Assets Strategy

2017/18-2019/20 (Revised July 2018)

Introduction

As a fire and rescue service, we own or lease a wide range of assets that include buildings, vehicles, equipment, PPE and IT hardware and software to enable us to provide our prevention, protection and training services as well as respond professionally to the significant range of emergency incidents we are called to attend.

Effective procurement of goods, services or works is vital to support frontline service provision, transparency, secure best value and adhere to the Authority's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

The Service ensures a consistent approach to procurement by using an e-procurement portal for all tender opportunities.

The Service is committed to collaboration both nationally; supporting where appropriate the six categories of the Strategic Commercial Board of the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), via frameworks and joint procurement; and locally through working in partnership with other organisations to achieve savings in both resource and finances.

This Assets Strategy covers three key aspects of our approach to providing and managing our strategic assets as shown in the diagram below:
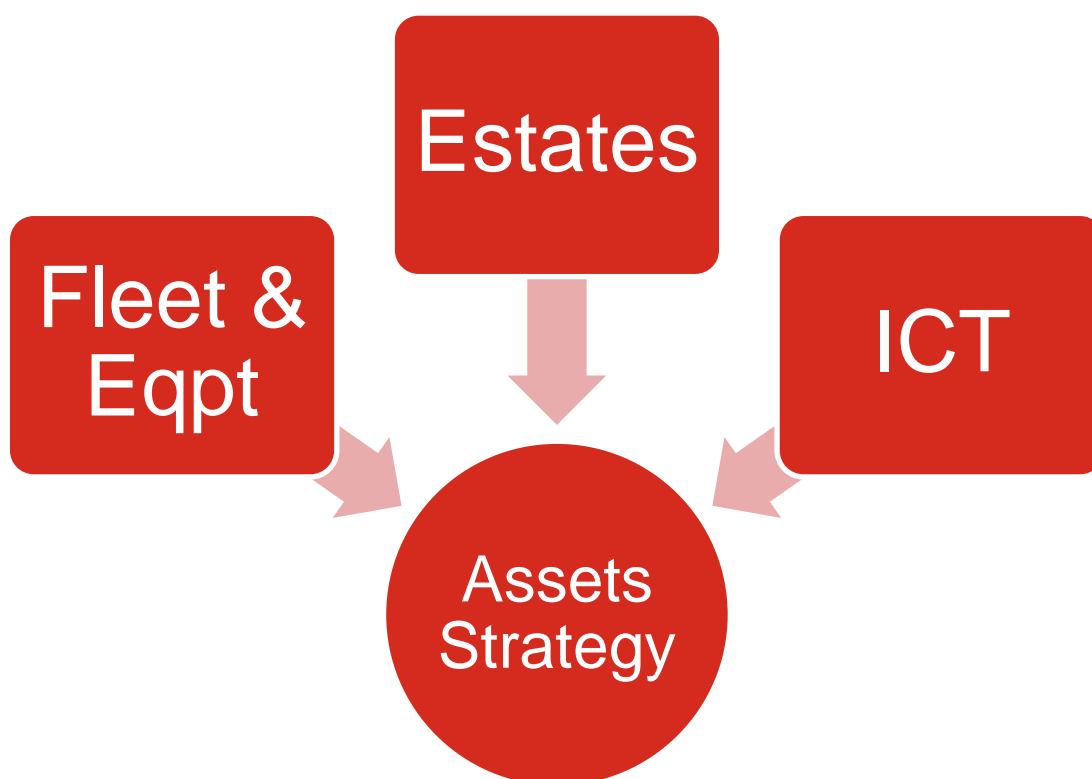
Fleet & Equipment - where are we now?

Under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, we have the same obligations as any other employer to ensure the health, safety and welfare of our employees. Most employers approach this by focusing on making the workplace their employees work in a safe environment.

However, the operational environment or 'workplace' that our operational staff are often called to work in, when responding to emergencies, can be inherently dangerous and it is not always possible to control all the hazards and risks that may be present in each 'workplace' we are called to.

To ensure the health, safety and welfare of our operational staff in these potentially dangerous environments, we adopt the approach of making the *person* safe rather than trying to control the environment they are working in. The 'safe person concept' involves selecting and developing the right people who have the right skills, abilities and attributes to recognise risks and remain safe whilst resolving the emergency.

A key element of the safe person concept is the provision and maintenance of vehicles, equipment and protective clothing necessary to deal with a range of operational incidents the Service may be called upon to attend.

Despite the challenges that reductions in funding from central government present, County Durham and Darlington Fire Authority remains fully committed to its vision of 'Safest People, Safest Places'.

A 15-year Capital Replacement Programme exists to ensure major investments are managed over the medium term.

Investing in the highest quality vehicles, equipment and protective clothing we can afford helps support our objectives to 'Respond Competently and Effectively' and 'Deliver Value for Money'.

We do this because we believe our staff are our greatest asset and investing in them will also help us maintain, and where possible improve, the high standards of professionalism that the communities of County Durham and Darlington deserve.

This strategy has been developed to ensure we can deliver on our commitment and ensure we maximise utilisation of our existing assets and invest our limited resources wisely, via open and transparent procurement processes. In doing so, we will continue to provide and maintain vehicles, equipment & personal protective equipment (PPE) assets that meet our current and future needs.

The Operational Vehicles and Equipment Group (OVEG) exists to ensure we procure operational equipment and clothing assets that:

- support our Service Vision, Aims & Objectives;
- are fit for purpose, safe and effective;
- are suitable for use by a diverse workforce;
- are legally compliant;
- reduce our impact on the environment and;
- represent value for money.

In 2016, key Health and Safety (H&S) and assurance functions were merged with the existing operational support team that manages fleet, equipment, stores and asset management functions to form the Assets & Assurance team. Key staff responsible for the management of health and safety,

assurance and operational assets are now working within one overall team, improving resilience and efficiency.

Where do we want to be?

- By 2021, we will be able to clearly demonstrate that we continue to provide the best vehicles, equipment and PPE we can afford to enable our staff to respond and support the range of emergency incidents and other activities that we attend in ways that are professional, effective and efficient.

- Any investment will support joint working, collaboration and the national procurement agenda wherever there is a clear business case to do so.

- These assets will be specified, procured and maintained under the principles of protecting the front line, improving firefighter safety, providing value for money, adopting the whole life cycle approach to asset management, engaging with end users, utilising innovative new technologies, supporting national procurement and the Research and Development (R&D) hub, and actively pursuing collaboration opportunities with partners.

Whole Life Cycle Approach

- In order to ensure legislative compliance and support our efforts to deliver maximum value from our limited resources, we are keen to continue our efforts to fully adopt the 'Whole Life Cycle' approach to managing our operational equipment assets.
- The procurement process looks to find the most economically advantageous tender.
- The Whole Life Cycle approach is illustrated below

County Durham and Darlington
Fire and Rescue Service
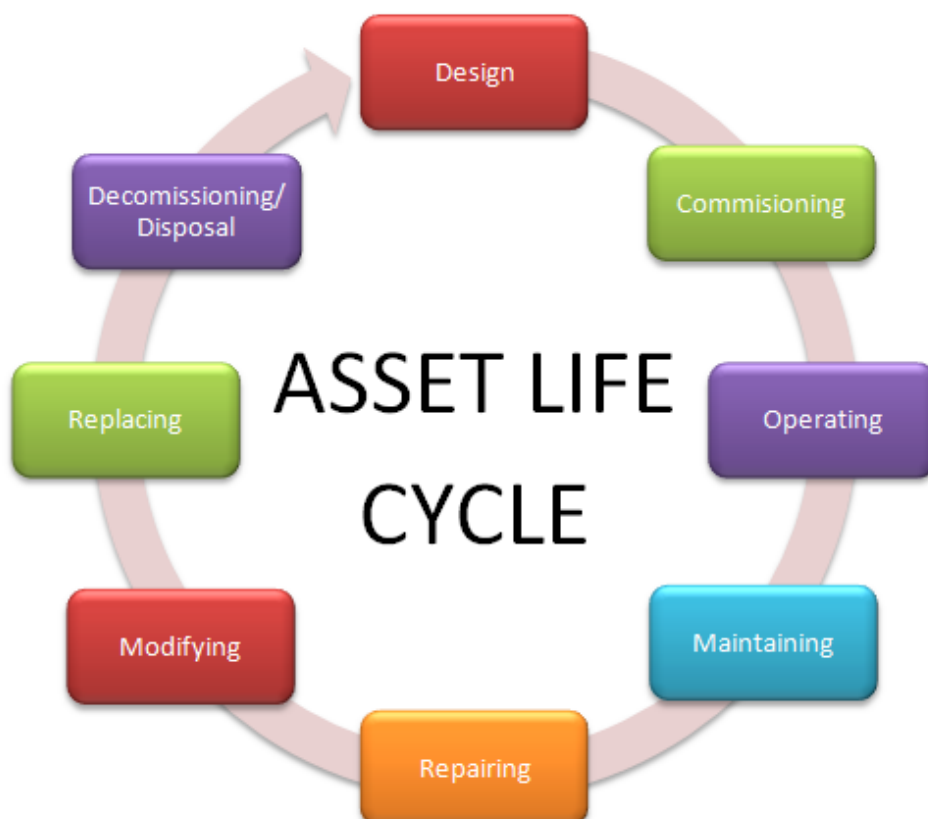
How do we get there?

To achieve our vision for fleet and equipment, we have identified 5 key improvement objectives:

Each of the Key Improvement Objectives (KIO) are underpinned by Priority Activities and prioritised over the next 3 years.

KIO 1 Further develop and embed the OVEG framework and processes to improve decision making and support the Whole Life Cycle approach.		
WHY? The Service needs to further embed the Operational Vehicle and Equipment Group (OVEG) framework and processes to maximise both quality and value for money and support each stage of the Whole Life Cycle.		
Target Year	KIO Ref.	Description
17/18	A.1.1	Priority 1 We will review the processes for tracking the movement of equipment between appliances such as handing over at incidents or rotating between appliances.
17/18	A.1.2	Priority 2 We will review how we engage with staff in specifying and evaluating new equipment to meet identified needs.
18/19	A.1.3	Priority 3 We will develop the internal SharePoint presence of the OVEG to raise awareness of the work of the OVEG and encourage contributions from all employees within the Service;
17/18	A.1.4	Priority 4 We will develop a process for monitoring and auditing compliance with our policy and procedures for standard tests of operational equipment. [COMPLETE]
19/20	A.1.5	Priority 5 We will review the current approach to decommissioning & disposal of operational equipment to ensure the Service maximises potential revenue streams through the sale of surplus assets;
19/20	A.1.6	Priority 6 We will conduct a full evaluation and audit of the OVEG process to ensure it remains effective and appropriate;

County Durham and Darlington
Fire and Rescue Service

		KIO 2 - Embed the Asset Management System to improve the tracking, testing & management of our fleet and equipment;
Why? We as an organisation need to modify how our approach to coding, tracking and accountability to ensure the vehicles & equipment we provide are utilised efficiently and have a full life history.
Target Year	KIO Ref.	Description
18/19	A.2.1	Priority 1 Continue the rollout of the AMS to all operational staff to manage the tracking and testing of all operational equipment, PPE and vehicles.
18/19	A.2.2	Priority 2 Initiate the development of the AMS within Workshops to provide an effective fleet management system
19/20	A.2.3	Priority 3 Develop the business intelligence reporting dashboards of the AMS to improve performance visibility and improve decision making.
19/20	A.2.4	Priority 4 Develop the AMS to improve the self-service ordering, allocation and tracking of non-standard tested personal issue items such as uniform.
19/20	A.2.5	Priority 5 Invest in vehicle telematics technology to improve the efficiency and utilisation of our entire vehicle fleet.

		KIO 3 - Investigate and evaluate new and emerging technologies, in collaboration with the work of the National R&D Hub;
Why? Working in partnership with other FRS and partners to identify, develop and evaluate new and innovative vehicle and equipment technologies will be key to improving our effectiveness whilst improving value for money
Target Year	KIO Ref.	Description
18/20	A.3.1	Priority 1 Actively support the National R&D Hub, volunteering as lead service on mutually agreeable research areas
17/18	A.3.2	Priority 2 Investigate and trial the use of Body Worn Video technology to enhance both training and our response to emergency incidents.
18/19	A.3.3	Priority 3 Investigate and trial the use of ultra-high-pressure firefighting technology to assess whether investment would improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our emergency response.
18/19	A.3.4	Priority 4 Improve the non-ESN mobile working capability of our fire appliances and firefighters to facilitate greater use of technology and improve productivity whilst working away from stations.
18/19	A.3.5	Priority 5 Investigate the use of new and alternative vehicle technologies and types to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and environmental footprint of our fleet of emergency response and support vehicles.

County Durham and Darlington
Fire and Rescue Service

Target Year	KIO Ref.	Description

KIO 4 - Actively pursue and support collaboration opportunities with other FRS, the Police and other partners;

Why? There are clear advantages in working with partners to identify how we can work together to enhance our effectiveness and reduce costs

Target Year	KIO Ref.	Description
17/18	A.4.1	Priority 1 Establish a joint aerial capability with Durham Police utilising the latest in unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) technology. Using UAVs equipped with HD video and thermal imaging cameras that can relay footage back to Command Units and Control Rooms in real time will greatly enhance both pre-planned events and response to emergency incidents. The UAVs will be available 24/7 using CAA licensed pilots drawn from both services, an arrangement that supports greater interoperability and closer working between fire and police responders as well as enhancing efficiency and resilience.
17/20	A.4.2	Priority 2 Investigate the development of a Joint Command Unit with Durham Police or other partners. This project would promote closer joint working during both pre-planned events and critical incidents, improve visibility within the local community and provide an on-scene recovery cell and business continuity facility.
17/20	A.4.3	Priority 3 Investigate and participate in a regional collaboration between NE Fire & Police services and a private sector supplier to specify and develop a command support IT system to improve shared situational awareness and decision-making at emergency incidents, both internally within the FRS and across services during multi-agency incidents. This project would inform the procurement of such a system which if delivered would support greater interoperability and closer working between fire and police responders as well as enhancing efficiency and resilience.
17/20	A.4.4	Priority 4 Investigate opportunities to collaborate with other FRS and/or blue light partners to procure outsourced fleet services such as vehicle body repairs.
18/19	A.4.5	Priority 5 Review, renew and potentially expand the existing partnership with North & West Yorkshire FRSs to jointly specify and procure fire appliances.

County Durham and Darlington
Fire and Rescue Service

KIO 5 - Actively support the national procurement agenda, and the Home Office Commercial Reform Programme			
Why? Being an active partner in the efforts to develop how FRS can work together to specify and procure key assets and services will deliver both improved quality and better value for money.		
Target Year	KIO Ref.	Description
17/18	A.5.1	Priority 1 Provide national leadership by fulfilling the role of CFO Category Sponsor for Fleet within the Strategic Commercial Committee of the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), actively supporting the Home Office Commercial Reform Programme.
18/19	A.5.2	Priority 2 Actively seek (including providing staff for user trials) to procure our next generation of firefighting PPE via the national procurement project being led by Kent FRS, where doing so will clearly deliver quality products and services that provide value for money.
19/20	A.5.3	Priority 3 Actively seek to procure all our vehicles and fleet services via collaborative partnerships and/or procurement frameworks, where doing so will clearly deliver quality products and services that provide value for money.
17/20	A.5.4	Priority 4 Actively seek to procure all our operational equipment via collaborative partnerships and/or procurement frameworks, where doing so will clearly deliver quality products and services that provide value for money.
17/20	A.5.5	Priority 5 Improve the availability and visibility of procurement information such as expenditure and contracts registers.

County Durham and Darlington
Fire and Rescue Service

ICT - where are we now?

In recent years despite the challenging reductions in funding from central government, investment in ICT within the service has remained strong. Key improvements have been made in resilient infrastructure and software systems to protect service resources and data.

The service is steadily increasing awareness of the threats to information assets across the workforce and has a rigorous audit regime in place to ensure standards across all aspects of ICT are continually being challenged.

Although there have been delays in the expected rollout of the Emergency Services Network, the service is well prepared for the forthcoming Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP) and any technical requirements to enable connection to this network.

A 10 year capital replacement programme exists to ensure major investments are managed over the medium term. This also ensures that the whole ICT estate can be managed in accordance with emerging technologies to fully exploit current capabilities.

Investment in ICT requires constant review. There is a balance between achieving value for money from the lifetime of an asset to enabling the workforce to make use of ICT and current capabilities to deliver enhanced services or achieve productivity improvement.

The whole life cycle of the asset should be considered at the procurement stage in order to deliver value for money from the most economically advantageous tender

Where do we want to be?

- By 2020, compliance will have been achieved and implemented for the forthcoming Emergency Services Network standards.

- The user desktop environment throughout the service estate will have been refreshed with current technology.

- Broader and greater awareness of necessary security standards will be recognisable from all staff perspectives.

- We will modernise ways of working through cloud based investment, improving accessibility and availability, remotely.

- The data environment will be further cleansed and restructured in order to maximise the data assets of the Service.

- Software and hardware revisions will follow the cloud based investments ensuring rationalisation of licencing, reducing hardware spend and improving the resilience through revised disaster recovery arrangements.

- Remote working to the desktop environment will be a more seamless transaction than at present.

County Durham and Darlington
Fire and Rescue Service

How do we get there?

To achieve our vision for ICT, we have identified 5 key improvement objectives:

Each of the Key Improvement Objectives (KIO) are underpinned by Priority Activities and prioritised over the next 3 years.

KIO 1 Further develop hardening of ICT security and resilience.		
WHY? The Service needs to be well prepared for all prevalent and forthcoming risks in the information technology and cyber security field. Employees need to be well informed of risks and the role they can play in defending against such attacks.		
Target Year	KIO Ref.	Description
17/18	I.1.1	Priority 1 We will further develop the role of the Protective Security Group (PSG) in identifying areas for improvement across each of the strands identified by the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure (CPNI)
17/18	I.1.2	Priority 2 We will invest in the skills and knowledge of our people, in terms of both security expertise but also knowledge and awareness;
18/19	I.1.3	Priority 3 We will aim to achieve cyber essentials accreditation
18/20	I.1.4	Priority 4 We will develop and invest in technologies to pro-actively manage security risks to the Service and closely monitor national guidance.

KIO 2 – Ensure the service meets the requirements of the forthcoming ESMCP;		
Why? In order to maintain interoperability with 3ES following the removal of the Airwave network it will be essential to transition to the new Emergency Service Network (ESN).		
Target Year	KIO Ref.	Description
17/18	I.2.1	Priority 1 Maintain effective programme governance, locally and regionally.
17/18	I.2.2	Priority 2 Ensure the service has robust plans in place that will satisfy our criteria for connection in accordance with national readiness templates.
18/19	I.2.3	Priority 3 Engage appropriate teams in the implementation phase of the project.
18/20	I.2.4	Priority 4 Seek strategic collaboration opportunities where regional or national implementation synergies exist
18/20	I.2.5	Priority 4 Exploit incremental technologies from ESMCP as they become available and consider as part of the service ICT strategy

County Durham and Darlington
Fire and Rescue Service

KIO 3 - Exploit emerging technologies and modernise the ICT environment;		
Why? Software products and infrastructure are migrating to cloud based technologies, future licencing models will be prohibitively costly for on premises infrastructure.		

Target Year	KIO Ref.	Description
17/18	I.3.1	Priority 1 Deploy Office 365 Infrastructure
17/18	I.3.2	Priority 2 Roll-out to service users
17/18	I.3.3	Priority 3 Support to service users in order to exploit new technology.
18/19	I.3.4	Priority 4 Reduce on premise infrastructure and resources.
18/19	I.3.5	Priority 5 Make best use of Microsoft agreement using Office 365 platform to replace equivalent technologies
18/19	I.3.6	Priority 6 Improve remote working, simplifying remote access technologies and increasing security
19/20	I.3.7	We will aim to migrate all services to cloud technologies to allow flexible access for all staff.

KIO 4 – Maximise access to data assets;		
Why? In order to reduce duplicated effort and unnecessary data storage and handling it is important to integrate systems where possible and make appropriate data accessible from the whole data estate.		

Target Year	KIO Ref.	Description
17/18	I.4.1	Priority 1 Complete the implementation of the integrated back office system
17/18	I.4.2	Priority 2 Commence transition process to new SharePoint sites
18/19	I.4.3	Priority 3 Further develop delegated accountability and skills within teams for managing their own data environments
18/20	I.4.4	Employees will be empowered to gain further advantage from the new SharePoint system

Target Year	KIO Ref.	Description
KIO 5 – Review the infrastructure requirements for disaster recovery (DR);		
Why? Making the most of cloud based disaster recovery will reduce the long term investment that would be required to maintain disaster recovery hardware.		
17/18	I.5.1	Priority 1 Procure disaster recovery services
17/18	I.5.2	Priority 2 Migrate DR services
18/19	I.5.3	Priority 3 Restructure existing DR hardware and reduce ongoing hardware demand.

County Durham and Darlington
Fire and Rescue Service

Estates - where are we now?

In the years leading to the comprehensive spending review the service invested in an estates capital improvement reserve. This has funded an ambitious programme of estates improvements in recent years despite the continuing austerity.

Key improvements have been seen in significant parts of the estate being replaced by new buildings or with substantial renovations.

More than 50% of service estate building are now less than 10 years old. This in itself brings new challenges as it is of great importance that these new assets are protected and maintained to ensure they provide long service life.

In order to service the existing estate there are numerous contracts in place to ensure specialist repairs and maintenance can be undertaken. These will require continued review for best value. The service now shares more of its estate buildings than ever before with partners from other emergency services, key partners and other agencies who have a similar agenda, aims or values to CDDFRS.

County Durham and Darlington
Fire and Rescue Service

Where do we want to be?

By 2020, we will be able to demonstrate how we have built upon recent achievements and further strengthen our excellent working relationships with partners such as the police and ambulance services. The strategy provides a framework for creating an estate which is fit for purpose, with good quality buildings of the right size, with the right facilities, in the best locations and provided at optimum cost.

- The service will have undertaken significant capital rebuild or modernisation projects across more than 70% of service estate assets.
- A general maintenance action plan will be in place to schedule all service backlog and future maintenance and thus reduce financial risk to the service.
- The service will consider social values in all procurement opportunities, such as sustainable materials and local employment
- A greater proportion of the value of general repairs and maintenance will be undertaken by the service estates team than by other contractors.
- Further aspects of service estate will be shared with partners or other suitable agencies.
- Outstanding major contracts will have been reviewed and re-tendered.

County Durham and Darlington
Fire and Rescue Service
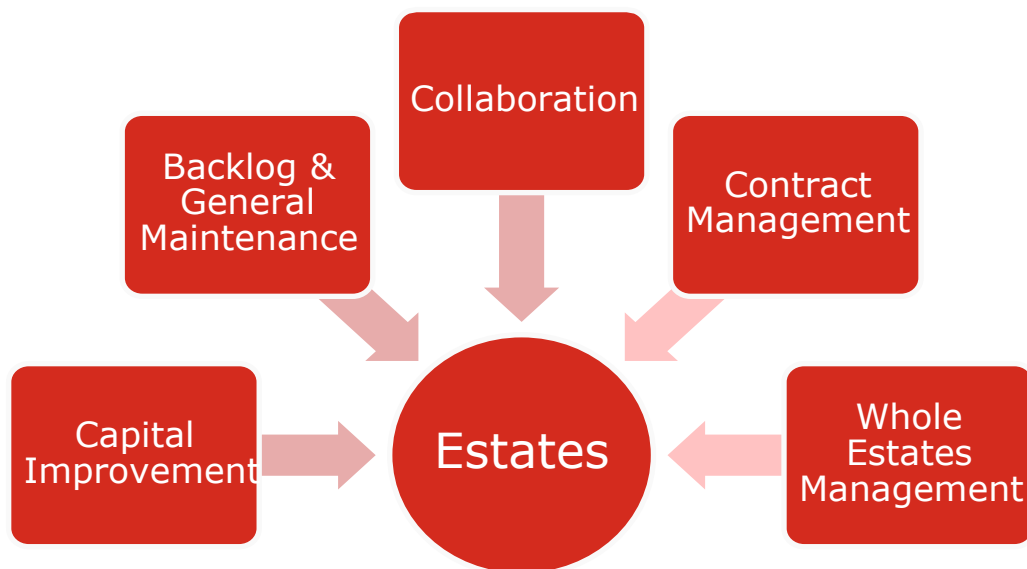
How do we get there?

To achieve our vision for Estates, we have identified 5 key improvement objectives:

Each of the Key Improvement Objectives (KIO) are underpinned by Priority Activities and prioritised over the next 3 years.

KIO 1 Capital improvement.		
WHY? Although significant improvements have been made throughout the service estate, there are still a number of significant capital projects to prepare for when funding becomes available.		
Target Year	KIO Ref.	Description
17/18	E.1.1	Priority 1 Develop an outline plan for the modernisation and refurbishment of facilities at Darlington station
17/18	E.1.2	Priority 2 Improve service training centre facilities to accommodate increase in recruits in future years
17/18	E.1.3	Priority 3 Design and build extension to Stanhope station.
18/19	E.1.4	Priority 4 Subject to appropriate funding implement the Darlington station improvement plans
19/20	E.1.5	Priority 5 Consider improvements to Sedgefield station

KIO 2 – Backlog and General maintenance		
Why? Improved planning is required for outstanding repairs and maintenance across the rest of the service estate		
Target Year	KIO Ref.	Description
17/18	E.2.1	Priority 1 Identify extent of backlog repairs
17/18	E.2.2	Priority 2 Create a prioritised improvement plan and prepare budget
18/19	E.2.3	Priority 3 Implement improvement plan for backlog and future maintenance
18/19	E.2.4	Priority 4 Demonstrate improved proportion of value of estates repairs and maintenance completed in-house

County Durham and Darlington
Fire and Rescue Service

KIO 3 - Estates collaboration		
Why? There are clear advantages in improving operational effectiveness, generating income and releasing efficiencies to protect the front line by working with willing partners.		
Target Year	KIO Ref.	Description
17/18	E.3.1	Priority 1 Undertake an assessment of estates utilisation
17/18	E.3.2	Priority 2 Identify primary elements of service estate to seek collaboration
17/18	E.3.3	Priority 3 Complete the construction of the joint emergency services station at Barnard Castle
18/19	E.3.4	Priority 4 Seek opportunities for collaboration at Service HQ

KIO 4 – Contract management;		
Why? To ensure the Service constantly secures value for money services a range of contracts will be renewed over the term of this strategy.		
Target Year	KIO Ref.	Description
17/18	E.4.1	Priority 1 Review HQ facilities management contract
17/20	E.4.2	Priority 2 Review a range of sub-contracts for estates support and maintenance
18/19	E.4.3	Priority 3 Review estates cleaning contract
19/20	E.4.4	Priority 4 Review Service catering contract

KIO 5 – Whole estates management;		
Why? There are currently insufficient resources directed to support the overall maintenance of service wide assets, this has been mitigated in the short term by an aggressive capital improvement programme.		
Target Year	KIO Ref.	Description
17/18	E.5.1	Priority 1 Re-align appropriate resources to support whole estates management
17/18	E.5.2	Priority 2 Undertake asset review and prepare Planned Preventative Maintenance (PPM) schedules
18/19	E.5.3	Priority 3 Implement PPM schedules.
18/19	E.5.4	Assess suitability of estates technician resources and establishment

County Durham and Darlington
Fire and Rescue Service

Measuring Progress

We will monitor progress of the improvement strategy in the following ways:

Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

In the first year we will develop a suite of appropriate Key Performance Indicators to help measure the progress of this strategy.

Reporting Progress

Scrutiny of progress against the strategy will be undertaken by the Performance & Programme Board (PPB) who will receive regular reports from Area Manager, Assurance & Assets.

Measuring Perceptions/ Sense Checking

We will regularly ask for feedback from our operational staff to inform us of our progress with this Strategy. Their opinions and suggestions will be used to measure and influence improvement.

Keeping it current

We will provide a progress report and update the plan annually to keep it fresh.

County Durham and Darlington
Fire and Rescue Service

Safest People, Safest Places

County Durham and Darlington
Fire and Rescue Service