



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority

ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE 2014-15

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Date: 18 December 2015

Purpose of Report:

To present the Annual Statement of Assurance 2014-15 for approval.

CONTACT OFFICER

Name : John Buckley
Chief Fire Officer

Tel : (0115) 967 0880

Email : john.buckley@notts-fire.gov.uk

**Media Enquiries
Contact :** Bridget Aherne
(0115) 967 0880 bridget.aherne@notts-fire.gov.uk

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Fire and Rescue Service National Framework places a mandatory requirement on fire authorities to provide assurance on financial, governance and operational matters, with due regard to the expectations set out in the Integrated Risk Management Plan.
- 1.2 The production of an Annual Statement of Assurance contributes to the requirement for greater public sector transparency and accountability and with its publication offers and promotes accessibility to information.
- 1.3 The 2014-15 Statement of Assurance replaces the 'annual report' and is supported by guidance from the Chief Fire Officers Association.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 The Annual Statement of Assurance 2014-15 provides a backwards look at organisational performance, providing confidence to local communities and central government in support of the Services national resilience role.
- 2.2 The Annual Statement of Assurance 2014-15 signposts available information that can be accessed, for example, Statement of Accounts or Fire Authority reports.
- 2.3 The following sections summarise the content of the Annual Statement of Assurance 2014-15:
 - **The communities we serve** – provides an overview of the city and county's natural and built environment and their heritage;
 - **The risks we face** – this section highlights the social, economic, environmental and risk beyond the county border;
 - **Overview of the Service** – will give a clear structure of the organisation, the people and resources and how they deliver services to the community;
 - **Governance arrangements** – ensure that the arrangements for delivering services through the Integrated Risk Management Plan are within legislation, National Framework and are effective;
 - **Our purpose** – highlights the vision, aim and objectives set for the organisation, how it will work in collaboration with others and how resilient it is through business continuity measures;
 - **Our performance** – provides overarching information about how the organisation performed during 2013-14 and compared to its family group;

- **Our future plans** – this section provides a forward looking aspect for the year ahead and supports the current Integrated Risk Management Plan 2014-19;
- **Our community engagement** – forms part of the arrangements for transparency and how further information and feedback will be dealt with by the organisation e.g. general enquires for information or complaints.

2.4 With revisions to the committee structures, the reporting of performance is under review and this will include the link between the Integrated Risk Management Plan and Annual Statement of Assurance and how these are to be reported to members in future.

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 as this report does not change policy or service delivery functions.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Failure to produce the statement and make it publicly available could lead to Government intervention, and undermine community confidence in the Service.

7. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

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

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The requirement to produce an Annual Statement of Assurance and make it publicly available is statutory within the National Framework Document, as enacted through the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members approve the Annual Statement of Assurance 2014-15.

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

None.

John Buckley
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities



Statement of Assurance 2014 - 2015

Contents

Foreword by the Chair of Fire Authority	1
Introduction by the Chief Fire Officer	2
The communities we serve	3
Our community	3
Our natural environment	3
Our built environment	3
The risks we face	4
Social risk	4
Environmental risk	4
Economic risk	4
Risks beyond our borders	5
Overview of fire and rescue service	6
Overview of our structure	6
Our people	7
Our values	7
Our resources	9
Our purpose	10
Our vision and purpose	10
Our collaborative arrangements	10
Our legal responsibilities	10
Management of risk	11
Our services to the community	12
Priority 1 Service delivery	12
Priority 2 Employees and workforce	14
Priority 3 Improvement and governance	15

Priority 4 Engagement and partnerships	16
Priority 5 Environment	17
Priority 6 Inclusion and equality	18
Our performance: how we performed during 2014/15	19
What others have said about our performance	22
Lessons learnt	22
Financial performance	23
Our budget for 2014/15	23
Our future plans	25
Our future challenges	25
Our future commitments	26
Our community engagement	27
How you can become involved	27
Access to information	27
How to make a compliment or a complaint	27

Foreword by the Chair of Fire Authority

This Statement of Assurance has been compiled in accordance with the guidance published by the Department for Communities and Local Government on Statements of Assurance for Fire and Rescue Authorities in England.

It sets out the financial, governance and operational arrangements that Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority had in place for the period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015.

As Chair of Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority I am satisfied that business has been conducted in accordance with law and proper standards and that public money was properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively. Additionally, I am satisfied that the requirements of the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England have been met.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Darrell Pulk', written diagonally across the page.

Councillor Darrell Pulk

Chair of Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority

Introduction by the Chief Fire Officer

As the Chief Fire Officer of Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) I am pleased to introduce our Statement of Assurance for 2014/2015.

I, and the rest of the NFRS management team, believe it is important to provide you, the members of our communities, with clear information about how we manage public funds – not only as this statement is a requirement of the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, but also to assure you of the effectiveness of our financial, governance and operational fire service activities.

As well as providing an emergency response to fires, road traffic collisions and a wide range of other emergencies, staff at Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service deliver a range of activities to reduce the risk and mitigate the impact of such incidents, increasing community safety and enforcing fire safety legislation.

We firmly believe that, as a Service, everything we do should go towards creating safer communities in Nottinghamshire. We will continue working to reduce fires and other incidents, minimise injuries and deliver initiatives to promote the safety and well-being of all those who live, work and travel here.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Buckley', with a stylized flourish at the end.

John Buckley
Chief Fire Officer

The communities we serve

Our community

Nottinghamshire lies in the heart of England and covers an area of 835 sq miles, with a population of just over one million people and a workforce of 360,000. The largest concentration of people is found in the Greater Nottingham conurbation, the suburbs of which lie mostly in the county. In total, including Nottingham city (306,000) Greater Nottingham has a population in excess of 786,000. Nottingham itself is a city of contrasts. It has the highest rate of employment growth of any major UK city and an attractive and successful city centre. It is a leading city in the East Midlands region, its shopping facilities are ranked as amongst the best in England outside London and it has a vibrant and growing leisure and cultural scene. However, it also has some of the worst areas of deprivation and under-achievement in the country.

Our natural environment

Nottingham City Council is a unitary authority and is responsible for all local government services. In addition to their own well-defined council areas, the councils of Ashfield, Broxtowe, Erewash, Gedling, Nottingham City, and Rushcliffe work together under the title 'Greater Nottingham Partnership' and have produced a planning strategy which is forward-thinking, consistent and aids service delivery.

Our built environment

Greater Nottingham is a big conurbation – one of the ten largest in the country – but only half the population live within the city boundaries. Nottinghamshire has a two-tier system of local government. This means that people who live outside the City of Nottingham will find that their services are shared between two or three councils. Nottinghamshire County Council is a first-tier local authority. The second tier comprises seven district councils.

The other main county towns are Mansfield (99,600), Kirkby-in-Ashfield (25,265), Sutton-in-Ashfield (45,848), Newark (25,376), Worksop (44,790) and Retford (21,314). Approximately one-fifth of the population lives outside these built-up areas, mostly in small towns and villages with less than 10,000 residents. The density of population is about 3.6 persons per hectare, ranging from over 35 in the urban areas to below three persons per hectare in rural parishes. Access to services by all is crucial. Large areas of the county are rural or semi-rural, and the growing numbers of people choosing to live in these areas can sometimes compromise the tranquil lifestyles that they sought from their relocation. A diverse local economy features many world-renowned companies in the fields of healthcare, pharmaceuticals, precision engineering, textiles, clothing and professional services. Boots, Raleigh, Vision Express, Experian and Capital One have bases, as do Government bodies including the Driving Standards Agency and the Inland Revenue.

The county and city have two universities – the University of Nottingham and Nottingham Trent University – offering courses to over 45,000 full and part-time students.

The risks we face

As part of our service planning process we review a comprehensive range of risks that face our communities in Nottinghamshire. Risk information plays a key role in informing our Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2014 - 2019, this plan sets out our strategic objectives over a five year period, ensuring that we focus on the key issues that affect the safety of our communities.

The following sections outline some of the key risks that we face in Nottinghamshire, including the demographic of the population and the county's unique geography, which can have an impact on how we deliver our services.

Our Fire Cover Review 2010 provided detailed intelligence to inform our plans. The 2010 Fire Cover Review can be accessed here:

http://www.notts-fire.gov.uk/Documents/FCR_options_and_full_report.pdf

Our Integrated Risk Management Plan 2014 - 2019 sets out the strategic objectives over the next five years. The IRMP can be accessed here:

http://www.notts-fire.gov.uk/Documents/IRMP_2014_-_2019.pdf

Social risk

Greater Nottingham is one of the ten largest conurbations in the country and roughly half the population lives within the city boundaries. The latest Index of Multiple Deprivation (2015) results showed that Nottingham ranked 8th out of the 326 districts in England. The city has the highest level of deprivation compared to the surrounding districts of Nottinghamshire with 61 of the 182 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) being amongst the 10% most deprived in the country. These pockets of LSOAs suggest that many residents living within Nottingham are at risk of high deprivation with health, education and crime being key deprivation factors.

Environmental risk

Fire Service involvement in dealing with environmentally damaging incidents is set to increase and receive continued focus. This includes the effects of our own fire fighting actions, for example, "water run off", and the legal and financial risk implications that these may present NFRS.

Throughout Nottinghamshire there are locations at risk from flooding. However in terms of a European perspective, nowhere in Nottingham or Nottinghamshire is considered to be a significant flood risk area.

This is not to say that localised flooding in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire is insignificant. The flooding in June 2007 clearly highlighted how vulnerable our communities are to local flooding and the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) highlights that a large number of people could be affected by surface water flooding.

Economic risk

Nottinghamshire has successfully managed the changes forced upon it during the last 20 years. These changes have had a major influence upon mining and some manufacturing industries, and the communities they supported. Overall, unemployment has been relatively low. However, labour market disparities remain, with qualification and skills levels causing concern. In 2008, the recession began to impact upon the local economy and employment, and substantial numbers of job losses were reported.

Nottinghamshire has become economically diverse and innovative however, some areas of the county share problems, which are faced by the wider East Midlands region, primarily that of a low skills/low innovation/low wage economy.

Risks beyond our borders

Through Sections 13 and 16 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 we have set up reinforcement schemes. Plans are also in place, through the National Resilience New Dimension Programme, to provide specialist appliances and crews across England and Wales.

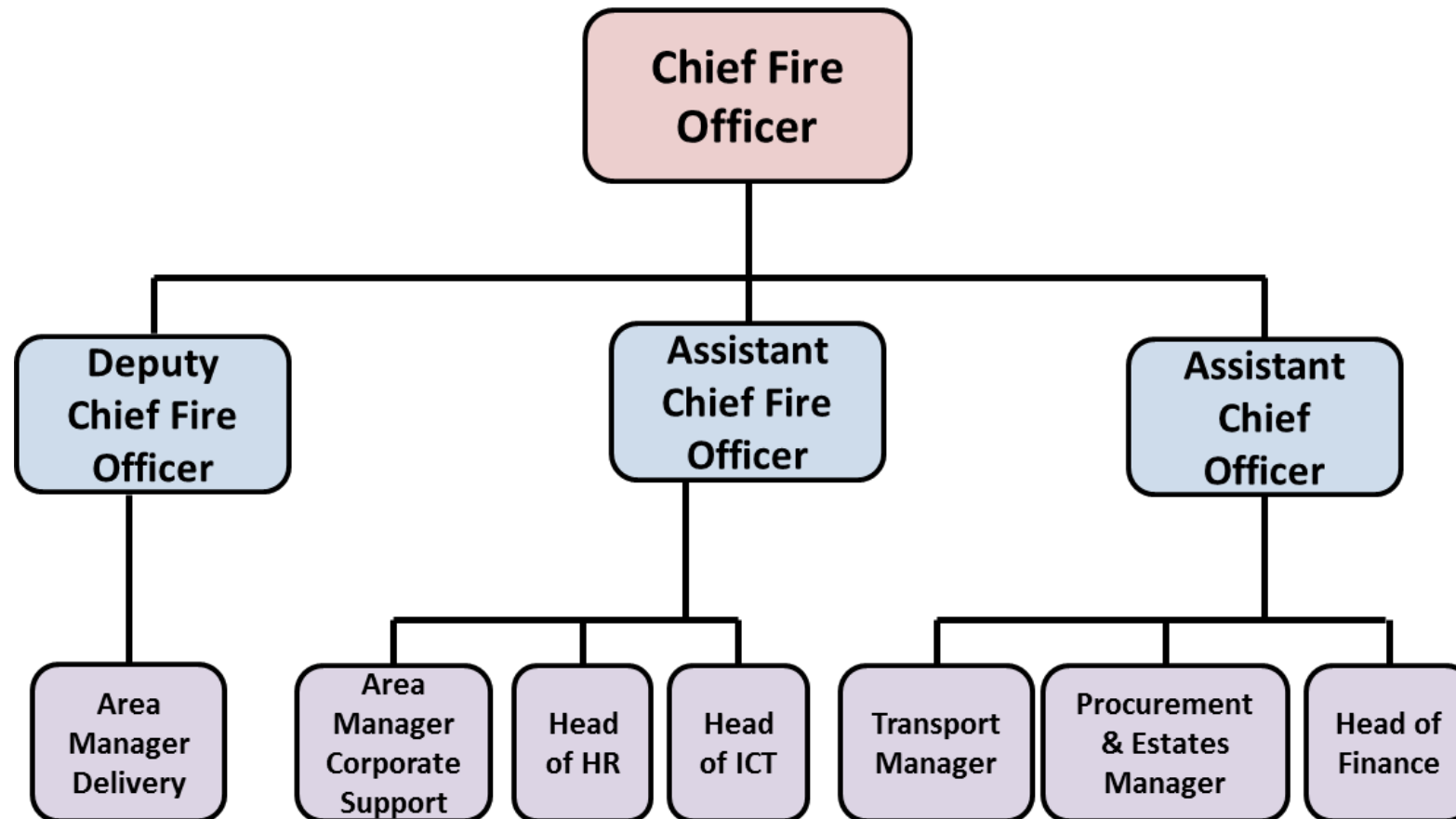
We have a responsibility to assess all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect our community, including those of a cross-border, multi-authority and/or national nature. In order to do this we work with partners on the Nottinghamshire Local Resilience Forum to identify very high and high risks through the Community Risk Register and ensure relevant emergency plans are in place.

The Government monitors risks that the UK could face through the National Risk Assessment process, led by the Cabinet Office, and through other relevant risk assessment and horizon-scanning processes. These risks are outlined in the National Risk Register, which can be accessed via the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/National Risk Register.pdf>

Overview of Fire and Rescue Service

Overview of our structure



Overview of our structure

Our people

As of 1 April 2015, the Service structure comprised of 885.8 full-time equivalent (FTE) approved posts, split as follows:

- 510 (FTE) approved whole-time roles providing full-time operational cover (whole-time duty system (WDS)) and managerial support. We currently have in role 519.58 (FTE) as we are carrying a surplus of trainee firefighters who will ultimately fill vacancies due to retirement and leavers.
- 192 (FTE) approved units providing on call operational cover (retained duty system (RDS)). We currently have 135.5 (FTE) units filled and are running retained recruitment processes to fill these vacancies.
- 23.5 (FTE) approved control roles providing call handling support in the control centre. We currently have 27 (FTE) in role due to resourcing moves for the Tri-Service project.
- 160.31 (FTE) approved employees providing managerial, professional, technical and administrative support to the Service. We currently have in role 154.31 (FTE) due to cost saving initiatives.

Our values

Our values underpin how we do things and how we conduct business when striving to make Nottinghamshire a safer place to live and work.

We value service to the community by:

- Working with all groups to reduce risk
- Treating everyone fairly and with respect
- Being answerable to those we serve
- Striving for excellence in all we do

We value all our employees by practicing and promoting:

- Fairness and respect
- Recognition of merit
- Honesty, integrity and mutual trust
- Personal development
- Co-operative and inclusive working

We value diversity in the Service and the community by:

- Treating everyone fairly and with respect
- Providing varying solutions for different needs and expectations
- Promoting equal opportunities in employment and progression within the Service
- Challenging prejudice and discrimination

We value improvement at all levels of the Service by:

- Accepting responsibility for our performance
- Being open-minded
- Considering criticism thoughtfully
- Learning from experience
- Consulting others

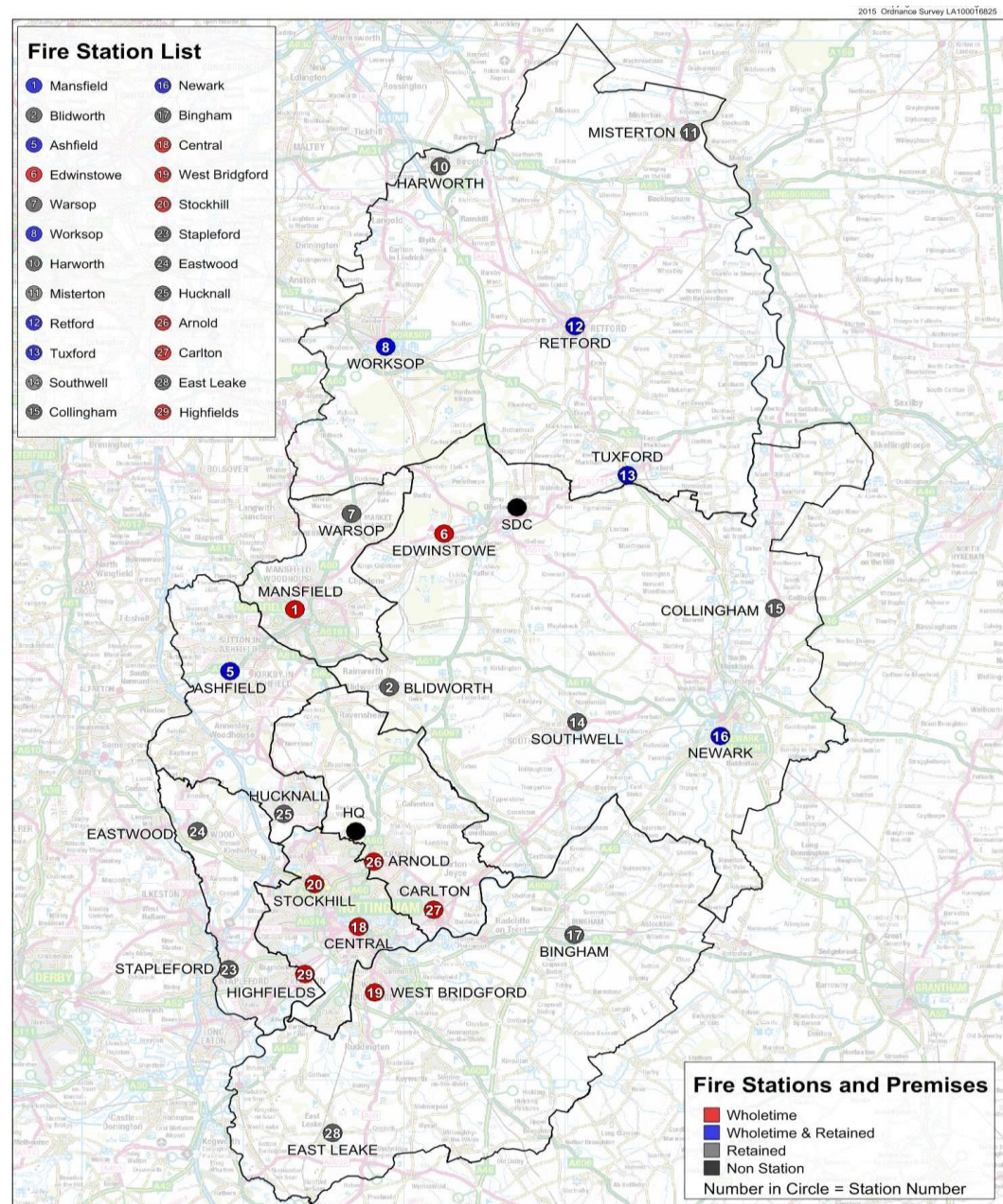
Our resources

Service headquarters is in Arnold, Nottingham, which also accommodates the control centre. Training facilities are based at the Service Development Centre, Ollerton, Nottinghamshire.

There are 24 fire stations in Nottinghamshire – crewed by wholetime and retained (sometimes known as ‘on-call’) firefighters. The Operations Response team is responsible for the work of fire fighters at each of these stations, their equipment, fire appliances and other specialist appliances.

Operational equipment that NFRS has includes:

- 30 front-line pumping appliances;
- 2 front-line aerial appliances;
- 18 front line special appliances;
- 6 reserve pumping appliances;
- A wide range of ancillary and other support vehicles.



Our purpose

Our vision and purpose

‘A safer Nottinghamshire by putting safety at the heart of the community’

NFRS has one very clear and simple aim – to make Nottinghamshire a safer place to live and work. This may sound straight-forward, but achieving this aim relies on a great many people and organisations working together with the same goal in mind.

Fortunately, our colleagues in the councils, police, health, education and other local services are also striving to achieve similar improvements, and we are working in close partnership with them to pool our efforts and, between us, make a greater difference than we could possibly achieve by working alone.

Our collaborative arrangements

We are committed to forming or joining partnerships that assist in achieving organisational goals and contribute to the vision “A safer Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham by putting safety at the heart of the community”.

We continue to strengthen our partnership working around common objectives at a local, regional and national level.

Partnerships help us create more for less - pooling resources can help partners achieve results in a more cost effective way and can give them access to extra resources. Working with our partners allows us to reach more areas of the community with vital safety information and advice.

We work closely with a number of groups, businesses and agencies in the community. By working together with agencies such as the police, ambulance, probation service, registered social landlords and community groups we can tackle complex problems. A broader range of perspectives, knowledge, information, strengths and skills provides new and better ways of delivering services.

Our legal responsibilities

The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004:

The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 sets out the duties and powers of fire authorities. Under the Act, the Fire Authority has a number of core functions:

- Fire safety – promoting fire safety, including the provision of information and publicity on steps to be taken to prevent fires and the giving of advice on how to prevent fires and on the means of escape from buildings in case of fire
- Fire fighting – extinguishing fires and protecting life and property in the event of fires
- Road traffic accidents – rescuing people in the event of road traffic accidents and protecting people from serious harm in the event of road traffic accidents

- Emergencies – when necessary deal with emergencies, other than fires and road traffic collisions.

The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 can be found via the following link:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/21/contents>

Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005:

The Fire Safety Order was brought into force on 1 October 2006. It is now the primary piece of fire legislation that applies to non-domestic premises (with a few minor exceptions). The key points of the order are that it:

- Simplified the law by having a single piece of legislation that applies to all non-domestic premises.
- Based fire safety on risk assessment, making it less prescriptive and bringing it into line with other health and safety legislation.
- Puts the responsibility for fire safety on the employer or the person in control of the premises.
- Made the Fire Authority the single enforcing authority for the Fire Safety Order (with a few exceptions).

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 can be found via the following link:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2005/1541/contents/made>

The Fire and Rescue Service National Framework:

The Fire and Rescue Service National Framework sets out the Government's priorities and objectives for Fire and Rescue Authorities in England to:

- Identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their area faces.
- Make provision for prevention and protection activities and respond to incidents appropriately.
- Work in partnership with their communities and a wide range of partners locally and nationally to deliver their service; and
- Be accountable to communities for the service they provide.

The Fire and Rescue Service National Framework can be found via the following link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/5904/nationalframework.pdf

Management of risk

The Fire Authority is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Authority also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvements in the way in which its functions are exercised having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

Our services to the community

In 2014 we consulted on our new Intergrated Risk Management Plan 2014 -2019, which details NFRS's six Service priorities:

Priority 1	Service Delivery
Priority 2	Employees and Workforce
Priority 3	Improvement and Governance
Priority 4	Engagement and Partnerships
Priority 5	Environment
Priority 6	Inclusion and Equality

What we have done during 2014/15 to meet our priorities

Priority 1 Service Delivery

NFRS delivers its frontline Service Delivery through three strategic Service teams, prevention, protection and response.

One of our first priorities in 2014 - 2015 was to implement a re-organisation of Service Delivery which took place in January 2015. The restructure is designed to align NFRS resources to deliver the 2014-2019 IRMP effectively.

Prevention

In 2014 the community safety team carried out a review and, as a result re-organised its resources to ensure that we are able to deliver services to meet our identified priorities. The review provided a platform for determining the priorities for the community safety team, those priorities are:

- Persons at risk
- Road safety
- The elderly
- Education

One outcome of the review was the development of a Community Safety strategy. The purpose of this strategy is to provide a clear framework for delivering services that will contribute to making communities safer. It focuses our efforts and resources to deliver targeted services to the people and communities who are at greatest risk in order to best meet the vision of 'Creating Safer Communities'.

The Service carried out 3482 home safety checks and took part in 21 days of action to reduce risk in the most vulnerable communities.

The Service visited over 260 primary and comprehensive schools, delivering a variety of community safety packages. This includes, key stage 1 and 2 risk watch programmes, danger zone and road safety initiatives.

NFRS has been nominated for an award by the Business Disability Forum (Disability-Smart awards) for its work with the elderly in particular those over the age of 75 living alone.

Protection

A cornerstone of the Fire and Rescue Service is in the area of fire protection. This work is focused on assisting businesses to comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, so that the non-domestic buildings in which people work, visit and enjoy leisure time are provided with facilities that will ensure a safe means of escape in the event of a fire. This assistance may take the form of educational events, signposting to relevant guidance and the checking or auditing of fire protection measures.

All of our fire protection activities are targeted at those premises that we perceive present the greatest risk to the community. We are committed to enforcing the law so that members of the public and local employees are protected from the risk of death and injury caused by fire.

It is essential to us that the way in which we enforce fire protection supports our communities, businesses and the Government's expectations of enforcers.

In 2014/15 we made 1397 contacts with the 25801 non-domestic properties within Nottinghamshire. This equates to 5.41% of the rate-paying non-domestic properties within the Service's area. These dealings have been in the form of:

- Formal in-depth audits
- Simpler, quicker inspections
- The provision of advice
- The education of businesses

In 2014/15 NFRS completed 598 fire safety audits.

We use a targeted approach when carrying out fire protection activities and ensure all dealings with properties are relevant and proportionate to the risk we perceive the property presents to the community.

The Service responds to certain organisations when they require our expert opinion on fire safety matters. We receive consultation on building regulations applications for new buildings or alterations to existing buildings. Additionally, we are also consulted in respect of licensing applications and occasionally in the case of planning applications. In 2014/15 we responded to 1,104 consultations.

Response

In the year 2014/15 numbers of operational incidents attended by the Service were reduced to 9469. This trend continues due to the sustained efforts to pro-actively reduce risk in our communities. The 9469 incidents attended included:

- False alarms 4116
- Fires 3491
- Special service calls (including road traffic collisions) 1862

Further details on operational activity levels and our performance can be found via the following link: [Operational Activity 2014](#)

To ensure a safe effective resolution to the incidents we attend, response personnel carry out a number of site specific risk assessments. These risk assessments help the Service to plan and prepare for incidents at known risks sites.

Response personnel in all roles maintain their competence in a number of ways – by following structured training programmes, attending mandatory development courses and taking part in training events organised at a local level.

In order to test our operational effectiveness an annual Service-wide exercise programme is followed which requires the involvement of all operational personnel. Two of the main benefits from carrying out these exercises, is the organisational learning and subsequent improvement to the way we do things, and the opportunity to test our procedures and policies in multi-agency exercises.

Priority 2 Employees and Workforce

During 2014 NFRS committed to ensuring that operational managers have the required levels of underpinning knowledge to maximise the safety of its employees. To ensure that this is the case NFRS introduced the nationally recognised Institution of Fire Engineers (IFE) examinations. These exams will be a mandatory requirement of future promotional and development processes. Currently 55 operational personnel have applied to sit the examination, demonstrating the Service's and the candidates' commitment to learning and development.

In supporting and developing our workforce, NFRS saw some 4200 internal training course delegate days, delivered by the Service Development Centre. We also recognise the benefit of external training courses, committing to 200 delegate days at external training providers and 150 delegate days at the Fire Service College.

2014/15 also saw the re-introduction of the Service's bursary scheme, with seven bursaries being awarded, three at masters level. Full support has been given to seven staff to undertake Nottingham Trent University's Public Sector Management Diploma and 11 staff to undertake the Public Sector Leadership Certificates as part of their management development.

Operational competency remains critically important to the Service therefore we benchmarked all of our operational incident commanders at level 2 (Station Manager) and level 3 (Group Manager) by using an incident command training suite to test and assess incident commanders actions at a simulated incident.

We have trained all operational staff in Operational Training Guidance Breathing Apparatus (OTGBA). This is a major training programme managed in three phases over two years to bring in significant new national breathing apparatus (BA) operating protocols. Phase one was successfully conducted over 2014/15 and Phase 2 and 3 will

be conducted in 15/16. In support of the move to OTGBA, we completed the compartment fire behaviour training for all operational personnel in 2014/15. This ensured better operational understanding of fire behaviour and the conditions firefighters may face which ultimately supports firefighter safety. To support our emphasis on breathing apparatus in hot-fire conditions, we invested £18K in purchasing new thermal imaging cameras which allows the use of video debriefs to raise and demonstrate training points to delegates during the BA basic and BA refresher courses.

Priority 3 Improvement and Governance

The Authority is known as a 'Combined Fire Authority' (CFA) as it comprises councillors from two local authorities. There are 18 Members: six councillors from Nottingham City Council and 12 councillors from Nottinghamshire County Council. It is chaired by Councillor Darrell Pulk (County) and the Vice Chair is Councillor Brian Grocock (City). Authority Members continue to make decisions on key matters such as strategy, policy and the budget. There are eight sub-committees reporting to the full Fire Authority:

- Appointments Committee
- Community Safety Committee
- Finance and Resources Committee
- Human Resources Committee
- Personnel Committee
- Policy and Strategy Committee

Meetings were held at our Headquarters and the public were welcome to attend. Papers for our meetings are published on the Nottingham City Council website. Agendas, accompanying reports and minutes of all the Fire Authority meetings can be accessed at: <http://www.notts-fire.gov.uk/3742D38C4F1E410289AF9BB8C5AF3B8B.asp>.

During 2014 NFRS consulted on a number proposals which were a consequence of facing the financial challenges that lay ahead. The consultation resulted in the removal of two fire appliances, one from Highfields and one from Mansfield.

Operational Planning and Resilience

Operational planning and resilience is responsible for operational intelligence, operational assurance, emergency planning, policy research and development activities which are essential in ensuring activities are pre-planned, efficient and continuously improving.

Throughout the last business year, work has been undertaken to identify key areas for improvement through monitoring, review and audit processes. New processes have been developed to strengthen Service Delivery including assisting colleagues to interpret operational intelligence and improving risk information and access to it. During 2014/15 we have developed the following key areas:

- Improved the quality assurance of operational Service Delivery following national guidance by creating a regional working group with partner Fire and rescue Service;s

(FRSs). This group develops joint standard operating procedures and breathing apparatus ways of working for implementation across the region.

- Reviewing and revising systems, policies and processes, including Inner Cordon Gateway Control for operational incidents.
- Providing an assurance that the Service is undertaking its responsibilities as set out in the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (CCA). This work includes the secondment of a Station Manager into Police Headquarters one day each week to improve inter-agency working around National Resilience.
- Providing an assurance that the Service is resilient and is able to respond to emergencies as defined in the CCA. This is tested regularly in local regional and national exercises. The Service plays a key part in the Local Resilience Forum activities, including chairing the training sub-group and contributing to the local emergency planning process. This year the emergency plans for large risks across the City and County have been reviewed and tested.
- Providing an assurance that logistical arrangements for the movement of operational resources and mobilising resources to incidents are resilient. This process has been further improved throughout the year..For example through new operational incident debriefs and improved communication between departments with a new reporting process so that all post-incident learning points are captured, assessed and improvements implemented and reviewed.
- Co-ordinate the distribution of operational intelligence generated locally and regionally, including large operational incidents and changes to operational guidance. This has necessitated improved communication with the learning and development function.
- Redesign and implement standard operating procedures and integrate with regional FRSs following a national model aligned to the National Operational Guidance model.
- Implement an operational assurance protocol aligned to the requirements of Service Delivery so that operational assurance officers attend or monitor incidents to an agreed methodology.
- Guide departmental managers in the completion of their business continuity plans and provide a statement of preparedness following a cycle of Business Continuity Management (BCM) exercises, including serious events.

Priority 4 Engagement and Partnerships

NFRS works with and is committed to form or join partnerships that assist in achieving organisational goals and contribute to our vision “A safer Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham by putting safety at the heart of the community”.

We continue to strengthen our partnership working around common objectives at a local, regional and national level.

We work closely with a number of groups, businesses and agencies in the community. By working together with agencies such as the police, ambulance, probation service, registered social landlords and community groups we can tackle complex problems. A broader range of perspectives, knowledge, information, strengths and skills can provide new and better ways of delivering services. Below are two examples of our partnership working.

Age UK

For the last five years NFRS has commissioned AGE UK to do a percentage of home safety checks and smoke alarm fitting for over 60s in the City of Nottingham. They conduct between 400 and 500 visits on behalf of NFRS every year and we have found this partnership to be very successful due to the other services AGE UK may provide during the visit (e.g. grab rails, adaptations, heating insulation, trips and falls prevention etc.). These visits provide a holistic approach and improved quality of life for the older people engaging with them.

Framework

NFRS recognises the need to target the vulnerable people who will not present themselves to us and the need to work with those people who care for them and provide services to support the underlying issues contributing to vulnerability. For this reason in 2012 NFRS started commissioning Framework to conduct home safety checks on our behalf. There is now a dedicated 'fire' support worker within Framework who manages a case load of citizens who are deemed to be at risk of fire. The Framework employee supports citizens to address the fire risks, whilst helping to support the additional issues contributing to vulnerability through referrals to Framework's other services e.g. mental health services and last orders.

We work with other FRSS within the region across prevention protection and road safety creating opportunities to share good practice, collaborate and reduce duplication of effort. We have continued to look for collaborative opportunities with Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service and have agreed to enter into a joint project looking at the development of a system we currently use to capture intelligence about risk, which helps prioritise our work and targets those most at risk in our communities.

Priority 5 Environment

NFRS is committed to minimising our impact on the environment by integrating environmental considerations in all aspects of our work, during 2014/15 we:

Saw the completion of the new Retford fire station in December 2014, which has allowed NFRS to reduce the overall energy budget due to the high energy efficiency of the new station. The new station will see reduced carbon emissions and improved energy efficiency through passive and active sustainable measures. This has been achievable using a high level of thermal insulation, energy efficient lighting and heating, a smaller overall building size and the production of electricity from photovoltaic panels located on the roof.

The next station to be replaced will be the Central fire station. This will be replaced by a smaller energy efficient station located on London Road incorporating similar features as the new Retford station.

NFRS has also reduced its overall electricity demand across its whole estate and in doing so has reduced its carbon emissions with the extensive use of photovoltaic panels for electrical generation on just under half of its building stock.

The Service has conducted an initial environmental review to determine those NFRS activities which pose significant risk to the environment. The results of this review will allow a targeted approach to managing environmental risk. Running alongside the initial

environmental review, site specific environmental risk assessments have also been completed at each fire station to identify environmental hazards and any necessary local risk controls required.

Adding to our existing fleet of vehicles we have purchased the Scania CP31 Euro 6 vehicles which emit even lower exhaust emissions, reducing the levels of carbon emissions from Service vehicles.

Priority 6 Inclusion and Equality

During 2014-15 the Service continued to demonstrate its commitment to inclusion and equality in a range of ways, building on its success of reaching the Excellent level of the Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework in December 2013.

In January 2015 the Service entered Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index Top 100 employers for the first time. Entering at 91st, the Service demonstrated progress on a range of areas relating to employment and service delivery in relation to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and communities in Nottinghamshire.

In December 2014, marking International Day of Disabled People, the Service hosted a Mental Health Management Development Conference aimed at improving the way in which the Service and its managers deal with mental health issues in the workplace. This was attended by over 80 people including NFRS managers and other organisations nationally.

The Service continued to deliver a range of equalities and communities training to its employees ensuring that employees have the appropriate skills to deal with different groups of people. In addition to the face-face training we deliver, the Service is rolling out its eLearning on equality essentials and managing diversity.

The Equalities Team continued to deliver careers presentations in schools, colleges and universities ensuring that key positive action messages are communicated to potential employees.

Retained fire stations delivered bespoke positive action events aimed at women who may be interested in becoming firefighters in their local area.

Our employees continued to deliver effective community safety to the most vulnerable people in Nottinghamshire. This includes providing tailored services to older and disabled people, including those with dementia.

The Service worked in partnership with Nottingham Mencap and their Smile Stop Hate Crime Team to open up four fire stations to become Safe Places. This provides service users of Nottingham Mencap with a safe place to go if they find themselves lost, frightened or bullied. High street shops and public places like libraries are also participating in this. All front-facing NFRS employees received training in order to develop their awareness and understanding of learning disabilities.

The Service also continued to support local communities by attending Mela, Pride and Carnival festivals. These events were used to push the message about testing smoke alarms.

Our performance: how we performed during 2014/15

	Over 10% Improvement Over Previous Year
	Within 10% of Improvement Over Previous Year
	Within 10% of Under Achievement Over Previous Year
	Over 10% of Under Achievement Over Previous Year

Indicator	Actual	Performance	Previous Year	Previous 2 Years
Deliberate Primary Fires	399.00		428.00	442.00
Deliberate Sec. Fires	1298.00		1365.00	1236.00
Primary Fires	1489.00		1602.00	1566.00
Fatalities in Primary Fires	5.00		3.00	5.00
Non-Fatal Casualties	39.00		57.00	77.00
Accidental Dwelling Fires	564.00		619.00	627.00
Accidental Dwelling Fire Deaths	3.00		2.00	3.00
Accidental Dwelling Fire Injuries	23.00		42.00	54.00
KPI 144 % Fire & Heat Damage Confined To Room	90.78		93.38	90.11
KPI 146i % Malicious Hoax Calls Not Attended (NOFM)	26.97		44.57	39.50
KPI 146ii % Malicious Hoax Calls Attended	73.03		55.43	60.50
KPI 149 No of Unwanted Fire Signals Attended	2865.00		2766.00	2912.00
Deliberate Primary Fires Excl Vehicles	242.00		250.00	235.00
Deliberate Primary Fires Vehicles	157.00		178.00	207.00
Deliberate Secondary Fires Excl Vehicles	1281.00		1351.00	1224.00
Deliberate Sec. Fires Vehicles	17.00		14.00	12.00
KPI 207 Fires In Non Domestic Premises	261.00		288.00	233.00

KPI 208 % Escaped Dwelling Fires Unharmmed	95.39		93.43	91.45
KPI 209i % Smoke Alarm Activated	54.74		51.53	57.37
KPI 209iii % Smoke Alarm Not Fitted	18.46		19.51	20.40
KPI 12i Sickness WT Staff	7.49*		5.09*	5.55*
KPI 12ii Sickness All Staff	8.25*		5.8*	6.39*
KPI 150 Expenditure per Head	37.90		37.90	39.54
KPI 8 % Undisputed Invoices Paid within 30 Days	96.50		99.50	97.90

*days per employee

FAMILY GROUP 4 (FG4)									
PER POPULATION PERFORMANCE Q4 (APRIL 2014 TO MARCH 2015)									
National Indicator 49i (Primary Fires) Per 100,000 population		National Indicator 49ii (Fatalities due to Primary Fires) Per 100,000 population		National Indicator 49iii (Non Fatal Casualties) Per 100,000 population		National Indicator 33a (Deliberate Primary Fires) Per 10,000 population		National Indicator 33b (Deliberate Secondary Fires) Per 10,000 population	
All Primary Fires (April 2014 to March 2015)		Fatalities due to Primary Fires (April 2014 to March 2015)		Non Fatal Casualties (April 2014 to March 2015)		Deliberate Primary Fires (April 2014 to March 2015)		Deliberate Secondary Fires (April 2014 to March 2015)	
Service	Number	Service	Number	Service	Number	Service	Number	Service	Number
Cheshire	101.88	Derbyshire	0.10	Staffordshire	2.45	Hampshire	1.99	Lincolnshire	3.10
Hampshire	108.20	Leicestershire	0.19	Lincolnshire	2.60	Cheshire	2.35	Hampshire	4.49
Kent	110.34	Cleveland	0.36	Humberside	2.93	Hertfordshire	2.45	Leicestershire	5.21
Hertfordshire	113.79	Kent	0.40	South Wales	3.28	Derbyshire	2.70	Hertfordshire	5.63
Derbyshire	115.30	Lancashire	0.41	Leicestershire	3.49	Staffordshire	3.11	Kent	5.64
Leicestershire	116.65	Lincolnshire	0.41	Nottinghamshire	3.51	Kent	3.21	Derbyshire	7.20
Cleveland	117.73	Nottinghamshire	0.45	Hampshire	3.88	Lincolnshire	3.30	Cheshire	7.79
Staffordshire	124.86	Hampshire	0.45	Cleveland	3.93	Leicestershire	3.55	Avon	9.23
Avon	133.05	South Wales	0.47	Cheshire	4.87	Lancashire	3.59	Nottinghamshire	11.70
Nottinghamshire	134.11	Cheshire	0.49	Hertfordshire	4.91	Nottinghamshire	3.60	Staffordshire	12.40
South Wales	137.59	Northern Ireland	0.60	Derbyshire	5.10	Avon	4.54	Lancashire	12.43
Lincolnshire	139.50	Avon	0.64	Avon	5.22	Humberside	4.63	Humberside	13.45
Humberside	145.20	Hertfordshire	0.70	Kent	5.38	South Wales	4.68	South Wales	22.93
Lancashire	146.35	Staffordshire	0.73	Lancashire	6.23	Cleveland	5.36	Northern Ireland	24.80
Northern Ireland	173.40	Humberside	0.76	Northern Ireland	28.45	Northern Ireland	7.25	Cleveland	43.72
FG4 Average	127.86	FG4 Average	0.48	FG4 Average	5.75	FG4 Average	3.75	FG4 Average	12.65

What others have said about our performance

Our employees:

Staff surveys are carried out every two years, with the most recent survey being in 2014. Survey results show the following headline figures:

- 74.4% of respondents would recommend the Service as a good place to work
- 71% of respondents said the Service is a good place to work
- Job satisfaction was measured as a mean score of 4.74 out of 6

Whilst headline figures were comparable to previous staff survey results, NFRS does recognise the need to continually develop and learn from employees experiences.

What users of our service say about us:

During 2014/15 we surveyed households who had received a home safety check. We received 407 responses, here is a selection of some of the results we received:

- 54% of respondents said that since their home safety check they had improved or changed their fire safety measures.
- 94% of respondents were 'very satisfied' with the service received from NFRS.
- 92% of respondents felt safer in their home after a home safety check.

Satisfaction levels are similar to previous years, receiving overwhelmingly positive feedback in terms of satisfaction with our service delivery but, perhaps more importantly, we are finding that people are feeling safer in their homes as a result and are taking on board the safety messages and advice we promote.

Lessons learnt

The NFRS service assurance framework includes an accident reporting / near miss and investigation process, incident monitoring and reporting system, operational debrief system and an operational assurance team with appropriate procedures.

The policies, procedures, systems and processes are designed to support a continuously improving service.

The health, safety and welfare committee monitor progress against agreed actions for improvement.

Our risk reduction activity is underpinned by a risk based performance driven approach with quarterly performance meetings designed to highlight areas for improvement and areas that require action. Any risk reduction activity that is delivered is evaluated and reported upon at the performance meeting. This informs future initiatives and responses to identified risk. Lessons learned from national or major incidents are shared with partners and other services, recommendations are scrutinised and a gap analysis carried out to ascertain if any action by NFRS is required. Any recommendations found to be relevant will form the basis of an action plan and progress monitored.

Audits are carried out locally against a set of bench marking expectations identifying areas for improvement. Local management teams address any areas for improvement providing support and direction when required.

The Fire Protection department's risk based inspection programme helps identify levels of risk and compliance to the Fire Safety Order, in a variety of premises. The results of these inspections inform future inspection activity and the provision of advice and information to those responsible for fire safety and compliance with the Order.

Financial Performance

Our budget for 2014/15

The 2014/15 Year was another challenging one financially, with the amount of grant funding from Central Government reduced, and further grant reductions expected in future years. A number of planned savings were implemented during the year with the aim of reducing costs going forwards and preserving the Authority's strong, underlying financial position.

Where our money comes from and what your money is spent on

Revenue Income and Expenditure

	Income 2014/15 £000	Expenditure 2014/15 £000	Variance 2014/15 £000
Net Expenditure	42,892	42,694	(198)
Financed By:			
Revenue Support Grant / NNDR	12,511	12,511	0
Council Tax Freeze Grant	9,652	9,647	(5)
Precept from Constituent Authorities	20,729	20,729	0
Net			193

Revenue expenditure describes the day to day costs of running the Authority and includes items such as employees' pay, running costs of buildings and vehicles and office expenses. The Authority set a revenue budget of £42.892m for 2014/15 and the position at the end of the year shows an underspend of £193k. This underspend includes a Voluntary Revenue Provision charge of £121k. This will contribute to the on-going budget savings required in future years.

Capital Budget

	Capital Programme 2014/15	Actual 2014/15	Variance from Budget 2014/15
	£000	£000	£000
Property Programme	5,577	1,944	(3,633)
Transport Programme	2,691	1,490	(1,201)
Equipment	250	0	(250)
IT and Communications Programme	2,479	1,033	(1,446)
Total	10,997	4,467	(6,530)

The property programme underspent by £3.633m. The main reason for this was the delay in acquiring land required to build a new fire station to replace the current Central fire station. The delay occurred for reasons outside of the Authority's control and the impact of this pushed back the whole project, although the land was eventually acquired in April 2015.

The Transport programme underspent by £1.201m and this budget will be slipped forward to fund the build of appliances which started in the year as well as light vehicles. The majority of this slippage related to vehicles which were under construction but not completed by the year end.

The Information and Communications Technology programme also underspent during the year, by £1.446m. Most projects either completed in the year or made good progress, but budget will be slipped forward to fund the completion of the new Mobilising system as well as further Business Process Automation initiatives.

How we provide value for money

Expenditure per head per population	Population 2013/14	Expenditure 2013/14	Net Expenditure per head 2013/14
	1,115,658	42,694,000	38.28

Auditor's findings

A summary of auditors' reports and findings can be found in the Annual Audit Letter on the link below. Details regarding the annual statement of accounts can also be found via this link:

http://www.notts-fire.gov.uk/Documents/Statement_of_Accounts_2014-15_final.pdf

Our long-term financial challenges and commitments

Elected Members of the Fire Authority approved a council tax increase of 1.95% for 2015/16, with a Band D council tax of £72.44, and the revenue budget for 2015/16 has been set at £41.2m, some £1.7m less than that set for 2014/15. This is part of an overall requirement to reduce budgets over the period to 2017/18 alongside reductions in grant from central government.

Despite this, the Fire Authority is committed not only to surviving during this period of financial austerity, but also to continuing to improve and develop services against this financial backdrop. The three core values of the Authority are to deliver high quality services, with an engaged and motivated workforce, within a framework of strong governance and financial stability.

Our future plans

Our future challenges

Strategic risks, which are external factors that may affect the long-term priorities of the Authority, are recorded in the Strategic Risk Register. This register is updated twice a year and reported to senior management and Elected Members so that they may consider its content as part of the strategic decision-making process.

In 2010 NFRS completed a comprehensive Fire Cover Review which was a requirement of the National Framework 2008 and formulated part of the Service Plan 2010-13. Results showed that the county's risks have changed, with the number of incidents falling by nearly 35% over the last 10 years. The aim of this was to review the operational element of its service. We looked at how and where to best place our fire stations and fire appliances, delivering plans for the future which we will continue to implement over the coming years. As part of this review, NFRS implemented a model which is used to identify areas of risk for the county.

The economic climate has caused increasing financial difficulties for all public bodies, including Fire Services, and this situation is expected to continue for a few more years. Some of the financial pressures facing us include: the probable reducing levels of funding from Central Government; cost increases due to inflation and pay awards; the need to replace or refurbish our fire appliances and fire stations; uncertainty about interest rates and the reform of public sector pensions.

Back in 2010/11, our annual budget for running the Service was £48.1m. By 2015/16 this had reduced to £41.1m, a fall of £7m. This is in the context of increasing prices, so in real terms our budget reduction has been greater than this. Despite this, we have frozen council tax for the last three years – Band D household currently pays £69.69 council tax a year for our services (in 2013/14).

We are a front-line service and rely on the majority of our workforce to deliver services directly to you with a minority of our workforce providing support. In all, 78% of our annual budget pays for our workforce and the budget reductions in recent years have resulted in us employing fewer people than we used to. This trend is likely to continue as we strive to find

more efficient ways of working whilst still maintaining the high quality service that you have come to expect from us.

Our future commitments

‘Shaping our Future’: Organisational Development and Inclusion

2014/15 has seen the development of a number of proposals relating to the way in which the Service is to change over the next few years. As the Service works to balance the budget, it is also working to ensure that it is continuously improving.

The Service is now embarking on a new journey of organisational development and inclusion called ‘Shaping our Future’. Whilst the IRMP is concerned with what the Service does, the ‘Shaping our Future’ programme will be ensuring that the way in which things are done fit well with the values of the organisation. The programme will seek to ensure that the Service becomes a more progressive, learning organisation over the next five years. This work will aim to; embed a strong set of values and positive behaviours, pro-actively focus on service improvement, create a more collaborative, innovative work environment, develop leaders at all levels of the organisation, become more effective and efficient by best use of new and existing technologies and ensure that equality is embedded to all aspects of the Service through an “inclusion” approach.

Our community engagement

How you can become involved

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire Authority is a body of 18 elected members (six from the City and 12 from the County Council) that exists to supervise and direct the work of the Service and hold it to account to ensure it performs efficiently in the best interests of the community.

Members of the public can get involved with the work of the Fire Authority by attending the public meetings that are held regularly by the Authority and its sub-committees at NFRS headquarters. You can find out more about the Fire Authority, its work and access documents from previous and future meetings via this link:

<http://www.notts-fire.gov.uk/5B0BC81F3CC7407A93BB1DA196BC916A.asp>.

NFRS values the views of the communities we serve to ensure we are providing you the service you need. We consult formally on the ways in which we propose to deliver services – particularly when developing our Integrated Risk Management Plan, which sets out how we intend to manage the Service for the next five years. More information about our consultation activities is available via this link:

<http://www.notts-fire.gov.uk/8EA887DEDAD948179B7588072932C1B6.asp>

Much of our work with the public is done face-to-face by firefighters and community safety staff, whose aim is to make communities safer. You can see how we do this, find advice on making yourself safer at home, work or play in the county or contact us for more information by visiting our website <http://www.notts-fire.gov.uk/>. You can also find us on Facebook www.facebook.com/NottsFRS and on Twitter by searching for @nottsfire

Access to information

Details regarding our arrangements in respect of access to data and information can be found on the NFRS website via the following link:

<http://www.notts-fire.gov.uk/6243A099F0DD4EBA97B9E143D74AD3A9.asp>

How to make a compliment or a complaint

NFRS aims to make it as easy as possible for the people we serve to let us know their views. Through listening and learning we improve the quality of the services we provide, and encourage and recognise good practice by our staff.

We want to hear from people if they:

- Have a suggestion on how we might improve services.
- Would like to compliment us on a job well done.
- Feel we have fallen short of their expectations.
- Feel we have fallen short of the standards we set ourselves in dealing with complaints.

There are a number of ways in which you can compliment, comment or complain about our services:

- Email us on enquiries@notts-fire.gov.uk
- Phone us on 0115 967 0880
- In person by calling into one of our stations or headquarters
- By post

Compliments, comments and complaints
Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service
Bestwood Lodge
Arnold
Nottingham
NG5 8PD