



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority

IMPLEMENTATION OF 'RESOURCING TO RISK'

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Date: 22 September 2023

Purpose of Report:

To present Members with updates relating to the deployment of resources to address current and future requirements in the Service.

Recommendations:

That Members note the contents of this report.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At the Fire Authority meeting in February 2023, Members voted to “*task the Chief Fire Officer to swiftly work up and implement proposals at Ashfield fire station to address the identified gap in resourcing to risk faced by the community.*”
- 1.2 At the Fire Authority meeting in July 2023, Members supported and endorsed the approach of the Chief Fire Officer in the proposed deployment of resources to risk and agreed to receive further updates from this workstream at full meetings of the Fire Authority.
- 1.3 The Service’s Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) details how the Service will aim to make the best use of resources to deliver its commitments to communities.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 The delivery of the changes to crewing at Ashfield fire station is being led by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer for Service Delivery, through a project board approach.
- 2.2 The project aims to see the reinstatement of 24-hour, wholetime crewing, at Ashfield by the end of November 2023 and is currently on target for the completion of the required changes within this timeframe.
- 2.3 Proactive engagement with staff, representative bodies, and internal and external stakeholders is being prioritised to ensure that progress is maintained, and necessary changes are implemented with minimum impact or disruption to those affected.
- 2.4 The current wholetime ridership level presented a risk to the ability to crew the additional posts required to facilitate the changes at Ashfield fire station, however a number of steps have been taken to improve the ridership, including the advertisement of transferees from other Services for personnel who are already On-Call firefighters in Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service, and to external applicants who wish to relocate.
- 2.5 These additional firefighter roles entering the Service will both support the ridership level and allow the facilitation of the release of posts to support the wider achievement of CRMP commitments, as highlighted in the July report.
- 2.6 The Service has also progressed plans to undertake a large intake of new firefighters in 2024, with the aim of recruiting 40 new firefighters within the year. Positive action and engagement events are underway to recruit a diverse and representative group of future firefighters, with recruitment days opening in late September 2023.

- 2.7 Mitigations to the risks highlighted in the July report to Fire Authority, in relation to the higher frequency of crewing appliances with four personnel, have been progressed. These include refreshed incident command training, a review of degradation procedures and incorporation of crewing levels in to training scenarios.
- 2.8 As part of wider Service plans to improve dignity and accessibility of the estate, further works are planned for Ashfield fire station in 2023/24 that will see facilities improved for personnel working at this location.
- 2.9 A range of evaluation criteria have been developed to monitor performance both in the Ashfield area, and Service-wide, related to the changes which are being implemented. These areas will be monitored through the Service's established governance structures and reported to the Community Safety Committee as part of the Service Delivery performance update.
- 2.10 Further updates, and pertinent evaluation reporting, will be presented to the December Fire Authority meeting, and future meetings, to inform Members of progress against the changes.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising from this update report. All associated costs for this report are covered within the agreed annual budget for 2023/24 and any future associated costs will be contained within the medium-term financial strategy.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Through the project approach, the Service is proactively engaging with the workforce, and representative bodies, to ensure a transition that maintains staff well-being and engagement, through a well-established consultation and policy framework.
- 4.2 There are no learning and development implications arising from this report.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 An equality impact assessment (EIA) was completed as part of these proposals and reported to the July Fire Authority meeting.
- 5.2 The EIA is being used, and reviewed, by the project board to support the implementation of plans for the resourcing to risk.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

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

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Fire and Rescue Services Act (2004) places a statutory duty on authorities to make provisions for firefighting, fire safety and responding to road traffic collisions and other emergencies.
- 7.2 The Secretary of State, under Section 22 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act (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 Act.
- 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 Act 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 Authority has a statutory responsibility to consult on changes to fire cover. Consultation was conducted in accordance with HM Government Code of Practice on Consultation and the outcomes of this consultation were reported to the CFA meeting in February 2023.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The Service's corporate risk register highlights risks that are associated with the contents of this report:

Risk	Implications
Employee Engagement	The changes to duty systems and the proposals to change crewing models, present the risk of damaging employee engagement and industrial relations. Early, proactive engagement with affected personnel and representative bodies, along with an effective communications plan and a consultative approach will assist in mitigating this risk.

Risk	Implications
Preventable Deaths	The Service is reallocating risk based on independent modelling and feedback from consultation that will aim to ensure that the right resources are prioritised in the right location, ultimately with an aim of creating safer communities.
Availability of Resources	<p>This risk is mitigated in part by the proposals in this report by ensuring the best use of resources across the Service and ensuring a 24/7 wholetime response is available in the Ashfield area.</p> <p>Risks presented by the level of wholetime ridership are being mitigated through a focussed recruitment of additional firefighter roles to the Service, including the immediate steps outlined within this report.</p>
Corporate Reputation	This risk is presented through the proposals for change and public interest in these changes. A full communications plan and proactive engagement with this workstream will assist in mitigating this risk.

9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS

Any proposed changes to the crewing at Ashfield fire station have been fully communicated with colleagues from affected Fire and Rescue Services.

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