



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

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham  
Fire and Rescue Authority  
Community Safety Committee

# **FIRE COVER REVIEW IMPLICATIONS**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

**Date:** 02 October 2015

**Purpose of Report:**

To make Members aware of the community safety implications of the Fire Cover Review 2015 reported to the Fire and Rescue Authority on 25 September 2015 and to consider further any actions.

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## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 At the Fire and Rescue Authority meeting on 25 September 2015 Members received the Fire Cover Review 2015 (FCR 2015) and the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2015/16 to 2017/18 (MTFS).
- 1.2 These papers outline the risk analysis and financial context facing the Fire Authority in the short to medium term.
- 1.3 This report aims to bring together the salient points from each paper within the context of the Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service's (NFRS) priorities under the Integrated Risk Management Plan 2014 – 2019 ((IRMP) aiming to deliver a professional, effective and value for money emergency response service to all those who live, work and travel in the county of Nottinghamshire) in order that Members can have detailed options brought forward to a future meeting of the Community Safety Committee.
- 1.4 Whilst it is difficult to speculate the outcome of future comprehensive spending reviews, the gross deficit figures reported in the MTFS are £2.2m for 2016/17 and £3.9m for 2017/18 (reduced to £1.75m if the 2016/17 deficit is resolved).
- 1.5 The overall spend profile of the Authority estimates that nearly 80% of all spending is on public facing services and only 4.5% is spent on corporate support.
- 1.6 FCR 2015 reports that there has been a further 27.9% decrease in incidents attended by NFRS over a four year period since the last report. In 2014/15 this equates to 9468 incidents of which 3490 were fires, 1862 were to emergencies other than fires and 4116 were false alarms.

## **2. REPORT**

- 2.1 The five year data sample used in the FCR 2015 and the figures shown in the MTFS indicate that extensive analysis of alternative options for service delivery need to be considered in order to meet the objectives of the IRMP.
- 2.2 Demand for emergency response has fallen, it is also worthy of mention therefore that the risk of incidents occurring has also reduced.
- 2.3 A clear commitment towards prevention over the past fifteen years and combined with the primary duty to enforce the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order and statutory duty under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 for prevention work, there has been a comprehensive risk management strategy from which the outcome is safer communities and reduced demand for emergency fire response. Changes in legislation such as the foam filled furnishings regulations, improved building control regulations, reduced ignition propensity cigarettes and new vehicle technology have and continue to be key contributors to this reduction in demand.

- 2.4 The data presented in the FCR 2015 also acknowledges the reduction in fire appliances in recent years to the current levels. Taking this into account there are still areas requiring further scrutiny based on the risk and demand levels reported.
- 2.5 The demand profile for NFRS shows that most incidents are attended during the day, when communities and roads are most active. Almost half of these daytime incidents are of a secondary type (outdoor fires including grassland and refuse fires and fires in single derelict buildings etc).
- 2.6 The resources available to deal with these incidents remains static across the 24 hour period regardless of the fluctuations in demand or altering risk levels between day and night. The wholetime workforce being available 24/7 and the retained workforce available on call to attend incidents as required.
- 2.7 The workforce and societal demographics also indicate that recruitment and retention of retained duty system (RDS) staff is increasingly difficult. Recent changes to the recruitment approach have shown positive signs in the numbers succeeding in securing a trainee position, but a fundamental review of the contracts of employment and remuneration is required to increase attraction and retention rates. The future of the RDS workforce will be a key factor in the response model for NFRS considering its appropriateness for the risk levels and demand the Service responds to.
- 2.8 There is a national trend towards increasing response times which is reflected within Nottinghamshire. It is important to contextualise response times in relation to risk, locality, and community type etc. It is also important to consider whether historical and current response standards reflect the risks and demand placed on a modern Fire and Rescue Service. NFRS has a standard to attend 90% of incidents within 10 minutes. It currently achieves 82% within 10 minutes. There is limited scope to improve this with static response and crewing models.
- 2.9 The FCR 2015 suggests that given the continuing drop in call demand and reducing levels of risk across the City and County, the number and mix of response resources are not the optimum for responding to the current risk profile and geography.
- 2.10 Based on the information contained within the FCR 2015 there are areas for further detailed scrutiny which will help align the resources of NFRS more closely to the current and anticipated risks and demand within Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. These fall into the following broad areas:
  - Review of duty systems;
  - Review of the operational response model (focus on innovation and efficiency);
  - Options for demand led resourcing (making best use of existing capacity);
  - Review of response standards and weight of response;
  - Opportunities for collaboration locally and regionally.

2.11 By reviewing these broad areas the Service will aim to maintain pace with new and emerging technology, ensure efficiency and effectiveness within service delivery, and strive to achieve the financial efficiencies required. This approach would contribute to the objectives of the IRMP and the guiding principles of the organisation:

- To deliver a high quality service;
- To maintain high standards of governance and financial stability;
- To have an engaged and motivated workforce.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Financial implications from reviewing the broad areas mentioned at 2.9 above would be considerable and complex and will be included in the detailed reports relating to each area. One of the overarching principles of any review would be to contribute to the projected future funding deficit.

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

The human resources and learning development impacts will be captured in detail in the individual areas of review. In principle, based on this paper they could be complex and far reaching.

### **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken because the purpose of this report is to request that Members commission further detailed options, each of which would require an equality impact assessment.

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

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report. Future reports arising as a result of this report will make reference to any specific matters.

### **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 is the statutory duty which requires Authorities to make provision for fire-fighting purposes, protecting life and property from fire, making provision for attending road traffic collisions and other emergencies as well as promoting fire safety in its area and to make arrangements for obtaining information needed for the purpose of extinguishing fires and protecting life and property in their area.

7.2 The Authority must have regard to the Fire and Rescue National Framework in carrying out its functions. The more detailed review of the areas

suggested, supports the Authority in demonstrating due diligence in respect of its responsibilities under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the Fire and Rescue National Framework.

## **8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Fire and Rescue Authorities are required to produce an IRMP to identify how they will deliver their duties under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. NFRS is part way through the 2014-2019 IRMP as endorsed by the Authority.
- 8.2 The areas recommended for review in this report are directly aimed at managing risk and responding to demand. They will also lead into areas of prevention and protection and therefore will directly contribute to a blended strategy of proactive prevention in order to continue to reduce demand and assured reactive emergency response.
- 8.3 The risk management implications will be far reaching and will therefore be addressed in specific detail within each future report.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Members request the Chief Fire Officer to bring forward a range of more detailed options to the Community Safety Committee as detailed in the body of this report.

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

None.

John Buckley  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**