFIs was either already planned or has now been included in the Service's annual delivery planning.
- 2.12 It is proposed that the same, robust governance and scrutiny arrangements are adopted to the previous AFIs from the Round One inspection. This would involve the adoption of the AFIs by Members of the Fire Authority, and

progress and management of the AFIs being discharged to the relevant Committee structures.

- 2.13 The Service did not receive any 'Causes for Concern' (CfC); HMICFRS' lowest grading. So far in round two of the inspections, 14 Services have received a total of 20 CfCs. Only ten CfCs were awarded in the whole of the round one inspections.

## **TRANCHE TWO RESULTS**

- 2.14 There was just one Service who achieved an 'Outstanding' grading in tranche two. This was Lancashire FRS who achieved the result in the area of 'Culture and Values'.
- 2.15 The Service will engage with Lancashire FRS to understand the areas of development they have undertaken to achieve this grading.
- 2.16 The report also highlighted eight 'Innovative Practices' across six Services. These incorporated areas including youth engagement, promoting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, prevention activities, and promoting the right values and culture. The Service will review these innovative practices to understand any further areas for development for NFRS.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

### **4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no human resources or learning and development implications arising from this report.

### **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken because of the nature of this report.

### **6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The Local Government Act 1999 places a statutory duty on the Service to '*secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised*'.
- 7.2 The Police and Crime Act (2017) Chapter 4 Section 11 outlines that the English inspectors must inspect, and report on the efficiency and effectiveness of, fire and rescue authorities in England.

## **8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

## **9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS**

There are no collaboration implications arising from this report.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members:

- 10.1 Note the outcome of the HMICFRS inspection and the progress made by the Service;
- 10.2 Acknowledge the four areas for improvement highlighted by HMICFRS and approve governance and scrutiny through the Fire Authority Committee structures.

## **11. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)**

None.

Craig Parkin  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**

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# TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

Report of the Treasurer

**Date:** 16 September 2022

**Purpose of Report:**

To provide Members with an update on treasury management activity during the 2021/22 financial year.

**Recommendations:**

That Members note the update on treasury management activity during the 2021/22 financial year as required under the Local Government Act 2003.

## CONTACT OFFICER

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## 1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Treasury management is defined as:

“The management of the organisation’s borrowing, investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with these activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks.”

1.2 The Fire Authority is required by regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003 to produce an annual treasury management review of activities and the actual prudential and treasury indicators for 2021/22. The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy’s (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management (revised in 2021) was adopted by the Fire Authority on 9 April 2010.

1.3 The primary requirements of the Code are as follows:

1. The creation and maintenance of a Treasury Management Policy Statement which sets out the policies and objectives of the Authority’s treasury management activities.
2. The creation and maintenance of Treasury Management Practices which set out the manner in which the Authority will seek to achieve those policies and objectives.
3. Receipt by the Fire Authority of an annual Treasury Management Strategy Statement for the year ahead, a mid-year review report and an annual report covering activities during the previous year.
4. Delegation by the Authority of responsibilities for implementing and monitoring treasury management policies and practices and for the execution and administration of treasury management decisions.
5. Delegation by the Authority of the role of scrutiny of treasury management strategy and policies to a specific named body. For this Authority the delegated body is the Finance and Resources Committee.

1.4 This annual report has been prepared in compliance with CIPFA’s Code of Practice, and covers the following:

- An economic review of 2021/22
- A review of Capital Activity during 2021/22 and the impact of this on the Authority’s Capital Financing Requirement
- A review of the Investment and Cash Management Strategy during 2021/22
- Investment and cash activity during 2021/22
- A review of the year end Investments and cash position and usable reserves
- A review of the Borrowing Strategy and borrowing activity during 2021/22

- A summary of compliance with treasury and prudential limits for 2021/22
- 1.5 The Authority has appointed Link Asset Services as its external treasury management adviser.

## **2. REPORT**

### **ECONOMIC REVIEW**

- 2.1 Over the last two years the Covid-19 pandemic has done huge damage to the UK economy and economies around the world. After the Bank of England took emergency action in March 2020 to cut Bank Rate to 0.10%, it left Bank Rate unchanged at its subsequent meetings until raising it to 0.25% at its meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2021, 0.50% at its meeting of 4<sup>th</sup> February 2022 and then to 0.75% in March 2022.
- 2.2 The UK economy continued its post-Covid recovery during 2021/22 and was almost back to business as usual, with a relatively robust GDP figure of 9% y/y for Q2 2022. The Monetary Policy Committee therefore turned its attention to tackling the effects of inflation, as the CPI measure rose to 6.2% by March 2022.
- 2.3 Gilt yields fell towards the back end of 2021, but despite the war in Ukraine yields shot higher in early 2022. At 1.38%, 2-year yields remained close to their 11 year high and 10-year yields of 1.65% were close to their 6 year high. These rises have been part of a global trend as central banks have indicated that they will continue to raise interest rates to combat inflation.
- 2.4 Household utilities prices leapt up by 54% in April 2022. This, together with supply side shortages, labour shortages, commodity price inflation, the impact of the war in Ukraine and the subsequent Western sanctions on Russia all point to inflation being at elevated levels until well into 2023. Consequently, inflation will be a bigger drag on real incomes in 2022 than in any year since records began in 1955.
- 2.5 Until recent years, world growth has been boosted by increasing globalisation i.e., countries specialising in producing goods and commodities in which they have an economic advantage and which they then trade with the rest of the world. This has boosted worldwide productivity and growth, and, by lowering costs, has also depressed inflation. However, the rise of China as an economic superpower over the last 30 years, which now accounts for 18% of total world GDP (the USA accounts for 24%), and Russia's recent invasion of Ukraine, has unbalanced the world economy. In addition, after the pandemic exposed how frail extended supply lines were around the world, both factors are now likely to lead to a sharp retrenchment of economies into two blocs of western democracies v. autocracies. It is, therefore, likely that we are heading into a period where there will be a reversal of world globalisation and a decoupling of western countries from dependence on China (and to a much lesser extent Russia) to supply products and vice versa. This is likely to reduce world growth rates.

## REVIEW OF CAPITAL ACTIVITY IN 2021/22

2.6 The Authority undertakes capital expenditure on long term assets. These activities may either be:

- Financed immediately by way of capital or revenue resources (capital receipts, capital grants, revenue contributions), which does not give rise to a requirement to borrow; or
- If insufficient financing is available, or if a decision is taken not to apply resources, the capital expenditure will need to be financed by borrowing.

2.7 Actual capital expenditure forms one of the required prudential indicators. The table below shows actual capital expenditure in the year and how this was financed.

	<b>2020/21 Actual</b>	<b>2021/22 Revised Budget</b>	<b>2021/22 Actual</b>
	<b>£000's</b>	<b>£000's</b>	<b>£000's</b>
<b>Capital Expenditure</b>	<b>3,249</b>	<b>8,681</b>	<b>6,499</b>
<b>Resourced By:</b>			
- Capital Grants	0		0
- Capital Receipts	235		473
- Revenue Contributions/Earmarked Reserves	691		527
- Borrowing	2,323		5,499
<b>Total Financed Capital Expenditure</b>	<b>3,249</b>		<b>6,499</b>

2.8 The 2021/22 capital budget underspent by £2.182m. Significant variances include £179k relating to the purchase of light vehicles, £106k relating to water rescue equipment, £78k relating to the new station at Hucknall, £394k relating to Worksop station and £671k relating to the Joint Headquarters. Further details of these and other variances can be found in the 2021/22 Revenue and Capital Outturn Report, which was presented to members of the Finance and Resources Committee on 24 June 2022.

2.9 As at 31 March 2022 the Authority's capital financing requirement was £30,594k, which was within the prudential indicator set of £31,971k. The Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) figure represents the Authority's underlying need to borrow to fund capital expenditure and equates to un-financed capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for by revenue funding or other resources such as capital grants or receipts. The CFR is reduced over time by way of a statutory Minimum Revenue Provision charge to revenue which effectively charges the revenue budget for the use of capital assets over their asset lives.

2.10 The Treasury Management Strategy approved by the Authority set out the policies for managing investments and for giving priority to the security and liquidity of those investments. The risk appetite of this Authority is low in order to give priority to security of its investments. Accordingly, the following types of low risk specified investments may be made:

- Deposits with the Debt Management Agency (Government);
- Term deposits with Banks and Building Societies;
- Term Deposits with uncapped English and Welsh local authority bodies;
- Call deposits with Banks and Building Societies;
- Triple-A rated Money Market Funds;
- UK Treasury Bills;
- Certificates of Deposit.

During the year, all investments were made with banks or building societies (term deposits or call deposits) or with English local authorities.

2.11 The Authority has a maximum limit of investments with any single counterparty of £4m. The maximum investment placed with any single counterparty during the year was £4m.

2.12 No term deposits are made for more than 1 year without the prior approval of the Treasurer and the Chair of Finance and Resources Committee. There have been no term deposits made during the year due to the low interest rates.

2.13 The selection of counterparties with a high level of creditworthiness is achieved by reference to Link's weekly credit list of potential counterparties. The Link weekly credit list shows potential investment counterparties, which are colour-coded to indicate the maximum period it is recommended that investments are made for. The Authority has made all investments with counterparties during the year in accordance with the maximum periods advised by Link.

2.14 The Authority avoids locking into longer term deals while investment rates are at such low levels unless exceptionally attractive rates are available which make longer term deals seem worthwhile.

2.15 In terms of cash resources, the strategy is to maintain a bank overdraft facility of £200,000 and to continue to use cash flow forecasting to predict cash surpluses and shortfalls. These surpluses and shortfalls are managed, and current account balances are transferred to the Business Premium Account on a daily basis if the interest rate is favourable. The current account was not overdrawn at any point during 2021/22.

2.16 The Treasury Management Strategy stated that the Authority will only use approved counterparties from countries with a minimum sovereign credit

rating of AA from Fitch ratings. An exception to this policy can be made for the UK in the event that its sovereign credit rating is downgraded to AA-, in which case the Authority can continue to use counterparties from the UK. The UK was downgraded to AA- by Fitch on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

- 2.17 All aspects of the Annual Investment Strategy outlined for 2021/22 remained in place throughout the year.

## **INVESTMENT AND CASH ACTIVITY IN 2021/22**

- 2.18 As at 31 March 2022, the Authority held £2.0m of principal as short-term investments on the Balance Sheet and £4.0m of principal as shorter dated “cash equivalent” investments.
- 2.19 The investment activity during the year conformed to the approved strategy, and the Authority had no liquidity difficulties. All investments during the year were made with UK or European banks and building societies.
- 2.20 Of the five call accounts held at 31 March 2022, four had been held for more than 1 year. These accounts had notice periods ranging from 1 day to 95 days. All counterparties have their creditworthiness continually monitored against Link’s credit listings, and had it looked likely that the maximum recommended investment term for these institutions would have fallen below the call account notice period then the funds would have been withdrawn.
- 2.21 Investment returns remained relatively low during 2021/22, although they were higher than in 2020/21. The expectation for interest rates within the treasury management strategy for 2020/21 was that bank rate would rise from remain at 0.10% during the year. However, the Bank of England raised rates three times between December 2021 and March 2022 in response to rising inflation. Bank rate at 31 March 2022 was 0.75%.
- 2.22 The average 3 Month LIBID benchmark rate for the year was 0.1707%. The Authority’s investments earned an average rate of 0.1443% during the year resulting in total investment (including overnight savings interest on the current account) income earned of £14.3k, against a budgeted sum for investment income of £20k. This means that the investment returns achieved by the Authority were below the benchmark set in the Treasury Management Strategy. The main reason for this is that the weighted average life of the investments was below 3 months (see below), therefore the returns tended to be lower.
- 2.23 The Treasury Management Strategy set a Weighted Average Life (WAL) benchmark for liquidity of approximately 0.4 years for the Authority’s investment portfolio. The actual WAL during 2021/22 was 47 days. The Strategy also set a security benchmark of 0.08% historic risk of default. The historic risk of default as at 31/03/22 was 0.005%.

## **REVIEW OF INVESTMENTS / CASH POSITION AND USABLE RESERVES**

- 2.24 Members will be aware that the Authority's "usable" reserves i.e., the General Fund and Earmarked Reserves have not been fully cash backed in the past due to the use of cash balances to support capital expenditure in previous years. This strategy of using internally borrowed funds is considered prudent as investment returns are low and counterparty risk is still an issue.
- 2.25 At 31 March 2022 the value of the Authority's usable reserves (including Capital Grants Unapplied) totalled £10.375m. The balance sheet as at the same date shows that short term investments were valued at £2.061m and cash and cash equivalents held totalled £7.687m. This means that reserves were not fully cash-backed at year end, as £627k of cash balances were being used to support capital expenditure. The 2021/22 Treasury Management Strategy recognised that the use of cash balances in this way, known as "internal borrowing", is prudent. However, it also recognised that internal borrowing brings a different kind of risk, as it is effectively variable rate debt. The Authority therefore has a local indicator that limits the level of internal borrowing to 20% of the underlying borrowing requirement. At 31 March 2022, the internal borrowing of £627k was 2.0% of the underlying borrowing requirement.

## **REVIEW OF THE BORROWING STRATEGY AND BORROWING ACTIVITY IN 2021/22**

- 2.26 The strategy recommended that a combination of capital receipts, internal funds and borrowing would be used to finance capital expenditure during 2021/22. Capital receipts of £473k, borrowing of £5,499k and revenue contributions of £527k were applied to finance expenditure.
- 2.27 The Authority did not take any short-term borrowing during 2021/22.
- 2.28 The Authority repaid £52.5k in principle on PWLB annuity loans during 2021/22. Three new long term loans totalling £6m were taken between October 2021 January 2022. This was done in order to secure borrowing at reasonably low rates, as PWLB rates had begun to rise in response to the rising gilt yields which resulted from the changing economic situation. A £2m PWLB maturity loan was taken in October 2021 for 50 years at a rate of 2.00%. Two further PWLB maturity loans totalling £4m were taken in January 2022 (£2m for 12 years at a rate of 2.11% and £2m for 24.5 years at a rate of 2.22%).
- 2.29 No rescheduling of debt took place, as the differential between PWLB new borrowing rates and premature repayment rates made rescheduling unviable.
- 2.30 The Authorised Limit is the affordable borrowing limit above which the Authority does not have the power to borrow. Total external debt as at 31 March 2022 was £32.952m, which was well within the Authorised Limit.

2.31 The Operational Boundary is the expected borrowing position of the Authority within the year. This was set at £33.959m for 2021/22. The Operational Boundary was not exceeded at any point during the year.

### SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE WITH TREASURY AND PRUDENTIAL LIMITS

2.32 The following indicators were approved by Members for the 2021/22 financial year. Actual performance is shown in the final column of the table below:

<b>Treasury or Prudential Indicator or Limit</b>	<b>Approved for 2021/22</b>	<b>Actual for 2021/22</b>
<i>Estimate of Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream</i>	5.4%	4.93%
<i>Estimate of Total Capital Expenditure to be Incurred</i>	£5,835,000	£6,499,000
<i>Estimate of Capital Financing Requirement</i>	£31,971,000	£30,594,000
<i>Operational Boundary</i>	£33,959,000	Not exceeded
<i>Authorised Limit</i>	£38,255,000	Not exceeded
<i>Upper limit for fixed rate interest exposures</i>	100%	100%
<i>Upper limit for variable rate interest exposures</i>	30%	0%
<i>Loan Maturity:</i>		
<i>Under 12 months</i>	Upper 30% Lower 0%	0.0%
<i>12 months to 5 years</i>	Upper 30% Lower 0%	9.1%
<i>5 years to 10 years</i>	Upper 75% Lower 0%	10.6%
<i>10 years to 20 years</i>	Upper 100% Lower 0%	12.2%
<i>Over 20 years</i>	Upper 100% Lower 30%	68.1%
<i>Upper Limit for Principal Sums Invested for Periods Longer than 365 Days</i>	£2,000,000	£0

<b>Local Indicator or Limit</b>	<b>Approved for 2021/22</b>	<b>Actual for 2021/22</b>
<i>Upper limit for internal borrowing as a % of the Capital Financing Requirement</i>	20%	2.0%
<i>Lower limit for proportion of net debt to gross debt</i>	50%	Not breached
<i>Upper limit for proportion of net debt to gross debt</i>	85%	Not breached
<i>Investment security benchmark: maximum historic default of investment portfolio</i>	0.08%	0.005%
<i>Investment liquidity benchmark: maximum weighted average life of investment portfolio</i>	0.40 years	0.13 years
<i>Investment yield benchmark</i>	Internal returns to be above 3-month LIBID rate	0.1443% (below the 3-month LIBID rate)

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The financial implications of this report are set out in full within the body of the report.

### **4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no human resources or learning and development implications arising from this report.

### **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken because this report gives a review of activities rather than introducing a new policy.

### **6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

There are no crime and disorder implications arising directly from this report.

### **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report, other than the requirement to act within the Authority's powers when undertaking treasury management borrowings and investments.

### **8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

Risk management is a key aspect of treasury management, and the Treasury Management Strategy sets out the parameters within which activities will be carried out with a view to managing credit risk, liquidity risk, re-financing risk and market risk. The Authority has approved a prudent approach to treasury management and this report allows Members to review how well risks have been managed during the year.

### **9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS**

There are no collaboration implications arising from this report.

**10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Members note the update on treasury management activity during the 2021/22. financial year as required under the Local Government Act 2003.

**11. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)**

None.

Becky Smeathers  
**TREASURER TO THE FIRE AUTHORITY**



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**  
**Fire & Rescue Service**  
*Creating Safer Communities*

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham  
Fire and Rescue Authority

# PRINCIPAL OFFICER ESTABLISHMENT

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

**Date:** 16 September 2022

**Purpose of Report:**

To seek the approval to amend the Principal Officer establishment and convene the Appointments Committee to recruit and appoint an Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) for Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service.

**Recommendations:**

It is recommended that Members:

- Agree to the deletion of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) post and creation of a substantive ACFO post.
- Task the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) with supporting the Authority in the recruitment of an Assistant Chief Fire Officer.

## CONTACT OFFICER

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Chief Fire Officer

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**Media Enquiries Contact:** Corporate Communications Team  
(0115) 967 0880

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Fire Authority will be aware that following the appointment of the current Chief Fire Officer on 15 April 2022, a temporary ACFO post was created in place of the substantive DCFO role. This has enabled a review of the operational/delivery needs of the Service at Principal Officer level and reflects the support needs of the Fire Authority as an Authority appointed role.
- 1.2 The temporary structure has operated in excess of five months and proven to be effective in meeting the needs of both the Service and in supporting the Fire Authority.

## **2. REPORT**

- 2.1 By the learning from the temporary structure put in place by the Fire Authority from April 2022, the Chief Fire Officer has been able to consider the needs of the team in supporting the Fire Authority, leading the Service, but more importantly communities. It is the recommendation of the CFO that the current temporary structure be substantiated by the Fire Authority, deleting the DCFO post and creating an ACFO post on the permanent establishment.
- 2.2 The skills mix within the current team highlights the benefit of diverse experience and the ongoing demands for the sector specific aspects, covered within Service Delivery with prevention, protection and response. As such, this report recommends that the next ACFO appointment would have substantial experience and foundation operationally of the fire service. Whilst this approach limits the potential quantity of applicants, it meets the needs of the Service and may also reduce the recruitment costs associated.
- 2.3 The recruitment process will be a multi-stage approach and will include application, personal statement, written paper and presentation, profiling, a strategic operational exercise and media interview, stakeholder panel, and finally interview by the Appointments Committee.
- 2.4 The process will result in a report to the February 2023 Fire Authority meeting seeking to confirm the preferred candidate. As such, the process is planned to commence by December 2022 and gives sufficient lead in time to plan each stage in a realistic timeframe. Any appointment will also need to take in to account notice periods of the successful candidate, but ideally would see the appointment from April 2023.
- 2.5 As detailed within the financial implications, the removal of the DCFO post and creation of the ACFO post present a significant saving opportunity and given the projected and ongoing budgetary pressures, all levels and areas of the organisation needs to seek efficiencies over coming years, aimed at putting the community first.
- 2.6 The timescale for recruitment means the positive action opportunity should assist in generating a diverse range of applicants and communicating widely within the fire service sector will be key.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The deletion of the DCFO role and creation of the ACFO role, if appointed in line with the current Pay Policy at 90% of full pay (£109,300) and rising to 100% (£121,444) over a 3-year period and subject to annual increases within the salary scale following assessment of satisfactory performance and decision by the Chair of the Fire Authority, would realise circa £80K (inc. on costs) in savings and circa £20k savings each year thereafter.
- 3.2 With continuing financial pressures this would be a clear contribution to overall savings in budget yet retain the necessary capacity to deliver statutory duties and support the fire Authority.

### **4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

The Chief Fire Officer along with the Human Resources department will support the Authority in undertaking a temporary Assistant Chief Fire Officer selection process.

### **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

### **6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

### **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

### **8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

The substantiation of the Principal Officer structure will be one step to ensuring leadership stability, particularly in the face of future, budget-based challenges to Fire the Authority in delivering services to communities, satisfying both statutory duties and Community Risk Management Plan ambitions.

### **9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS**

There are no collaboration implications arising from this report.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members:

10.1 Agree to the deletion of the DCFO post and creation of a substantive ACFO post.

10.2 Task the Chief Fire Officer with supporting the Authority in the recruitment of an Assistant Chief Fire Officer.

## **11. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)**

None.

Craig Parkin  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**  
**Fire & Rescue Service**  
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Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham  
Fire and Rescue Authority

# **FUTURES 2025: EFFICIENCY STRATEGY UPDATE**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

**Date:** 16 September 2022

**Purpose of Report:**

To inform Members of the outcomes of the Workforce Review and Fire Cover Review efficiency workstreams and present options to ensure the Authority can set a balanced budget for the financial year 2023-24 and beyond.

**Recommendations:**

It is recommended that Members:

- Note the proposed reduction in support roles and the move to a second phase of workforce review;
- Support a period of public and workforce consultation to save £2m from the operational establishment;
- Note the proposed changes to reduce demand upon the response resources;
- Note the review of the Service incident attendance time measure;
- Consider the option to pursue a referendum to increase council precept above the current cap;
- Support the review of Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) commitments to communities;
- Endorse the limited use of reserves for financial year 2023/24 to support planned Service reductions;
- Agree to receive further update reports to future meetings of the Fire Authority;
- Support the Chief Fire Officer in investigating sustainable longer term strategic options for the Service.

## CONTACT OFFICER

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## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. Since 2010, Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) has seen budget reductions of £9.6 million in real cash terms and significantly higher when considering other factors, such as inflation.
- 1.2. As part of the 2022/23 budget report considered by Fire Authority in February 2022 the Treasurer, based on some planning assumptions at the time, predicted a 2023/24 deficit of circa £2.1 million pounds.
- 1.3. Following a review of planning assumptions around inflation and pay awards, those figures are likely to be revised to show budget deficit in excess of £3.3 million. Clearly this requires action by the Fire Authority to ensure it is well placed to deliver a balanced budget.
- 1.4. The budget included £1.6 million of temporary savings which have been achieved with underspends in the pay budget and management of vacancies, a position that is not sustainable in the medium to long term. Phase 2 of the workforce review will focus on Service redesign to identify permanent savings as required.
- 1.5. The recent and very welcomed HMICFRS inspection report rated NFRS as 'Good' across all 11 areas of assessment and is a true testament to the dedication and efforts of the whole workforce. The HMICFRS report also highlighted the fact that since 2016, NFRS has seen a 10.65% reduction in the workforce as opposed to the 1.60% average for the England average. The Service has 0.57 firefighters per 1000 population compared to 0.62 for the England average and a firefighter cost of £22.72 per person compared to £23.73 for the England average.
- 1.6. Members will also be aware that for financial year 2022/23, Officers have worked to make temporary in-year savings and provide time to complete the 'Futures 2025' work to look at both pay and non-pay budgets and provide recommendations to Members to consider substantive savings from 2023/24 as reported to Policy and Strategy Committee at its meeting in May 2022.
- 1.7. The Authority receives over half its funding (£27.7m) from Council Tax. Increases to the Council Tax precept are currently limited to 1.95% - increase in the precept above this level would require a relaxation by Government on the cap or a local referendum to consult communities.
- 1.8. Previous budget reductions have predominantly been from the dedicated staff who serve the communities of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, across operational and non-operational roles, but have also seen the removal of six fire appliances completely, as well as further changes to crewing arrangements over the 24-hour period.
- 1.9. Members will also be aware that the Chief Fire Officer's scheme of delegation was updated and, subject to both internal and external consultation

requirements, is now able to make amendments to the permanent establishment, but must remain within the overall pay budget.

## 2. REPORT

- 2.1 The sources of budget for the Fire Authority are detailed below, and the deficit for future years has been clearly outlined by the Treasurer to the Fire Authority. A report was provided by the Chief Fire Officer at the July Fire Authority meeting, establishing the Futures 2025 efficiency strategy. This specified two main elements, one exploring savings in non-pay budgets and the second focused upon the pay budget.
- 2.2 This report provides Members with a package of interdependent recommendations seeking to balance the budget, it also highlights that this report is the start of what is likely to be a multi-year approach.

£46m				
£27.7m Council Tax	£7.3m Government Grant	£8.5m Business Rates	£2.3m Pension Grant	£0.2m General Reserves

### WORKFORCE REVIEW

- 2.3 The Workforce Review encompasses a review of the structure and budget associated with the green book establishment. The green book establishment comprises all NFRS staff who are on local government terms and conditions and are eligible for membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme.
- 2.4 The Service has a total of 158 green book posts. The total cost of the green book establishment is £6.933m. This represents 15% of the budget in 2022/23. Green book staff fulfil two main roles on behalf of the authority:
- Support staff;
  - Non-operational Service Delivery staff.
- 2.5 Support staff are those who are employed to deliver business and technical support to ensure the Service can deliver its statutory duties. Examples of support staff include ICT, training staff, communication specialists, and finance and human resources team members. There are 129 established posts that fall into this category.
- 2.6 Green book non-operational Service Delivery staff are those who hold a role providing front facing services to the community. These roles are predominantly found in the Fire Prevention and Protection Departments. Functions of these roles include the delivery of building inspections, education activities and safe and well visits. There are 29 posts that fall into this category.

## PHASE 1

2.7 The Workforce Review aimed to:

- Review management posts (Grade 5 and above) to flatten structures, and equalise responsibilities and spans of control across departments;
- Ensure that resourcing of the green book establishment is effectively distributed and reflects the needs and demands of the Service;
- Ensure that the Service is appropriately resourced to deliver statutory functions and to respond to other drivers for change, including sector reform and the need for continuous improvement;
- Identify single person dependencies or lack of resilience in structures and functions;
- Contribute to efficiency savings in the financial year 2022/23 and beyond.

2.8 The Workforce Review was delivered by an internal project team between May and July 2022. The project team undertook analysis of current departmental structures and held a series of interviews with departmental heads to ascertain potential efficiencies.

2.9 At the July 2022 Fire Authority, Members agreed to changes to the Scheme of Delegation to the Chief Fire Officer, enabling greater flexibility to change the permanent establishment, yet stay within the overall pay budget.

2.10 The 2022/23 green book pay budget included temporary savings of £250k. The Workforce Review has found that these savings can be made permanent through the disestablishment of posts across several departments, with a lower risk impact to the Service's ability to deliver key functions. It is therefore recommended that Members support a Phase 1 reduction in the green book pay budget of £250k.

2.11 The Workforce Review has also identified that a wider change and improvement programme is required to support the Service's aim to be outstanding by 2032. Structural redesign and business improvement is required to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of the Service and it is therefore proposed that a second phase of the Workforce Review is considered to deliver this during the life of the current CRMP.

2.12 It should be noted that this initial Workforce Review has yet to address the potential shortfalls in resourcing in certain departments where risk and demand is increasing. The redistribution of both green and grey book posts may be required to address this in the future, and this will be one of the objectives of the second phase.

2.13 The second phase will seek to build efficiencies that will be reported to future Fire Authority meetings. Clearly a balance will need to be found between seeking improvements for the Service, balancing the budget and prioritising the demands upon the Service with a reduced capacity that the variety of support functions are critical to achieving.

2.14 Delivering Futures 2025 will also require resources which would otherwise be focused upon CRMP objectives and as this report recommends, a review of the commitments within the 2022/25 CRMP will be undertaken. Members should be reassured that the focus will remain on communities.

## **FIRE COVER REVIEW**

2.15 The Fire Cover Review encompasses a review of the structure and budget associated with the operational wholetime establishment, comprising all uniformed NFRS staff who are on the National Joint Council (NJC) scheme of conditions and are eligible for membership of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme.

2.16 The Service has a total of 431 wholetime posts, with a total cost of £24.244m. This represents 53% of the budget in 2022/23. All staff must maintain competence to provide operational cover, as either part of the ridership or within other roles.

2.17 Other in-scope posts include those held by Officers at Station Manager and Group Manager levels and positions within Prevention, Protection, Fire Investigation, Risk and Assurance and Learning and Development. The Service's response capability is not restricted to the station-based workforce, Station and Group Managers are critical to the safe management and leadership of functions across the organisation.

2.18 Officers are, however, subject to a third efficiency workstream under Futures 2025, it is not recommended in this report to reduce this cohort, the collective agreement is under review and will continue with several temporary appointments, pending the potential for efficiencies and further clarity on the pressure upon budget provisions in financial year 2022/23 and 2023/24.

2.19 Other Officer roles include Area Managers and Principal Officers, both levels have been subject to review, requiring the substantive Area Manager cohort to remain unchanged at this point. A separate report covering the Principal Officer structure does recommend a minor adjustment, that would save circa £80K in its first three years and £20k in following years.

2.20 The Fire Cover Review is designed to:

- Undertake resource optimisation modelling, based on the Strategic Assessment of Risk, to identify potential savings whilst minimising negative community impact;
- Minimise increases to average attendance times and the CRMP commitment to meet the current response standard of a first appliance arriving at an incident within an average of 8 minutes from mobilisation;
- Consider Nottinghamshire-wide performance against attendance standards and accept that levels of performance can differ between areas of the city and county;
- Only consider existing station locations and not recommend the introduction of new On-call sections. However, this will be considered as a longer-term element of CRMP activities.

- 2.21 Resource modelling has been delivered in partnership with a sector leading expert with extensive experience of emergency services around the world to optimise resource use and respond in the most efficient and effective way. ORH have over 30-years' experience and have worked with over 150 organisations including NHS Trusts, EMAS, London Fire Brigade and West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service.
- 2.22 Building on the operational response cover that they undertook for the Service in 2021, ORH undertook optimisation modelling to identify different configurations of fire appliances to meet saving levels of £1m, £1.5m, £2m, £2.5m and £3m. This approach reflected the uncertainty of savings required and projected budget shortfalls detailed within this report.
- 2.23 It is not possible to save sufficient money from existing budgets without reducing the ridership. Due to the funding uncertainties and estimated budget shortfall (as highlighted in Paragraphs 1.2 and 1.3) it is recommended that Members support the option to save £2m from the station-based establishment. Any option that sees continued reductions in a highly regarded service, particularly considering the recent HMICFRS inspection report and 'Good' rating, is likely to attract negative attention.
- 2.24 It should also be noted that without the budget deficit being addressed with additional funds, further savings reports will be presented by the Chief Fire Officer in 2023 and 2024 for Members to consider as appropriate.
- 2.25 The best option, with least impact on the community utilising Service provided data with ORH, to achieve this has been identified the:
- Removal of the second appliance from London Road;
  - Removal of the second appliance from Stockhill;
  - Conversion of West Bridgford from one wholetime appliance to one day shift crewing appliance;
  - Conversion of Ashfield from one day shift crewing and one On-call appliance to one wholetime and one On-call appliance.
- 2.26 The £2m savings option reduces the number of appliances in Service from 30 to 28. It also reduces the ridership by 44 posts to 312. Current vacancies and the retirement profile would enable this reduction in posts to not result in any redundancies in this area, when staggered over the life of the CRMP, further changes will need to be kept under review, based upon future budget allocations.
- 2.27 Inevitably such a reduction in resources will have an impact on Service performance. The average time for a first appliance to arrive at an incident from mobilisation would increase by 7 seconds. Whilst this increase would have minimal impact on the outcome of an incident, it would mean that the CRMP commitment to attend within an average of 8 minutes is breached by 4 seconds.

2.28 A revision to the CRMP would therefore be recommended. It is also recommended a more detailed analysis be undertaken, and recommendations brought back to a future meeting of the Fire Authority. The impact on first appliance attendance time can be seen in Table 1.

	Current Average Attendance	Revised Average Attendance	Difference
Service-wide	7:57	8:04	+0:07
Ashfield	9:06	8:18	-0:48
Bassetlaw	9:37	9:37	0:00
Broxtowe	7:26	7:35	+0:09
City of Nottingham	6:31	6:52	+0:21
Gedling	7:01	7:11	+0:10
Mansfield	7:52	7:49	-0:03
Newark & Sherwood	10:02	10:02	0:00
Rushcliffe	9:47	10:30	+0:43

Table 1: Impact on first appliance average attendance of £2m saving model

2.29 Table 1 shows that the implementation of the £2m saving option has no impact or an improved first appliance attendance average in Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield and Newark and Sherwood. There is minimal impact on Broxtowe, City of Nottingham and Gedling where first appliance average attendance performance would be maintained well below the current standards.

2.30 There would be more impact in Rushcliffe where first appliance average attendance increases by 43 seconds. However, this is somewhat mitigated by the fact that since April 2020, Rushcliffe has had the second lowest number of incidents (see Figure 1) and in 2021/22 had the fewest number of residents that met the Service's at-risk CHARLIE profile identified by partner organisations (see Figure 2) signifying the lower levels of risk within the Borough.

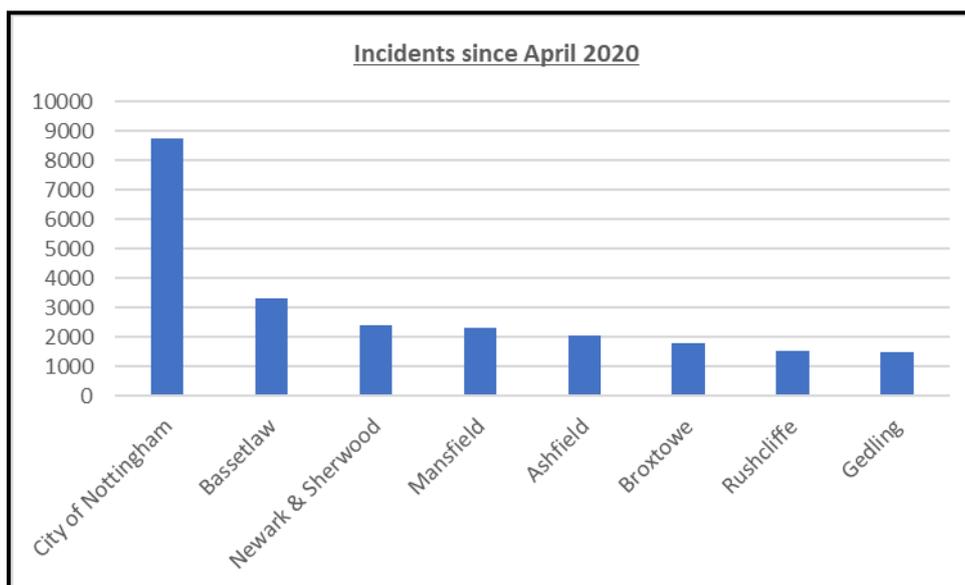


Figure 1: Incidents since April 2020 by District

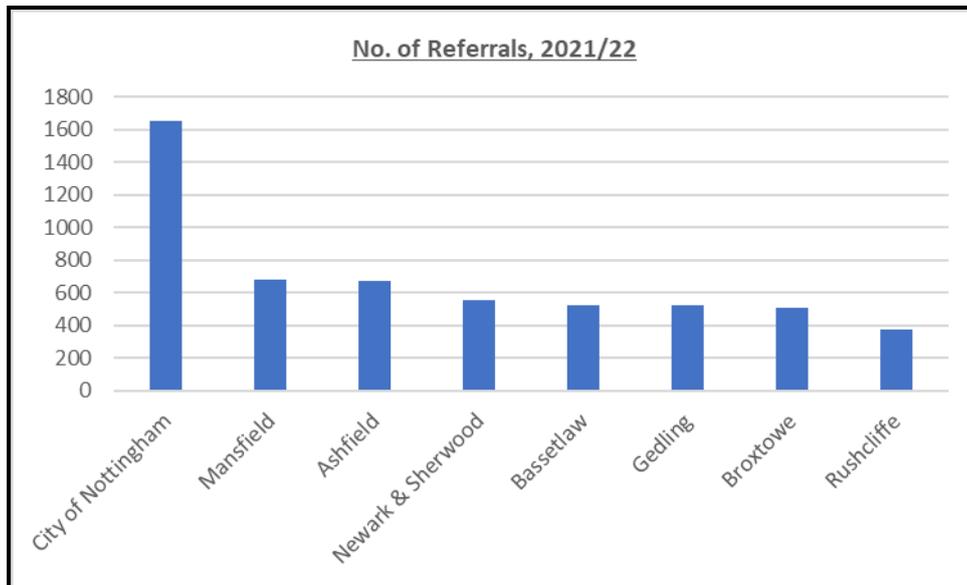


Figure 2: Number of Safe & Well referrals from partner organisations District, 2021/22

- 2.31 A reduction to response resources would also have an impact on the Service's ability to deliver current CRMP commitments relating to safe and well visits, business safety checks, and the collection of site-specific risk information. The Service would have to mitigate for losses of productivity at London Road, Stockhill and West Bridgford by redistributing workloads to other stations and teams, and seeking more efficient ways of working, including a further review of the of the working day and investment in digitisation.
- 2.32 The proposed reductions in response capability will clearly impact upon Service resilience during spate conditions, compounded by the ongoing challenges to recruit and retain On-call firefighters, whose enthusiasm and dedication to communities deliver 18 (overnight) of the Service's 30 appliances.
- 2.33 Given the demands for the On-Call element of the Service and numerous initiatives for its sustainability, additional focus and resource will be required and again this will be reported to the Fire Authority as appropriate.
- 2.34 Since its introduction, the day shift crewing model has been reviewed and given the extent of the recommendations and implications contained within this report, it is the view of the Chief Fire Officer that this be subject to a further efficiencies review, prior to and part of the recommended changes to the Service's response model.
- 2.35 The Authority has a statutory responsibility to consult on changes to fire cover. It is recommended that Members support a period of public and workforce consultation on the option to save £2m from the establishment. Any consultation will be conducted in accordance with HM Government Code of Practice on Consultation. Given the timescales it is proposed that consultation commence following Members consideration of the

recommendations in this report, providing sufficient time to report the outcomes to the February 2023 Fire Authority meeting.

- 2.36 Alongside proposed workforce reductions, a review of the demands on Service resources, specifically response, will be completed. These have previously been referenced at the Community Safety Committee, for example the need to reduce unwanted fire signals (UwFS), as these make up 40% of all incidents attended. Given how attendance time is measured as an average, reductions in the UwFS are likely to see an increase in the Service reported attendance measure, as such, further work as part of the CRMP will be required to review the Service attendance time measure.
- 2.37 Greater reductions in these areas will ensure focus continues to be placed upon prevention and protection, and response to incidents that are categorised as higher risk and requiring operational deployment. Service Delivery will identify this on a risk based, operational basis and progress will be reported to the Community Safety Committee.
- 2.38 This report does not recommend any reductions to protection resources. Members will be all too aware of the growing focus upon risk in the built environment, new legislation being implemented and aftermath following the tragic Grenfell Tower fire. Indeed, the joint work with NFRS and Nottingham City Council continues to highlight the degree of poor standards that exist within the built environment and therefore the Chief Fire Officer has tasked the wider leadership team to identify additional resources, subject to longer term budget reductions to be directed to this area of work.
- 2.39 With over a decade of reductions, Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service has generally managed balancing the budget internally, however with the prospect of further, sustained reductions, it is not recommended that this approach continue to be relied upon alone. As such, it is recommended the Chief Fire Officer investigate options for longer-term strategic partnerships that offer a more sustainable and resilient model to serve the communities of the city and county, including the potential offered from the ongoing journey to devolution.
- 2.40 The options outlined in this report are likely to take considerable time to implement as well as funds to resource, and these are currently built into the use of reserves shown in Table 2 (below). The implementation of any changes will be phased and informed once clarity is provided on the current planning assumptions, for example council precept and Government grant.
- 2.41 The Futures 2025 work will seek to have a broader organisational development approach and not only deal with significant change as highlighted in this report, but continue to develop NFRS as a well-regarded organisation, by using its finite resources focused upon community risk.

### 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The 2022/23 budget report considered by Members in February 2022 identified a £2m budget deficit position in 2023/24, rising to around £3m in 2024/25 and 2025/26. Inflation rates have increased substantially since the report was presented and will impact further on non-pay budgets (gas, electric and fuel in particular). In addition, pay awards are now expected to be higher than the 3% assumed in the report (each 1% increase above the 3% budgeted incurs an additional £350k annual cost).
- 3.2 The economy is now expected to fall into recession and increases in future funding for fire and rescue services are considered unlikely. Government advice is that the sector should not anticipate additional funding to, for example, cover pay awards.
- 3.3 Taking the above into account, the deficit position is expected to increase substantially from 2023/24 onwards. Assuming pay awards of 6%, current estimates would be for a £3m deficit in 2023/24 rising to £5m in 2024/25 and 2025/26 should no efficiencies be realised.
- 3.4 Table 2 shows that reserve levels are currently expected to be in the region of £10m on 01 April 2023.

Estimated Reserves 1 April 23	£'000	£'000
General Fund Reserve (minimum level £4.5m)		5,400
Earmarked Reserves:		4,600
Unused Grant	325	
ESN	1,184	
Mobilising system	278	
Pensions (McCloud remedy)	200	
Budget Pressure Support	936	
Futures 25 Efficiency Strategy support	900	
Other Committed earmarked reserves	777	
<b>Total Reserves</b>		<b>10,000</b>

Table 2: Expected reserve levels on 01 April 2023

- 3.5 The reserves include £936k for budget pressure support which could be used to support the 2023/24 budget. It is important to remember that these available reserves are required to protect the Authority against future unforeseen costs. Given the budget deficit is expected to increase in 2024/25 and 2025/26 it would be imprudent to use reserves in order to delay implementing efficiencies in 2023/24.

#### **4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 This report makes recommendations that fundamentally impact upon individuals and teams, at a time of increasing national anxiety over cost of living, income security and job security. The Service has a good track record in supporting its staff and this will be required more than ever. Financial provision has been aimed for staff engagement and the health and well-being of staff will be foremost.
- 4.2 Any changes to the permanent establishment will have implications for the workforce, including the potential need for redundancies in the Service which cannot be ruled out at this point, but the Service will seek to mitigate the need for this. Local consultation procedures are in place to ensure the Service complies with statutory consultation requirements and will fully engage with relevant trade unions in seeking ways to mitigate any proposed redundancies, and to consult on permanent changes to the establishment.
- 4.3 There will be a requirement for the relocation of operational staff to different stations. This will be managed in line with the well-established consultation and policy framework.
- 4.4 The Service will ensure it engages with the workforce and their representatives as fully as possible regarding outcomes arising from Futures 2025 proposals.

#### **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Equality impact has been considered as part of the Futures 2025 efficiency strategy. Equality impacts have been considered as part of the overall change impact assessment process.
- 5.2 An equality impact assessment will be completed for the Workforce Review outcomes once they have been agreed.

#### **6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

There are no crime and disorder implications associated with this report.

#### **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The Fire Services Act places a Statutory Duty on Authorities to make provisions for firefighting, fire safety and responding to road traffic collisions and other emergencies. With the budget available, NFRS will continue to meet its statutory duties.

- 7.2 The Secretary of State, under Section 22 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act (FRSA) 2004 has the power of intervention, if the Secretary of State considers that a fire and rescue authority is failing, or is likely to fail, to act in accordance with the Framework prepared under Section 21 of the FRSA.
- 7.3 Sections 10 to 13 of the Local Government Act 1999 (c. 27) (best value inspections) apply in relation to a fire and rescue authority's compliance with Section 21(7) of the FRSA as they apply in relation to a best value authority's compliance with the requirements of Part 1 of that Act. Fire and rescue authorities must have regard to the Framework in carrying out their functions.
- 7.4 The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 includes the need to plan for business continuity events, including periods of industrial action. Given the ongoing national issues and the consideration of this report, the Service has reported its resilience arrangements to the Policy and Strategy Committee and is reviewing its future arrangements.
- 7.5 The Authority has a statutory responsibility to consult on changes to fire cover. Consultation will be conducted in accordance with HM Government Code of Practice on Consultation and failure to comply with the code may result in Judicial Review of any decisions taken.

## **8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 The reputation of the Service and community confidence in it will need to be managed, this will be addressed with a supporting communication and consultation plan, with support from external, sector competent organisations as appropriate.
- 8.2 Workforce change is clearly significant and may result in negative relationships and culture. Building upon years of values-based activity and long-standing engagement with the workforce and representatives is imperative to maintain effective employee relations in order that changes to establishment do not impact unduly on employee relations, or well-being. Through the Chief Fire Officer, the Futures 2025 programme and wider leadership across the Service, this will be built into the recommended organisational development approach.
- 8.3 Given the expected budget deficit position, a do-nothing option is not recommended. Without making efficiency savings there is clearly a risk to the Authority's ability to deliver a balanced budget. The recommendations within this report seek to address that risk.
- 8.4 Changes to the establishment may impact on the Service's ability to deliver against some CRMP objectives and there will need to be a review of the current CRMP against planning for the 2025/28 version.
- 8.5 The proposed changes to fire cover will result in slightly increased appliance attendance times in some Districts. By taking the recommendation within this

report as a package of measures to balance the budget, resourcing and demand will be addressed.

## **9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS**

There are potential collaboration opportunities to ensure the efficient and resilient delivery of the Service. These will be investigated further as part of a Phase 2 of the Futures 2025 strategy.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members:

- 10.1 Note the proposed reduction in support roles and the move to a second phase of workforce review.
- 10.2 Support a period of public and workforce consultation to save £2m from the operational establishment.
- 10.3 Note the proposed changes to reduce demand upon the response resources
- 10.4 Note the review of the Service incident attendance time measure
- 10.5 Consider the option to pursue a referendum to increase council precept above the current cap.
- 10.6 Support the review of CRMP commitments to communities.
- 10.7 Endorse the limited use of reserves for financial year 2023/24 to support planned Service reductions.
- 10.8 Agree to receive further update reports to future meetings of the Fire Authority.
- 10.9 Support the Chief Fire Officer in investigating sustainable longer term strategic options for the Service.

## **11. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)**

None.

Craig Parkin  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**