



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority
Finance and Resources Committee

HOME OFFICE PRODUCTIVITY AND EFFICIENCY PLAN 2024/25

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Date: 18 October 2024

Purpose of Report:

To present to Members the Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service Productivity and Efficiency Plan for the financial year 2024/25 in response to the Home Office request for a Productivity and Efficiency Plan.

Recommendations:

That Members note the content of the Productivity and Efficiency Plan for 2024/25.

CONTACT OFFICER

Name: Bev Bull
Head of Finance and Treasurer to the Authority

Tel: 0115 8388100

Email: bev.bull@notts-fire.gov.uk

Media Enquiries Contact: Corporate Communications Team
0115 8388100 corporatecomms@notts-fire.gov.uk

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 As part of the Spending Review 2021, the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and the Local Government Association (LGA) agreed that between 2022/23-2024/25, fire and rescue services in England would increase wholetime firefighter productivity by 3% and create 2% of non-pay efficiency savings. Linked to these targets, the Minister of State for Crime, Policing and Fire asked that all standalone fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) draft and publish productivity and efficiency plans for 2023/24.
- 1.2 The Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service Productivity and Efficiency Plan for 2023/24 was submitted to Home Office and was presented to Finance and Resources Committee on 16 June 2023.
- 1.3 For 2024/25, the Minister has requested that all FRAs, regardless of their governance model, draft and publish a Productivity and Efficiency Plan for 2024/25. The expectation is that Services that undertook this exercise last year to refresh their plan.
- 1.4 Through analysis of the plans the Home Office aims to develop a picture of sector wide progress against these goals and helps them in building evidence for the next Spending Review.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 Appendix A to this report contains a full copy of the Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service Productivity and Efficiency Plan for 2024/25. The plan has been formulated based on guidance and templates provided by the Home Office.
- 2.2 The Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service Productivity and Efficiency Plan for 2024/25 includes the following information:
 - 2024/25 budget;
 - Summary of forecast reserves as at 31 March 2024;
 - Table of efficiency savings and any other savings;
 - Collaboration initiatives with other organisations;
 - Return on investment (ROI) projects;
 - Charging policies;
 - Asset management and investment in technology;
 - Resourcing;
 - Procurement;
 - Estates;
 - Departmental reviews.
- 2.3 The productivity section of the plan outlines the internally derived performance metrics the Service has in place for wholetime crews and the progress made in these areas. These are:

- Number of safe and well visits (SWVs);
- Number of business safety checks;
- Number of SWVs delivered at data-led community engagement events;
- Number of engagements under the Community Befriending Scheme;
- Completion rates of core competencies;
- Completion rates of monthly theoretical training planner;
- Attendance at operational exercises;
- Maintenance of site-specific risk information.

2.4 The 2% cashable efficiencies on non-pay budgets identified and included in the Productivity and Efficiency Plan for 2024/25 total £219k and are set out in the table below. Progress on achievement of these savings will be included in the budget monitoring reports to the Finance and Resources Committee.

Savings	£000s	% of Non-Pay Budget	Comments	Risk
Pay Related Savings				
Reduction in Prevention/Protection/Response Staff	35	0.32%	Creation of two Specialist Home Safety Operatives to undertake SWVs previously undertaken by On-Call crew – part saving achieved in 23/24.	This has already been achieved.
Reduction in Support Staff	2	0.02%	Reductions on pay related budgets.	This has already been achieved.
Total Pay Savings	37	0.34%		
Non-Pay Savings				
Fleet	52	0.47%	Stock items to be purchased direct not through the fleet maintenance provider to reduce the mark up cost currently paid to the provider.	This is low risk as it has been agreed as part of the contract extension agreement with the Fleet Maintenance provider.
Procurement	101	0.92%	ICT network, mobile phones and GIS system contract savings.	This is low risk as new contracts have been agreed.
Decreased Usage	30	0.27%	Reduction in various supplies and services budgets.	
Non-Pay Savings	182	1.66%		
Total Cashable Savings	219	2.00%		

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial implications included in the Productivity and Efficiency Plan are set out in Paragraph 2.4 of the report. The themes included in the Productivity and Efficiency Plan will continue to progress and any further savings will be identified and built into the 2025/25 Medium Term Financial Strategy which will be reported to Fire Authority in December 2024.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

There may be human resource and learning and development implications associated with the implementation of Productivity and Efficiency Plan. These will be reported as part of the decision-making process for any changes to policy or the delivery of services that result from progressing activities in the Productivity and Efficiency Plan.

5. EQUALITIES AND ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS

An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken because the report does not involve changes to policy or the delivery of services.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Where there are any environmental and sustainability implications associated with any of the activities in the Productivity and Efficiency Plan these are identified within the plan.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The corporate risk register includes risks to the Authority associated with the ability to set a balanced budget. The activities identified in the Productivity and Efficiency Plan contribute to mitigating this risk.

9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS

Collaboration activities currently undertaken are identified in the Productivity and Efficiency Plan. Further collaboration opportunities that contribute to efficiency, productivity or service improvement will continue to be identified and explored.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members note the content of the Productivity and Efficiency Plan for 2024/25.

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

None.

Craig Parkin
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER



Appendix A

Productivity and Efficiency Plan

2024/25

**CREATING
SAFER
COMMUNITIES**



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

INTRODUCTION

Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) is committed to its vision of creating safer communities. A fundamental part of our journey to being an outstanding service by 2032 is that we are as efficient and effective as possible. We have produced this plan in line with the guidance issued by the Home Office on 12 February 2024, and it is published on our website to allow scrutiny from the communities we serve.

The Fire and Rescue [National Framework](#) sets a requirement that combined and metropolitan Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) produce and publish Efficiency Plans. There is a specific requirement from the Minister of State for Crime, Policing and Fire that in 2024/25, all FRAs produce plans that not only cover their planned efficiencies, but also plans for increasing productivity.

We were rated as 'Good' in our most recent inspection by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) across all three pillars of the inspection. Specifically, under Efficiency, we were good at:

- Making best use of our resources
- Making our workforce's time as productive as possible
- Making savings while maintaining operational performance

In the face of the ongoing pressures on public sector finances, this plan outlines the savings we have made to this point (without repeating the information that can be found in [last year's plan](#)) and explains our existing plans for 2024/25 to show how we are continuing to create non-pay efficiency savings of 2% and increasing productivity by 3%.

EFFICIENCY
2024/25 Budget Information

The 2024/25 budget was approved by the Fire Authority on 23 February 2024 and is detailed in Table 1 below. More details can be found in the [Budget Proposals for 2024/25](#) report.

Costs	Revised Budget 2023/24 £'000	Budget 2024/25 £'000	Budget 2025/26 £'000
Employees	39,939	43,475	45,142
Premises	4,111	4,465	4,592
Transport	2,219	2,258	2,286
Supplies & Services	4,394	4,598	4,745
Payments to other Local Authorities	950	996	1,024
Support Services	172	183	188
Capital Financing Costs	2,692	3,125	3,901
Income	(4,512)	(6,413)	(6,537)
Total	49,965	52,688	55,341
Sources of Income			
Revenue Support Grant (RSG)	(8,529)	(8,939)	(9,140)
Business Rate Income	(3,648)	(3,892)	(3,827)
Business Rate Top Up Grant	(7,638)	(7,988)	(8,098)
Core Spending Power – Funding Guarantee Grant	0	(738)	0
Council Tax (23/24 £5, 24/25 2.95%, 25/26 2.95%)	(29,746)	(30,993)	(32,338)
Reserves (budget shortfall)	(404)	(138)	(1,938)
Total	(49,965)	(52,688)	(55,341)

Table 1 - Budget Details 2024/25

Reserves

Expected levels of reserves as at 31 March 2024 are £9.5m are detailed in Table 2 below.

Reserve	Opening balance 01/4/23 £'000	Movement during 2023/24 £'000	Expected closing balance 31/3/24 £'000	Expected closing balance 31/03/25 £'000
Resilience Crewing and Training	36	(2)	34	0
Prevention Protection and Partnerships	261	101	362	192
Business Systems Development	59	0	59	58
Transformation and Collaboration	360	(61)	299	90
Operational	480	(360)	120	15
Covid-19	15	(15)	0	0
ESN Reserve	900	0	900	900
Regional Mobilising System	619	(169)	450	0
Headquarters move	49	(49)	0	0
Budget Pressure Support	1,125	0	1,125	987
Efficiency Programme	900	(329)	571	213
Other	370	(14)	356	81
Estates	62	0	62	20
Capital	0	128	128	0
Earmarked Reserve Total	5,236	(770)	4,466	2,556
General Reserve	4,961	17	4,978	4,978
Total	10,197	(753)	9,444	7,534
ESMCP Regional Reserve	101	0	101	101
Total	10,298	(753)	9,545	7,635

Table 2 - Expected reserve position at 31 March 2024 & 31 March 2025

The General reserve is predicted to be £5.0m at the end of 2023/24, which is above the minimum level of £4.5m general fund reserve agreed for 2023/24 by the Fire Authority in December 2022. A £4.1m minimum level for the general fund for 2024/25 was agreed by the Fire Authority in December 2023.

Earmarked reserves are expected to be in the region of £4.6m by 31 March 2024. These reserves are earmarked for known projects or items of one-off expenditure. They include a budget pressure support reserve of £1.125m which was created to support the budget in 2023/24 and future years. The 2023/24 budget included a contribution of £404k from this reserve but it is now expected that this contribution will not be required due to underspends elsewhere in the budget. The £138k budget shortfall in 2024/25 will be funded from this reserve if required. Earmarked reserves are reviewed annually as part of the Reserves Strategy included in the [Medium-Term Financial Strategy](#) (MTFS).

Efficiency Savings 2024/25

The budget for 2024/25 includes cashable savings of £219k that helped towards reducing the deficit. £37k were from pay budgets and £182k of savings were achieved from non-pay budgets. The total cashable saving represents a 2% non-pay efficiency saving. A further £171k of non-cashable savings were achieved through the use of procurement frameworks which has resulted in cost avoidance. More details can be found in Table 3 below.

Savings	£000s	% of Non-Pay Budget	Comments / Risks	Risk
Pay related Savings				
Reduction in Prevention/Protection/Response Staff	35	0.32%	Creation of two Specialist Home Safety Operatives to undertake Safe and Well visits previously undertaken by On-Call Crew – part saving achieved in 23/24.	This has already been achieved.
Reduction in Support Staff	2	0.02%	Reductions on pay related budgets	This has already been achieved.
Total Pay Savings	37	0.34%		
Non-Pay Savings				
Fleet	52	0.47%	Stock items to be purchased direct not through the fleet maintenance provider to reduce the mark up cost currently paid to the provider.	This is low risk as it has been agreed as part of the contract extension agreement with the Fleet Maintenance provider.

Procurement	101	0.92%	ICT network, mobile phones and GIS system contract savings	This is low risk as new contracts have been agreed.
Decreased usage	30	0.27%	Reduction in various supplies and services budgets.	
Non-pay savings	182	1.66%		
Total Cashable Savings	219	2.00%		
Non-Cashable Savings				
Procurement efficiency Savings using framework	171	1.56%	Mainly due to the review of new contracts awarded in 2022/23. This has been measured against the average cost of bids and is a non-cashable saving	Cost avoidance value.

Table 3 - Planned Efficiency Savings 2024/25

Collaboration

Collaboration continues to be at the forefront of NFRS business; as an organisation we are continually seeking opportunities where these will deliver financial efficiencies or benefits to our community. We continue to collaborate with Nottinghamshire Police around our shared headquarters and shared sites, as well as operationally where the shared welfare unit and drone capability continue to deliver efficiencies.

In collaboration with Nottingham City Council, we have formed a Joint Audit and Inspection Team (JAIT) which inspects multi-occupied, higher risk residential premises, specifically those that fall within the scope of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and the Housing Act 2004. This joint approach ensures the consistent application and regulation of both pieces of legislation follow the principles set out within the Regulator's Code for Better Regulation.

In partnership with Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County Councils, wholtime personnel deliver food parcels to vulnerable residents out of standard office hours to ensure a 7-day availability of the service. As part of the delivery crews will attempt to undertake a safe and well visit, which only a very small minority of residents have refused. The crews will record their time for this under the safe and well process, but it is an example of an efficient collaboration that delivers two outcomes for our community from one engagement.

Another initiative seeking to maximise our efficient use of resources is Safer Streets, where operational crews travel on designated routes when possible, with the aim of providing a visible and reassuring presence, and disrupting crime and antisocial behaviour. After proving successful in 23/24, this has been expanded to an additional station.

Section 3 within [last year's plan](#) highlighted the other significant collaborations NFRS undertakes, namely;

- Joint Fire Control with Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Joint Headquarters with Nottinghamshire Police
- Shared premises across multiple fire stations and locations

We also have a longer term strategic vision for closer working and integration with Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service; aligning our CRMP timelines and being cognisant of the potential collaborative opportunities that may arise following the Mayoral elections this year.

Return on Investment

NFRS has secured grant funding of £367k to support the Service's plans to decarbonise the Estate. NFRS will provide £257k of matched funding from the capital programme which will be used to fund a project to replace end of life fossil fuel heating, inefficient and soon to be obsolescent lighting and the installation of additional photo voltaic panels to our Highfields Fire Station. The savings have yet to be quantified but will be reported in future efficiency and productivity plans. The installation of an air source heat pump as a greener and more sustainable alternative to fossil fuel heating at Worksop Fire Station has enabled the removal of the gas supply from the site; this will save circa £19k/year on utility costs.

Charging Policies

NFRS has a chargeable special service calls policy, which provides the option to recover costs from a very specific set of fire service activities that sit outside our statutory responsibilities. The rates are reviewed annually by the Fire Authority and can be seen in Appendix 1.

Asset Management and Investment in Technology

NFRS adopts a risk based approach to equipment, PPE and appliance checks. These are conducted in line with the relevant procedures which outline the required timescales. The work is managed electronically through an asset management system which automatically logs all checks undertaken and the type of check completed for audit and review purposes. Assurance on the quality and frequency of these checks is undertaken through station audits and the internal audit process. Appliance inventories are undertaken on a weekly basis, through the same electronic system and areas of concern are automatically highlighted to the engineering team. This process has been in place for over a decade, with new scanners and station-based equipment being issued in the last three years to ensure functionality and improve the end user experience.

In line with the capital programme, 12 new fire appliances (a further 5 in 25/26), an incident command vehicle and a range of wildfire equipment have been purchased and will come into service in 24/25. In 24/25 an aerial ladder platform replacement programme will also commence. Forecasting savings on this programme is difficult but as modern vehicles manufactured to current legislation, these will offer improvements in fuel efficiency, sustainability of materials and longevity.

A continual programme of ICT equipment upgrade is part of this programme; replacing devices and infrastructure to deliver more efficient services and end user experience. This forms part of our systems redesign workstream within Futures 2025 and CRMP ambition for a digital first approach.

In 23/24 NFRS introduced a new unified rostering system for all operational personnel, replacing the previous separate systems that wholetime, on call and officers utilised.

Resourcing

This year we have reintroduced wholetime crewing at Ashfield Fire Station to more effectively address the identified community risks in this part of the County. In doing so we have redeployed firefighter posts into Prevention, Risk and Assurance and equality, diversity and inclusion workstreams to increase capacity in those areas. NFRS has an annualised hours collective agreement with its wholetime personnel which provides flexibility to employees and staffing efficiencies to the Service. This method of crewing enables employees to work flexibly in line with their personal needs and across watches where required.

A process to utilise on call personnel to cover short term gaps in the wholetime operational ridership (short crewing) and the process to deploy them, has been designed and implemented in 2023/24. Where a short crewing shift is authorised, an on call firefighter will work at the required wholetime station. This saves the difference in cost of a plain time shift against an overtime shift, is an efficient way of utilising the previously unavailable personnel resources available to the Service and assists with the retention of on call personnel. In 23/24 this has avoided more than £10k of overtime costs and is fully embedded for 24/25.

Procurement

The procurement tendering procedures are set out within the NFRS Financial Regulations to ensure that best value is achieved. Value for money is achieved by undertaking active pre-market engagement to understand the market, technology, any collaboration opportunities, and procurement routes available. The procurement route which offers best value is selected which could be; obtaining quotations aligned to the financial regulations, tendering aligned to the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or the use of National, Sector lead or PBO frameworks.

Where frameworks are used, this could be via mini-competition or direct award. Frameworks can offer a more streamlined and efficient procurement process and deliver both Cashable and Non-cashable savings. Non-cashable savings are achieved through the efficiency in procurement and evaluation time. Not having to run a full tender can save months of procurement time allowing the procurement team to undertake other projects and potentially frees up staff members time through pre-completed evaluation.

NFRS use the National Collaborative PPE framework to procurement Fire Kit. This has allowed NFRS to benefit from economies of scale and obtain lower pricing when compared to running an individual tender, have pre-defined terms and conditions which would have cost circa £6,000 - £7,000 to have written by a legal representative and saved many days of evaluation by multiple operational staff as this was undertaken at a national level.

NFRS have also used the sector led Devon & Somerset framework to procure fire appliances, again ensuring an efficient route to market with pre-defined documentation allowing NFRS the flexibility to be specific to our requirements whilst using the documentation provided and saving the legal fees as identified above.

NFRS use many frameworks including CCS and G Cloud ensuring efficient access to market and benefitting from preferential rates and use frameworks led by PBO's such as; ESPO, YPO, KCS etc.

NFRS engage with the National procurement hub where possible and are currently supporting the Commercial and Technical Groups for the National Fire Fighting PPE project. By utilising tenders, framework mini competitions and direct awards we have realised the following savings:

- Open Tender for 11 fire station refurbishments – winning bid vs. median bid – Saving of - £1,133,943.70
- Open Tender for refurbishment of the Service Development Centre – winning bid vs. median bid – Saving of - £30,615.69.
- Open Tender for the NFRS Cashback Scheme – winning bid vs. median bid – Saving of - £14,284.08.
- E-procurement portal (In-Tend) - NFRS signed up to the National Blue light agreement savings a full year's licence fee of - £2,500.
- Contract Management and the processing and return of faulty smoke alarms ensuring replacements are received avoided reprocurring smoke alarms to the value of £5,100.
- Open tender for Middle Managers development programme – winning bid/ Median Bid – Saving of - £6,391.00.

Estates

The Estates team seek to maximise efficiency across all areas of their work; avoiding costs wherever possible through the sharing of both resources and estate, the efficient reuse of resources wherever possible, reviewing contracts across all providers to ensure best value and strict oversight of projects to ensure works are completed within budget.

Examples include:

- Development of the building maintenance and service contract (MAC) terms and conditions has generated efficiency savings in the form of costs avoided in the delivery of estates minor works and projects with labour rates for these activities levied at a 20% reduction on MAC standard contract rates. This saving is estimated to be in the region of £34k in 2022/23 and £31k in 2023/24.
- Sharing our estate with blue light collaboration partners including the Police and EMAS at West Bridgford, East Leake and Eastwood Fire Stations and leasing space to other partner agencies including the City Council Emergency Planning Team, St John's, the Scouts and a Telecoms operator at Highfields, London Road, Eastwood and Stapleford Fire Stations and also leasing an office building at Clifton to Notts Police has generated an income for the Service of approximately £150k. This sum includes rental and recovery of service charges – however, after allowing for reactive costs and taking into account the areas occupied by collaboration partners, the net benefit is approximately £135.5k per annum.

- Sharing our jet wash facilities across the NFRS estate with Notts Police has generated an income of £5k per annum.
- Savings have resulted from rate rebates and revaluations. Rebates have been received for Bestwood (£29k) and West Bridgford (£111k).
- The move of Stores to Highfields Fire Station has optimised underutilised space within the existing footprint of the station and has been achieved without uplift in planned and reactive maintenance costs or utilities. The Service has also saved money through the re-use of the existing stores racking from Bestwood. The cost of works to facilitate the move was £52k; the savings will be seen through release of the previous site as part of the sale of the old headquarters building.
- The innovative use of performance dashboards for the monitoring of utility consumption has identified charges of £75k that have been billed in error; subsequent challenge to the provider has seen this cost avoided.
- The reuse of the fuel tank from the old HQ site and its installation at Arnold Fire Station means operational crews do not have to fuel at public filling stations; efficiency savings have been achieved by avoiding the cost to procure a new tank and costs have also been avoided on labour. The crews will also achieve a time saving time on an ongoing basis by being able to undertake this activity on station.
- Reuse of furniture for various projects within the Estate has enabled the Service to avoid incurring cost for new furniture to fit out JHQ and other meeting and office facilities necessitated as a consequence of the closure of the old HQ site; the estimated saving from recycling of furniture is approximately £67k.
- Recycling assets into other stations where they still have useful life (e.g. air conditioning, diesel tank, drying cabinets, EV charger) has enabled the assets to be retained to their full life expectancy and has avoided costs of approximately £28k to procure new.
- The move into shared accommodation with Notts Police at JHQ has created an opportunity for the Estates Team to rationalise services and re-structure the team. This has facilitated an estimated saving of £9k with planned preventative maintenance delivered in house that was delivered by external contractors previously. It has also avoided costs of circa £25k with an increased capacity within the team to carry out additional reactive works and has created a saving on resource (one Site Supervisor + attendance allowance approx. £33.5k and one Site Supervisor attendance allowance £4.5k).

Departmental Reviews

In 23/24 a full review of the Prevention department has been completed, restructuring the department to support the Service's ambition to be outstanding, reflect the changing needs of our communities and the demand for NFRS services in the Strategic Assessment of Risk. Whilst savings were not the rationale for this work,

efficiencies have been identified that will enable the delivery of a more efficient service with fewer posts. These savings will be reported in future efficiency returns. In 24/25 departmental reviews will be undertaken within People and Organisational Development and ICT to ensure these support the Service's ambition to be outstanding and are correctly structured to most efficiently undertake their work.

Governance

A review of governance arrangements in 23/24 has identified meetings that do not require full minutes to be taken. Due to the time required to accurately transcribe minutes, removing this requirement has released significant capacity within the Service Support Hub, circa 500 hours per year; a significant non cashable saving.

Occupational Therapist

As part of the review of the Prevention Department, the seconded occupational therapist (OT) role has been substantiated within the team. Independent evaluation of the role undertaken by Nottingham Trent University demonstrated that for every £1 invested in the OT service a benefit of £7.16 was realised through reduced harm and costs to the wider public purse.

PRODUCTIVITY

Service improvement is one of the 6 Strategic Goals within the CRMP and will remain as such throughout the lifecycle of the next plan from 2025 – 2028. Whilst this goal is applicable to all parts of the organisation, from a response perspective in terms of the time wholtime firefighters spend on the defined 'productive' work within the Home Office guidance on Fire Productivity and Efficiency Plans, there are specific and measurable targets to assure the Service that the national Spending Review target of a 3% improvement in productivity is achieved.

In order to measure productivity, the Service uses a number of internally derived performance metrics for wholtime crews. These are:

- Number of Safe and Well Visits (SWVs)
- Number of Business Safety Checks (BSCs)
- Number of SWVs delivered at Data-led Community Engagement Events
- Number of engagements under the Community Befriending Scheme
- Completion rates of Core Competencies
- Completion rates of Monthly Theoretical Training Planner
- Attendance at operational exercises
- Maintenance of Site-Specific Risk Information

These metrics are displayed as part of each stations' Plan on a Page and are reported electronically to enable managers at any level to see up to date performance levels against each metric. The quarterly evaluation and assurance review meeting, chaired by the response Area Manager oversees the performance of each station, addresses any areas of concern, and recognises good practice to local teams and managers. An important part of this meeting is the focus on the quality of the reported metrics through the ongoing evaluation of each activity. NFRS recognises that simply increasing the numbers of any activity is only part of any effective productivity increase; the quality of that interaction and/or activity must be of a high standard to deliver the best value to our communities.

In 2018/19 the Service completed 4,461 SWVs. Since then, there has been a sustained focus on increasing productivity in this area year-on-year. In 2023/24 over 15,600 SWVs were completed. This represents a 15% increase on 2022/23 and 1,600 more than the target set in the CRMP. The majority of SWVs (close to 12,000 in 2023/24) are delivered by wholetime crews. In addition, wholetime crews have delivered over 1,500 additional hours of fire, road and water safety education activities compared to 2022/23.

In 2021/22 the Service introduced the delivery of BSCs by operational crews. In line with the target set in the CRMP, in 2023/24 over 1,000 BSCs were delivered. This was a 100% increase on 2022/23, with 95% being delivered by wholetime crews.

In 2023/24 all wholetime crews were tasked with the new activity of 'befriending' a community group whose membership was predominantly from those with a protected characteristic. The objectives of this scheme were to raise the profile of NFRS; improve awareness and understanding of the services delivered; raise awareness of career opportunities; remove any fear of uniformed services; and to engage with hard-to-reach groups. During the year 172 different activities totalling 506 hours have been undertaken.

In 2024/25 WDS crews will again be working hard to achieve the targets of the CRMP. These include a 7% increase in SWVs and a 50% increase in BSCs when compared to 2023/24 targets. In addition, the productivity metric for Community Befriending has been changed to focus on 6-hours of engagement per quarter by each WDS crew. This will lead to over 1,100 hours of activity being delivered which is over a 100% increase on that achieved in 2023/24.

Wholetime firefighter productivity is planned through the Working Day Procedure, which has been reviewed in 23/24 and in 24/25 will deliver an increase of time spent per working tour of:

- 4.2% for operational training
- 2.1% for community safety activities (including safe and well visits and station visits)

This tangible increase in the time crews will spend on these activities will be monitored in conjunction with the increased annual targets discussed above for 24/25.

The system used by operational personnel to record the outcomes of safe and well visits is being upgraded as part of a project under the Futures 25 workstream which will deliver an entirely new way of recording outcomes electronically; this will save time per visit, prevent duplication of work and instantly communicate with the data warehouse. The project is on schedule to deliver this work for the end of 24/25 ready for 25/26, where it will enable firefighters to complete visits and the associated administration of these more quickly without compromising on the quality of the visit or the input. This will free their time to undertake additional productive activities.

Signed



Craig Parkin
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER
28 March 2024

Signed



Bev Bull
HEAD OF FINANCE AND TREASURER (SECTION 151 OFFICER)
28 March 2024

Appendix 1

	2023/24 Charges	2024/25 Proposed Charges
Personnel: per hour, or part of an hour:		
Full Crew	£320.60	£336.60
Station Manager and above	£71.50	£75.10
Watch Manager	£58.60	£61.50
Crew Manager	£55.90	£58.70
Firefighter	£52.90	£55.50
Appliances and Vehicles: per hour, or part of an hour:	£51.90	£54.00
Loan of Salvage Sheet:		
Charge for fitting	£320.60	£336.60
Charge for removing	£320.60	£336.60
Charge for salvage sheet	£113.20	£117.70
Copy of a Fire Report	£82.90	£86.20
Hire of Meeting Room:		
Full day	£295.30	£307.10
Half day	£152.40	£158.50

Table 4 - Chargeable Special Service rates