



## **Local Government Act 1972**

**A Meeting of the Combined Fire Authority for County Durham and Darlington will be held in the Morton Room - County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters on Friday 22 February 2019 at 10.00 am. to consider the following business:-**

### **PART A**

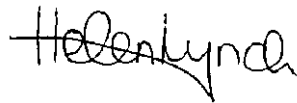
1. Chief Fire Officers Commendations
2. Declarations of interest, if any
3. Minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2018 (Pages 3 - 8)
4. Current Correspondence - Report of Assistant Chief Fire Officer - Service Support (Pages 9 - 10)
5. Notes of the Finance Committee - Report of Chair (Pages 11 - 12)
6. Notes of the Performance Committee - Report of Chair (Pages 13 - 14)
7. Integrated Risk Management Plan Consultation Feedback 2019-2020 - Report of the Chief Fire Officer (Pages 15 - 82)
8. Emergency Response Review Update - Report of Assistant Chief Fire Officer - Service Delivery (Pages 83 - 86)
9. Budget 2019/20 report under Section 25 of Local Government Act 2003 - Report of Treasurer (Pages 87 - 90)
10. 2019/20 Revenue Budget and Council Tax, Capital Programme and Medium Term Financial Plan - Joint Report of Treasurer and Chief Fire Officer (Pages 91 - 148)
11. Charging for Unwanted Fire Signals Trial - Report of the Area Manager Community Risk Management (Pages 149 - 160)
12. Fire and Rescue Incident Statistics: England, April 2017 to March 2018 - Report of the Area Manager Community Risk Management (Pages 161 - 176)
13. Fire and Rescue Service Inspections 2018/2019 - Report of Area Manager Training, Assets and Assurance (Pages 177 - 182)
14. Safer Futures 'Live' (School Safety Carousel) - Report of the Member Champion for Community Safety (Pages 183 - 186)
15. Such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration
16. Any resolution relating to the exclusion of the public during the discussion of items containing exempt information

## Part B

**Items during which it is considered the meeting is not likely to be open to the public (consideration of exempt or confidential information).**

17. Fire Fatality Presentation (Pages 187 - 196)
18. Such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration

**PURSUANT** to the provisions of the above named Act, **I HEREBY SUMMON YOU** to attend the said meeting



**H LYNCH**

Clerk to the Combined Fire Authority  
for County Durham and Darlington

County Hall  
Durham  
DH1 5UL

**TO: The Members of the Combined Fire Authority for County Durham and Darlington**

**Durham County Councillors:**

Councillors B Avery, A Batey, D Bell, J Bell, P Brookes, C Carr, A Gardner, D Hicks, P Howell, A Laing, L Marshall, H Nicholson, C Potts, G Richardson, J Robinson, J Shuttleworth, M Simmons, W Stelling, F Tinsley, D Stoker and J Turnbull.

**Darlington Borough Councillors:**

Councillors H Crumbie, C Johnson, B Jones and S Richmond.

At the meeting of the **Combined Fire Authority for County Durham and Darlington** held at Fire HQ, Belmont Business Park, Belmont Durham, DH1 1TW on **Tuesday 18 December 2018** at **10.00 am**.

### **Present:**

#### **Durham County Councillors:**

Councillors B Avery, A Batey, D Bell, J Bell, P Brookes, C Carr, M Clarke (substitute for Cllr F Tinsley), D Hicks, P Howell, A Laing, R Manchester (substitute for H Nicholson), L Marshall, C Potts, G Richardson, J Robinson, J Shuttleworth, M Simmons, W Stelling, D Stoker and J Turnbull.

#### **Darlington Borough Councillors:**

Councillors H Crumbie, C Johnson and B Jones.

#### **Independent Standards Members: -**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors H Nicholson, S Richmond and F Tinsley.

The Chair informed members that the Service had recently won two awards; Emergency Service Partnership of the Year at the Excellence in Fire and Emergency Awards 2018 and Best Apprenticeship Programme at the Training Journal Awards 2018.

### **A1 Declarations of interest**

Cllr C Johnson declared an interest for item 13, noting his position on Darlington Council Planning Applications Committee.

### **A2 Minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2018**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 26 November 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair (for copy see file of minutes).

### **A3 Current Correspondence**

The Authority received an update from the Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Service Support in relation to current correspondence received from government and other bodies relevant to the Authority and the status of each (for copy see file of minutes).

Members commented on the delay with HMICFRS reports for tranche one. S Errington confirmed that a summary report would be prepared for the next CFA meeting.

#### **A4 The Adrian Thomas Review**

The Authority considered a report of the Assistant Chief Fire Officer Service Support, which provided an update on the progress of the action plan that was developed in response to the 'Independent review of conditions of service for fire and rescue staff in England' (for copy see file of minutes).

#### **Resolved:**

That the content of the report be noted.

That the completed status of the action plan be approved.

#### **A5 Performance Report Quarter Two 2018/19**

The Authority considered a report of the Area Manager Training Assets and Assurance, which provided a summary of organisational performance at the end of the second quarter of the 2018/19 financial year (for copy see file of minutes).

The Authority received a demonstration of the new Fire Reduction Super Hero Flamin Nora.

Members commented on the work of the Arson Reduction Team.

Members queried the format of sickness reporting and suggested that long and short term sickness be presented separately. S Errington noted that the report presented a high level overview of the performance indicators and agreed that a separate sickness paper would be prepared for a future CFA meeting.

Members commented on AFA actuation figures noting plans for increased student accommodation. D Brown confirmed that the Service had engaged in the planning process and with landlords and occupiers.

Members queried the overall performance chart figures noting that the regression figure had increased from the previous report. Discussion took place regarding performance nationally and S Errington noted that the national benchmarking report would be presented to the next CFA meeting.

#### **Resolved:**

That the content of the report be noted.

## **A6 Assaults on Emergency Workers (Offences) Act 2018**

The Authority considered a report of the Chief Fire Officer which made members aware of the assaults on Emergency Workers (Offences) Act 2018 which received Royal Assent on 13 September 2018 and came into force on 13 November 2018 (for copy see file of minutes).

### **Resolved:**

That the report and introduction of Assaults on Emergency Workers (Offences) Act 2018 be noted.

## **A7 Further Government Response: Enabling Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) to sit and vote on Combined Fire and Rescue Authorities**

The Authority considered a report of the Chief Fire Officer which made members aware of the results of the independent enquiry that was commissioned by the Government following objections from two fire authorities to the consultation entitled 'Enabling Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) to sit and vote on Combined Fire and Rescue Authorities' (for copy see file of minutes).

Members commented on the position in Durham and Darlington and noted that the PCVC had stated that he has no intention of pursuing a change to governance for the fire and rescue service and does not wish to become a member of the Authority.

### **Resolved:**

That the content of the report and outcome of the independent enquiry be noted.

## **A8 Appointment of Independent Persons**

The Authority considered a report of the Clerk which sought approval to recruit independent persons to the Fire Authority (for copy see file of minutes).

Members agreed to proceed with option 3 to undertake a recruitment process to appoint two independent persons and determine their length of office.

Members discussed and agreed the addition of a commitment to periodically attend CFA meetings.

Members queried training arrangements for independent persons. H Lynch confirmed that an induction would be carried out followed by notification of any further training opportunities.

### **Resolved:**

That options be considered as set out in paragraph 7 with a term of office agreed for a period expiring on 30 April 2023.

That the recruitment exercise be undertaken in accordance with paragraph 9 of the report.

#### **A9 Consett Fire Presentation**

The Group Manager Community Risk Management delivered a presentation to members in relation to a fire at Gardner Aerospace in Consett.

Members noted that a letter of thanks had been sent to crews involved.

#### **Resolved:**

That the presentation be noted.

#### **A10 Any other Business**

There was no other business.

#### **A11 Exclusion of the public**

That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the said Act.

The Chair notified members of an error to the publication notice on printed copies of items 12 and 13. The notice stated by virtue of paragraph 1 of part 1 of schedule 12a of the local government act 1972 and should have stated by virtue of paragraph 3 of part 1 of schedule 12a of the local government act 1972.

#### **B12 Lord Kerslake Report Update**

The Authority Received a report of the Assistant Chief Fire Office Service delivery which provided an update on the work undertaken by the service in response to the report compiled by Lord Kerslake on the preparedness for, and emergency response to, the Manchester Arena attack in May 2017 (for copy see file of minutes).

#### **Resolved:**

That the update on the service's progress against the actions identified in the Kerslake Report be noted.

#### **B13 Estates Update**

The Authority received a report of the Head of Corporate Resources which provided an update on the latest position in relation to the Estates Improvement Programme (EIP) and of plans to

address the risks associated with outstanding estates maintenance (for copy see file of minutes).

Members noted their support for the Darlington station plans.

**Resolved:**

That the content of the report be noted.

**B14 Darlington Fire Presentation**

The Area Manager Training Assets and Assurance delivered a presentation to members in relation to a fire at Darlington.

Members noted that a letter of thanks had been sent to crews involved

**Resolved:**

That the presentation be noted.

**B15 Integrated Risk Management Plan Consultation Update Presentation**

The Chief Fire Officer provided a verbal update regarding IRMP responses received to date.

**Resolved:**

That the update be noted.

**B16 Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

**CLOSE OF MEETING**

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### Current Correspondence: December 2018 – February 2019

Release date	Subject	Summary	Action		
			CFA Report	CFA Response	Info
20/12/18	Letter from HMI Zoe Billingham	Invitation to HMICFRS event for CFOs, Authority Chairs, Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners and other FRS interested parties.			√
4/01/2019	Letter from Jonny Bugg	Introductory letter from Jonny Bugg, Deputy Director for the Fire Strategy and Reform Unit at the Home Office.			√
14/01/2019	Circular NJC/1/19	Technical Advisory Panel recommendation for Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service.			√
17/01/2019	Letter from Shehla Husain	Update regarding continuation of funding for the Fire Revenue Firelink Grant 2019-20. The precise level of grant funding for FY2019/20 has not yet been determined and further details will be circulated once cleared.			√
31/01/2019	Letter from Shehla Husain	Letter confirming grant payment in relation to Responding to New Risks (MTFA Capability).			√
31/01/2019	Letter from HMI Zoe Billingham	Update regarding HMICFRS inspections covering tranche one reports and the next steps for those inspected Service's, Chief and Chairs event, tranche two inspections, data and document collection and information for FRS in tranche three.			√

04/02/2019	Letter from Luke Edwards	Introductory letter from Luke Edwards, Director for Fire and Resilience within the Crime, Policing and Fire Group of the Home Office.			√
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## COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

22 FEBRUARY 2019

### NOTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 29 JANUARY 2019

#### REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

**Members Present:** Cllr A Batey (Chair)  
Cllrs P Howell, J Shuttleworth, W Stelling and C Potts

**Officers Present:** T Hope

**Apologies:** Apologies were received from Cllr H Crumbie

#### Forecast of Outturn 2018/19 Quarter 3

1. The committee received an update regarding the Service's revenue and capital financial outturn position based upon expenditure and income to the 31 December 2018. The forecast revenue outturn position to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 is an underspend of £0.441M.

The committee **noted** the report.

#### Short Term Investments 2018/19 Quarter 3

2. The committee received an update on the performance of the Authority's Short-Term Investments for the period ended 31 December 2018

The committee **noted** the current position regarding the Authority's Short-Term Investments.

#### Revenue and Capital Budgets 2019/20 and Medium-Term Financial Plan

3. The committee received details of the local government finance settlement for 2019/20 and were requested to consider the revenue and capital budgets and medium-term financial plan (MTFP) to agree a firm recommendation on the budget and council tax to the meeting of the Fire Authority on 22 February 2019.

The committee discussed possible effects of a council tax increase and noted concern for individuals who are already under financial pressure as a result of increases in the cost of living.

- (i) The committee **considered** the information in the report.
- (ii) The committee **considered** the level of council tax for the 2019/20 financial year.
- (iii) The committee **noted** the risks that had been identified as part of the budget setting process
- (iv) The committee **agreed** that a firm recommendation be made to the Combined Fire Authority meeting on 22 February 2019 that council tax for 2019/20 be increased by 2.95%.

## **Application for flexible retirement – reduction of working hours**

4. The committee considered an application for flexible retirement.

The committee **agreed** the flexible retirement application based on the information outlined within the report.



## COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

22 FEBRUARY 2019

### NOTES OF THE PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 10 DECEMBER 2018

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#### REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

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**Members Present:** Cllr C Carr (Chair)  
Cllrs D Hicks, D Stoker and B Jones

#### Purpose of the report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update of the discussions of the Performance Committee held on the 10 December 2018.

#### Presentation – Monitoring and Maintenance of Operational Competence

2. A presentation on the monitoring and maintenance of operational competence covering the following areas was given:
  - Planning for maintaining competence
  - Management practices in place to monitor operational competence at both local and service level
  - Management practices in place to ensure staff maintain operational competence
  - Process adopted when a member of operational staff drops out of competence
  - Current position in terms of operational competence
  - Problems encountered in maintaining competence across all operational roles
  - Recording of competence on Firewatch.

The committee **noted** the presentation.

#### Performance Report Quarter Two 2018/19

3. The organisational performance indicators for quarter two were presented to the committee. Overall 66% of the strategic PI's maintained or improved on performance compared to the previous year. Key areas of performance were discussed with an overview of actions plans and work carried out to drive improvement.

The Committee **noted** the report.

## **Sickness Absence Report**

4. Members received an update on sickness absence performance as at the end of Quarter Two. When compared against other services nationally, sickness for WT, Control and non uniformed staff are in the lower quartiles and below the national average.

The Committee **noted** the report.

## **Letters of Appreciation**

5. There had been a total of seventeen letters received. The Committee considered the various letters of appreciation that had been submitted to the Service.

The Committee **noted** the report.

## **Part B**

### **Formal Complaints**

6. The Committee were informed that there had been no formal complaints received by the service in the reporting period. No complaints had been forwarded to the Local Government Ombudsman.

The Committee **noted** the report.

Dominic Brown, Assistant Chief Fire Officer 0191 375 5610



## **COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY**

**22 FEBRUARY 2019**

## **INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN CONSULTATION FEEDBACK 2019-2020**

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### **REPORT OF CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**

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#### **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1. To update members with details of the consultation feedback in response to the 2019 – 2020 Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Action Plan.

#### **BACKGROUND**

2. The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 requires the Secretary of State to prepare a Fire and Rescue National Framework. The Framework sets out priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities who must have regard to the Framework in carrying out their duties.
3. The Fire and Rescue Service National Framework document places a responsibility on all fire and rescue authorities to produce and consult on their IRMP which in this Service is incorporated into the Three-Year Strategic Plan. These documents direct fire and rescue authorities to:
  - Identify and assess the full range of fire and rescue related risks our area faces, make provision for prevention and protection activities and to respond to incidents appropriately;
  - Work in partnership with our community to deliver our Service; and
  - Be accountable to communities for the service we provide.
4. The Authority must have in place and maintain an IRMP which reflects local needs and sets out how existing and foreseeable risks will be tackled in local communities. The Strategic Plan is reviewed annually to assess the effectiveness of existing arrangements and following this an annual IRMP action plan is developed.
5. The plan on which we consulted this year was the second-year action plan of the current Three-Year Strategic Plan (incorporating the IRMP) which spans from 2018/19 – 2020/21.
6. The action plan has had to be amended significantly this year due to a legal ruling in South Yorkshire which outlined that a crewing system, similar to that in place in the Service, does not comply with elements of the Working Time Regulations 1998. The system called Day Crewing Plus (DCP) is currently in place at Seaham and Newton Aycliffe Fire Stations. The system was introduced in 2013 at these stations and has operated successfully since that time. Although ultimately it would be for the courts to decide if the system operated in County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS) complies with the regulations it is prudent to assume the court would make a similar judgment to that made in South Yorkshire.

7. Nationally the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) have made it clear they expect fire and rescue services operating these types of crewing systems to remove them or potentially face a local legal challenge. We have been working closely with the FBU locally to try and negotiate an alternative system that complies with the regulations and also meets the needs of staff at those stations.
8. Whilst examining the options to remove the two DCP stations, the Service have updated and re-examined the data that was collated for the Emergency Response Review in 2017. The data covered:
  - Past and future demand from each station including types of demand and high demand times.
  - Current and future risk data including: population, dwellings, deprivation, high risk people, high risk locations, business premises, operational risk information, national and local risk registers.
9. Given the predicted deficit that the Service is facing in the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), understanding the financial implications of any option is vital. The options are also modelled against the impact they will have on our response standards. The response standards are the Authority's service delivery standard to the public for emergency response.

## **CONSULTATION FOR 2019/20**

10. A copy of the consultation document is attached at Appendix A.
11. The consultation considered three high level questions:

### **Bishop Auckland crewing arrangements**

If the trial currently being undertaken at Bishop Auckland fire station (crewing the first appliance with 4 firefighters and the Special Rescue Unit with 2 firefighters) is deemed successful, should we continue with this staffing arrangement permanently?

### **Collaboration opportunities**

Do you support our intention to explore further collaboration opportunities with Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS) and (NFRS) to improve efficiency, effectiveness or increase public safety?

### **Revised crewing options**

We must make changes to crewing at our stations at Seaham and Newton Aycliffe and possibly others (Durham and Spennymoor), please tick your preferred option below or alternatively please tell us in the free text box your ideas.

12. The three options presented for consideration under revised crewing options were:

#### **Option 1**

Have firefighters on duty at Seaham and Newton Aycliffe for 12 hours during the day. At night time only the existing on call firefighters will be called into work within 5 minutes of being alerted to the incident.

#### **Option 2**

Have firefighters on duty at Seaham and Newton Aycliffe as described in option 1. In addition, to cover 12 hours over night, move the second fire engine and crew from Durham to Newton Aycliffe and the second fire engine and crew from Peterlee to Seaham, this will maintain staffing that can respond immediately at these stations.



### **Option 3**

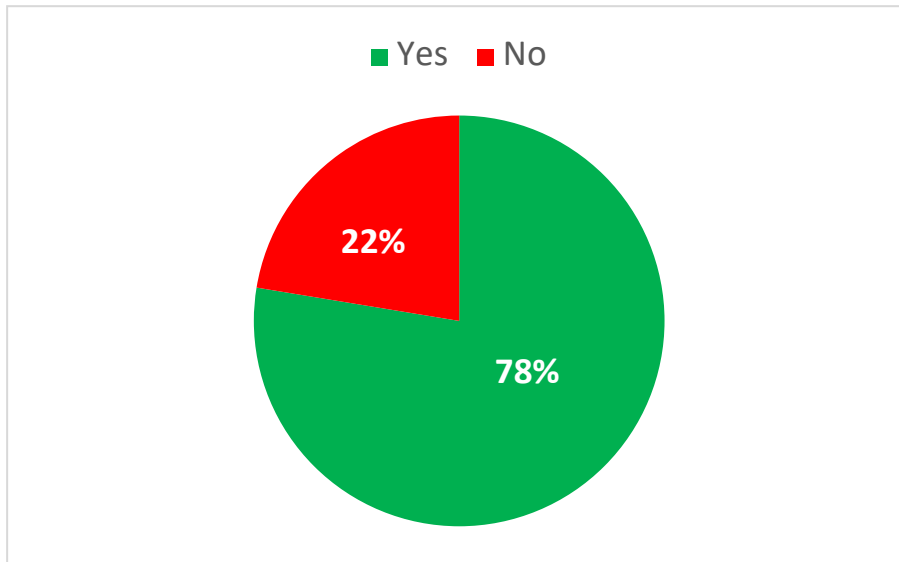
Have firefighters on duty at Seaham and Newton Aycliffe as described in option 1. In addition, move Durham's second fire engine and crew permanently to Spennymoor to replace the current arrangements. This means they would be there to offer an immediate response 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Both Durham and Spennymoor would then have identical resources when responding to incidents.

13. The consultation document outlined that the Service's preferred option was Option 3. This is the only option that has a positive impact on Service wide response standards, delivers the greatest savings and best matches our resources to the risk and demand data.
14. Various methods of communication have been used in the consultation process which included:
  - An on-line survey;
  - Station open night events at the stations impacted specifically by the options;
  - Durham County Council and Darlington Borough Council staff;
  - Messages about the survey and links to it from Twitter and Facebook via the Service accounts as well as the partner organisations (listed above);
  - Presentations to various strategic groups of Darlington Borough Council and Durham County Council including Overview and Scrutiny Committees;
  - Presentations at Resident Association meetings;
  - Presentations at Parish and Town Council meetings;
  - Presentations to Area Action Partnership meetings;
  - Briefings to all CDDFRS staff. Information also included in several staff bulletins and Communications Forums;
  - Information to neighbouring fire and rescue services.

## **CONSULTATION RESULTS**

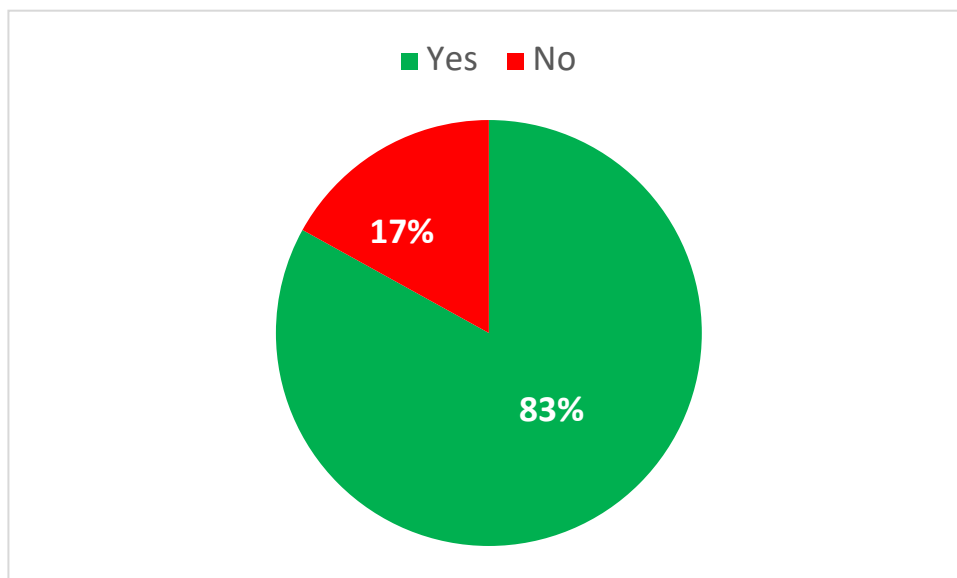
15. In total we received 790 valid, completed surveys. In order to present valid data a number of duplicate surveys that had been submitted from the same people, numerous times over a short period of time were removed from the final results. Details of the responses received against each of the questions are set out below. A copy of the free text responses is set out at Appendix B.

**Question 1: If the trial currently being undertaken at Bishop Auckland fire station is deemed successful, should we continue with this staffing arrangement permanently?**



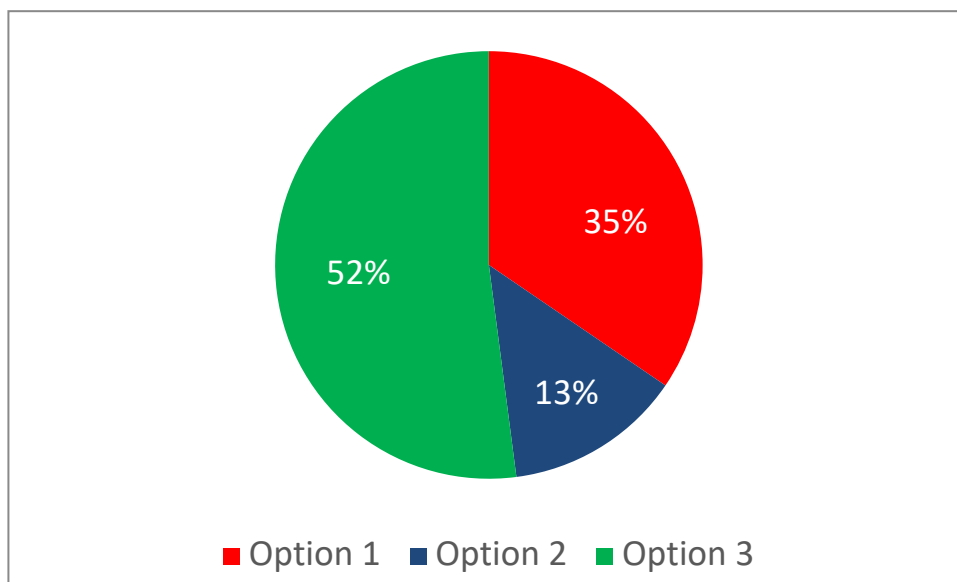
16. 78% of respondents supported this proposal.

**Question 2: Do you support our intention to explore further collaboration opportunities with Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS) and (NFRS) to improve efficiency, effectiveness or increase public safety?**



17. 83% of respondents supported this proposal.

**Question 3: We must make changes to crewing at some of our stations, please tick your preferred option below or alternatively please tell us in the free text box your ideas.**



18. 35% of respondents supported option 1, 13% supported option 2 and 52% supported option 3.
19. The Service received some specific feedback from Durham County Council's Safer Stronger Overview and Scrutiny Committee. A copy of the response is attached as Appendix C. The Committee unanimously supported Option 3. The Chief Fire Officer also received a letter from Grahame Morris MP, whose constituency covers Easington. Grahame expressed concern about the cuts to the fire and rescue service and wrote outlining this view to the Police and Fire Minister, Nick Hurd. Grahame had specific concerns about the option of moving the second appliance from Peterlee (Option 2). A copy of the correspondence from Grahame is attached as Appendix D.
20. The consultation results will be published on the Authority's website, via social media and made available in hard copy format if requested.
21. We are also aware that the options presented under Question 3 were, to some people, controversial and we received some passionate and emotive feedback to this particular question. A significant amount of the comments made referred to how unfair the current funding position was given the amount of grant cut that the Authority has received over the last eight years, the limitations around increases to the precept and the lack of capital funding.
22. We are also conscious of the views of staff who are impacted by the various options presented. We have tried to take account of all of these views when outlining the recommendations made in relation to the Emergency Response Review (ERR) which are covered in a separate paper on the agenda.
23. Members are reminded of the predicted deficit outlined in the MTFP. It is important that the Authority has robust plans to meet this deficit. The legal implications of the DCP mean it is vital that this shift system is ended as soon as is reasonably practicable.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

24. Members are requested to:

- a) **Note** the 2019/20 IRMP consultation outcomes;
- b) **Consider** the feedback received when considering the options outlined in the ERR paper (item 9 on the agenda).

Stuart Errington, Chief Fire Officer, 0191 375 5555

# Integrated risk management plan consultation 2018-2019





## Introduction

Having the safest people and safest places is at the heart of everything we do as a fire and rescue service and will be the golden thread running through every emergency call we take, every incident we attend and every home or business we make safer.

The tragedy that unfolded at Grenfell Tower last year served as a poignant reminder of the critical role we play in protecting our communities and has only made us more determined and passionate than ever to do the job we do and to do it well.

The last few years has seen some of the most significant cuts to public spending ever known. This means to continue offering a first-class fire and rescue service to the people living, working and visiting County Durham and Darlington we must be innovative and do things differently.

This document outlines some options we are considering to ensure you continue to receive a first class, cost effective fire and rescue service going forward.



**John Robinson**  
Chair of The Fire Authority



**Stuart Errington**  
Chief Fire Officer

## Our performance

The number of calls we received last year has decreased by

**2%**

- from 17,171 to 16,760.



We attended 71 non domestic building fires last year. That's a

**31%**

reduction from the previous year.

There were **0** deaths in house fires in 2017/2018 with numbers remaining low and fluctuating between zero and five in recent years.

Accidental house fires are up from 211 to 251, a

**19%**

increase from the previous year.

Last year we responded to 326 road traffic collisions. That's a

**0.6%**

rise from last year, where we attended 324.



Total injuries from accidental house fires are down from 24 to 20, a

**17%**

reduction from last year.





## Our finances

At a time when we, along with other public-sector organisations, face an uncertain future, it is essential that we have an effective medium-term financial plan (MTFP) in place. This means we can work towards balancing the budget over the medium term, taking account of our expenditure and of future central and local funding.

Our MTFP for 2018/19 to 2021/22 is set out in the table below. It has been calculated based on the assumption that council tax will increase by 2.95% in 2019/20 and 2.0% in 2021/21 and 2021/22.

The money we receive from government continues to decline and as a result we have a significant shortfall in funding from 2019/20 onwards.

In order to balance the budget we need to identify £0.448 million of savings in 2019/20 rising to £0.735 million in 2021/22. We have undertaken a full review of emergency response to identify further savings options and would welcome your views on our proposals.

### Medium term financial plan 2018/19 - 2021/22

		2018/19 £m	2019/20 £m	2020/21 £m	2021/22 £m
<b>Net Expenditure</b> (This is the money we have to spend)		28.507	29.010	29.632	30.230
Where our funding comes from	<b>Total government funding</b>	9.591	9.295	9.125	9.125
	<b>Local business rates</b>	1.374	1.408	1.408	1.408
	<b>Council tax</b>	17.170	17.859	18.402	18.962
	<b>Surplus on collection fund</b>	0.372	-	-	-
	<b>Total funding</b>	28.507	28.562	28.935	29.495
<b>Shortfall in funding</b>		-	-0.448	-0.697	-0.735



# Last year's consultation results

Last year we asked you to tell us how well we were doing. 969 people across County Durham and Darlington responded to our survey, this is what you told us:

**86%**

of people were satisfied or very satisfied with the service provided by County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS)



**72%**

of people are satisfied or very satisfied with the Safer County Durham and Darlington plan

**71%**

of people feel well informed of the work CDDFRS is doing



**82%**

of people were satisfied or very satisfied that CDDFRS are dealing with issues that matter to them



Overall **89%** of people's perception of CDDFRS was

**GOOD OR VERY GOOD**

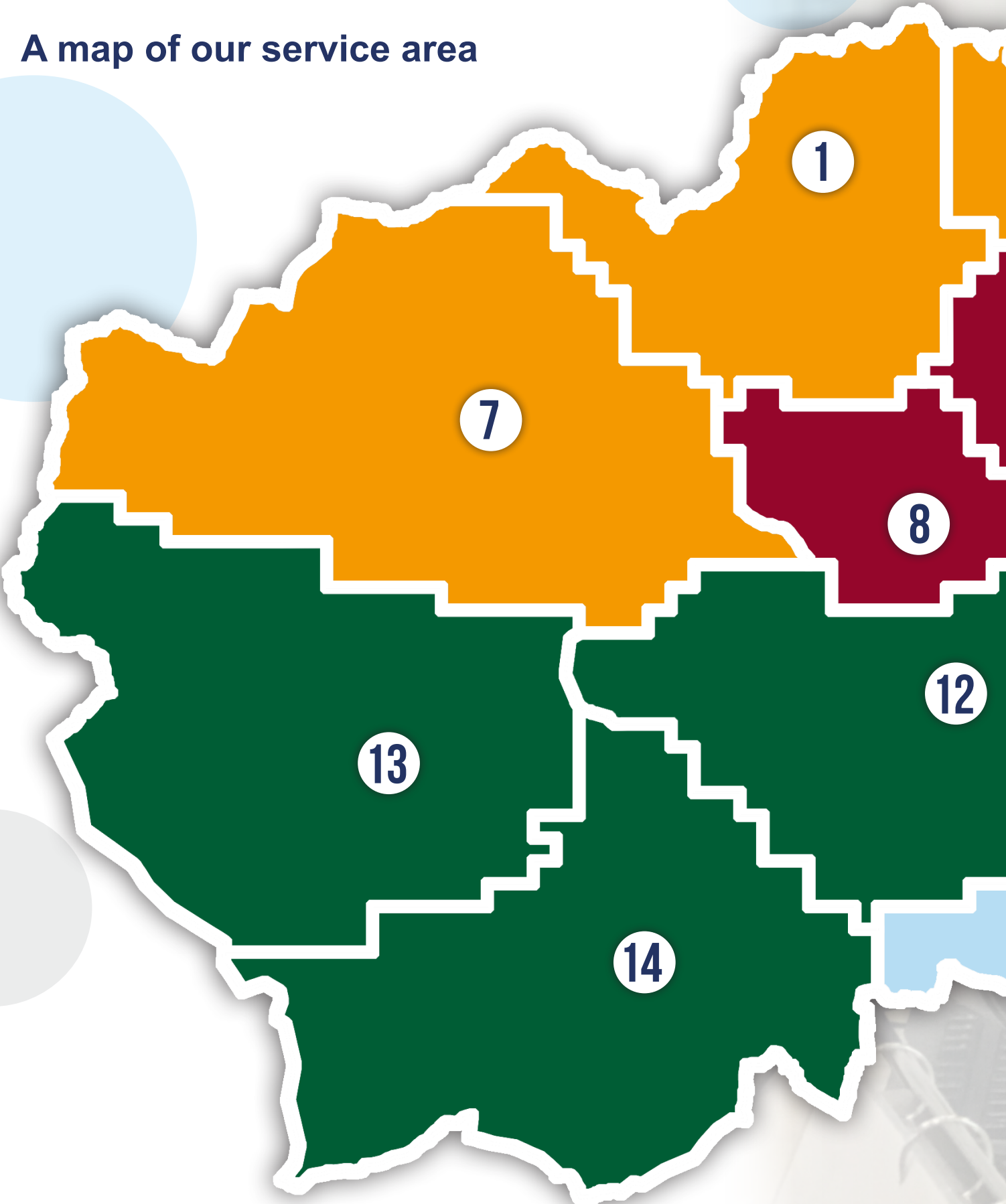
**88%**

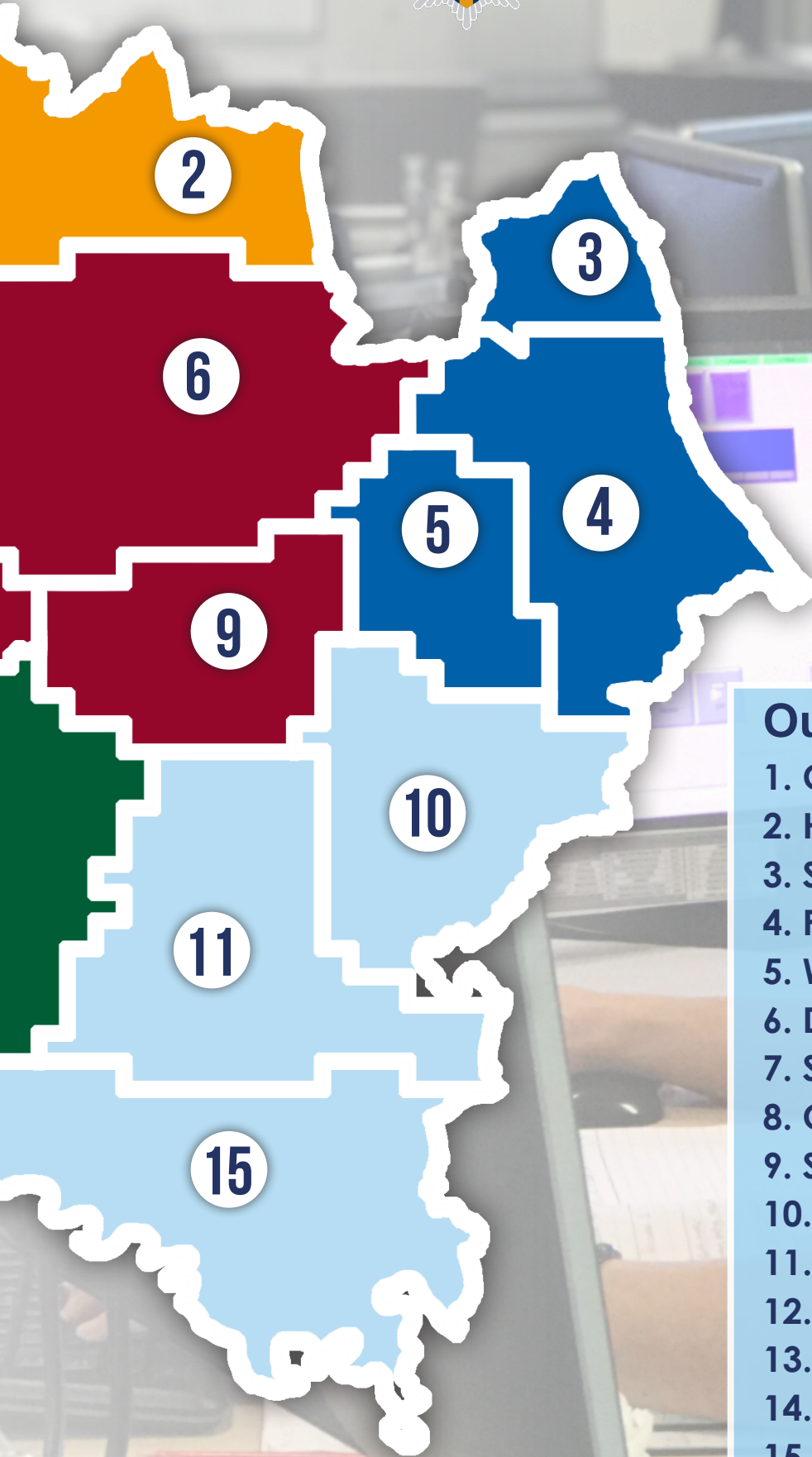
of people living in County Durham and Darlington feel safe or very safe



CDDFRS review **ALL** feedback, good and bad to ensure we can make the necessary changes to enable us to continuously improve.

# A map of our service area





## Our fire stations:

1. Consett
2. High Handenhold
3. Seaham
4. Peterlee
5. Wheatley Hill
6. Durham
7. Stanhope
8. Crook
9. Spennymoor
10. Sedgefield
11. Newton Aycliffe
12. Bishop Auckland
13. Middleton-In-Teesdale
14. Barnard Castle
15. Darlington

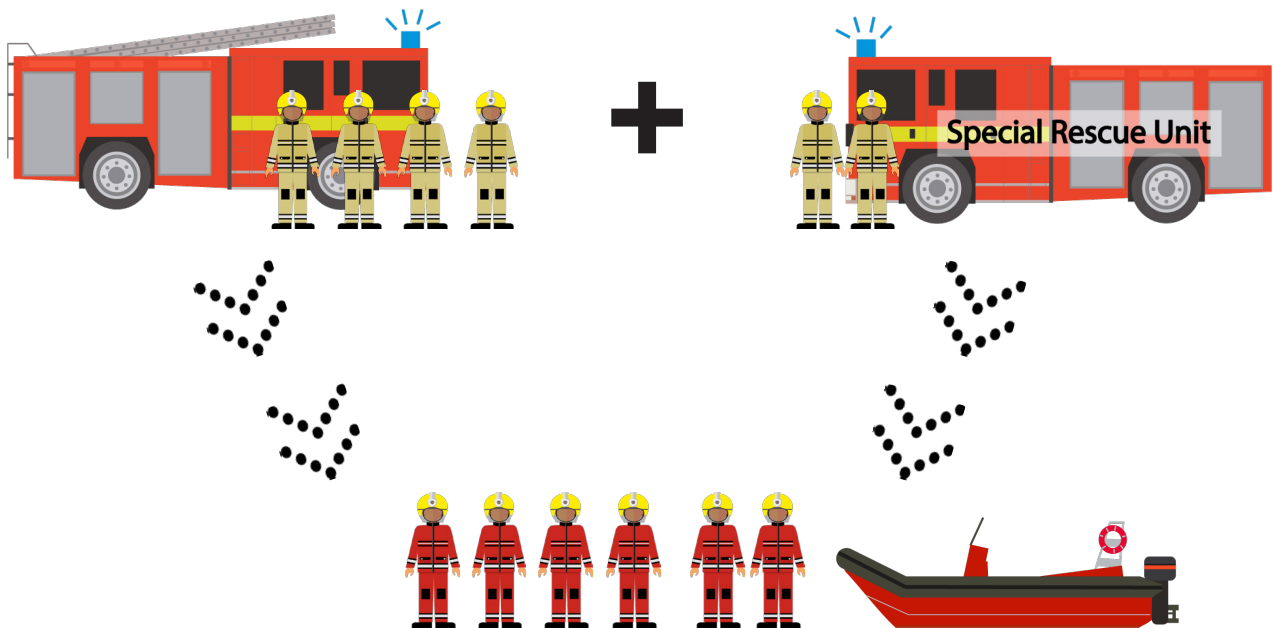


## Bishop Auckland crewing arrangements

Following a review of emergency response provision in 2017 a trial has been taking place where six whole time firefighters are on duty at Bishop Auckland fire station.

The trial is for the fire engine to ride with four wholetime firefighters and the Special Rescue Unit (SRU) to ride with two rather than utilise the station's on call firefighters. This would ensure both the fire engine and the SRU are immediately available to respond to incidents and also means our swift water rescue capability, also based at Bishop Auckland, can be immediately deployed as it needs a team of six firefighters.

Based on the information above, if the trial is deemed successful, should we continue with this staffing arrangement permanently?



 YES **OR**  NO

# Collaboration opportunities

CDDFRS have a statutory duty, under the Policing and Crime Act 2017 (the Act), to collaborate with other emergency services where it would be in the interests of efficiency or effectiveness or where it could increase public safety. The Act is focused on collaboration between Police and Fire services, however, at times, greater collaborative opportunities exist between two or more fire and rescue services or other agencies.

Enhancing collaboration has been one of our strategic objectives since 2011 and we have entered into a range of successful partnerships in areas such as: shared estates; shared operational resources; shared community engagement; and tri-service responders in rural areas.

We also have a good relationship with Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS) and Northumberland Fire

and Rescue Service (NFRS) and a real willingness to work together. Successful collaboration in recruitment; promotion processes; mental health support; and health and fitness have shown the tangible benefits that can be achieved when the three organisations work together.

## The Future

There are other collaboration opportunities which could deliver greater benefits. It is proposed that these areas are explored in some detail to understand if they align with the following principles:

- Deliver better value for money
- Deliver improved outcomes
- Help reduce demand and/ or risk

It is our intention to examine a wide range of potential opportunities against these principles and take forward those that can deliver real benefits.

Based on the information provided above, do you support our intention to explore further collaboration opportunities with TWFRS and NFRS to improve efficiency, effectiveness or increase public safety?



County Durham and Darlington  
**Fire and Rescue Service**



# Revised crewing options

A legal ruling involving South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service means we need to make changes to one of our shift systems. We have recently carried out a comprehensive review of our emergency response provision across the entire service to ensure we have the right level of resources, in the right place, at the right times, to keep you safe and make sure we are offering the most efficient and effective service possible.

As a result, we are looking at three options and we would like you to tell us which option you prefer considering the pros and cons of each option.

## Seaham & Newton Aycliffe

Seaham and Newton Aycliffe currently have firefighters who work a 12-hour day shift

from 7am – 7pm every day.

Outside of these times, when they are on duty, the firefighters spend their rest time at special accommodation blocks on station, so they can respond immediately should you need them.

## Spennymoor

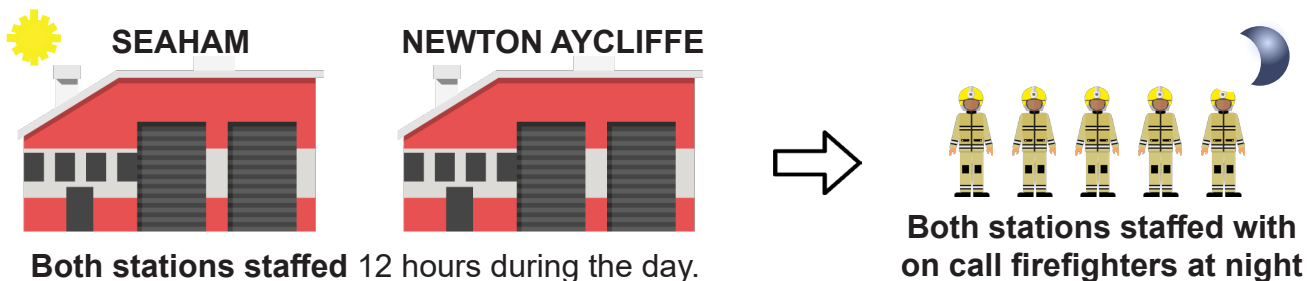
In Spennymoor firefighters are on duty from 8am – 5pm every weekday. Outside of these times on call firefighters are called into work within 5 minutes of being alerted to the incident.

## Durham

Durham station is crewed 24 hours a day, seven days a week and has three fire engines. Durham has the most resources of all our stations but is only the third busiest station in our service.

## Option 1

Have firefighters on duty at Seaham and Newton Aycliffe for 12 hours during the day. At night time only the existing on call firefighters will be called into work within 5 minutes of being alerted to the incident.



## Option 2

Have firefighters on duty at Seaham and Newton Aycliffe as described in option 1. In addition, to cover 12 hours over night, move the second fire engine and crew from Durham to Newton Aycliffe and the second fire engine and crew from Peterlee to Seaham, this will maintain staffing that can respond immediately at these stations.



### Option 3

Have firefighters on duty at Seaham and Newton Aycliffe as described in option 1. In addition, move Durham’s second fire engine and crew permanently to Spennymoor to replace the current arrangements. This means they would be there to offer an immediate response 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Both Durham and Spennymoor would then have identical resources when responding to incidents. This is CDDFRS’s preferred option.



	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Are our firefighters geographically stationed in the best possible place to respond to incidents across the service?	✓	✗	✓
Looking at demand and risk data, are our resources allocated to where they would be most effective?	✓	✗	✓
Will the number of fire engines stay the same or increase?	✗	✗	✗
Does this option create annual efficiency savings?	✓ £350K	✓ £50K	✓ £450K
Will the service’s overall response standards improve?	✗	✗	✓

For more information on all three options please visit:  
[www.ddfire.gov.uk/service-plans](http://www.ddfire.gov.uk/service-plans)



## Tell us what you think...

Use our online questionnaire:

[www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/IRMP201819/](http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/IRMP201819/)

Or alternatively complete the response sheet below and return to:

FAO Communications, CDDFRS HQ, Blemont Industrial Estate, Durham, DH1 1TW

### Consultation response sheet

#### Bishop Auckland crewing arrangements

If the trial currently being undertaken at Bishop Auckland fire station is deemed successful, should we continue with this staffing arrangement permanently? (Please tick)

YES

NO

#### Collaboration opportunities

Do you support our intention to explore further collaboration opportunities with TWFRS and NFRS to improve efficiency, effectiveness or increase public safety? (Please tick)

YES

NO

#### Revised crewing options

We must make changes to crewing at some of our stations, please tick your preferred option below or alternatively please tell us in the free text box your ideas.

OPTION 1

OPTION 2

OPTION 3

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## IRMP Consultation 2019 Comments

No	Comment	Response
1	<p>I see nothing here other than significant cost savings which will significantly reduce the response times and effective work of the fire service in County Durham. I also feel this will be a way of reducing fire fighter numbers on the quiet. All emergency services are at an all-time low and I know first-hand are at breaking point and this will contribute towards the safety of the public</p>	<p>Option 3 reduces five firefighter posts in total we have been clear about the savings generated by this option. The modelling has shown the impact on response standards for each of the options. Only option 3 has a positive impact on the Service level response standards.</p>
2	<p>Spennymoor has always been a 'standby' station. When pumps are off elsewhere in the county Spennymoor gets moved to fill gaps. By moving the second appliance from Durham to Spennymoor you are effectively leaving Durham with one pump. In busy periods the retained cannot be relied on to make it to the station in time because of its location on Sniperley roundabout, Spennymoor could be standby somewhere then you get a PRT house fire in Durham, 1 pump attending with a delay on other pumps getting there. Not to mention by moving Durham's second appliance to Spennymoor the extra delay it would take fire appliances from further away to travel into the Chester le street area.</p>	<p>The Service are fundamentally reviewing how we cover standby moves. Spennymoor will no longer be used in the way it was used previously. Durham's second appliance has also traditionally been used to cover other stations on standby moves.</p> <p>The modelling has fully considered the impact of response standards on Chester-le-Street.</p> <p>We are aware of the issue relating to Sniperley roundabout and have a number of options to consider to overcome this.</p>

3	I think removing a crew at anytime is risk taking, but Option 3 looks the better option. Ideally drum up funding for an extra engine at Spenny, in times where there are more businesses out of town and more houses popping up everywhere, your services will no doubt be stretched further and further and as a career forces man, I understand that! Living in the Worlds 3rd biggest economy and we cannot really look after ourselves....	We would agree that if additional funding was provided to the Authority then we would have greater choice about resources. This, however is not the case and it is also important that we fully consider the demand and risk data when making resourcing decisions.
4	I have put all three options as there is no option to query what existing arrangements are to be able to make a comparison. It is impossible to vote that CDDFR's preferred option would be mine also when I don't know what the 'current arrangements' are in Spennymoor for example to try and take a view on whether it would be an improved service	The current arrangements are explained in the consultation document and the video that accompanied it. There is also detailed information available on our website: <a href="http://www.ddfire.gov.uk">www.ddfire.gov.uk</a>
5	Seaham should not be going to a reduced cover on a night time this town is having huge development with thousands of new houses and families moving into the area Seaham should have a wholetime appliance on call 24/7 None of these options are palatable	The future development of Seaham has been considered as part of the Emergency Response Review. Information was taken from the County Durham Plan which details the proposed developments across County Durham.
6	Option 3 means losing a whole time pump in Durham, a UNESCO world heritage site, one of the largest student populations in the country and growing,3 prisons (2 on the north side of the city),a	The risk data considered heritage risk, prison locations, future student accommodation locations, and a range of other factors. This has been fully impacted into the final recommendations.

	lot of problems in the river wear and Spennymoor has???	The modelling predicts that Spennymoor's turnout area will expand to both the North and the South and will cover some of the highest risk wards in the Service area.
7	Is there an over provision of uniformed staff at service headquarters working in offices when they would be more valuable providing operational cover at fire stations especially Darlington	The Service operates one of the leanest back-office provisions of any stand-alone Fire and Rescue Service (FRS). There have been substantial reductions across all support areas over the period of austerity.
8	My comments are regarding Section 2 regarding collaboration with other services. It's important to collaborate and share ideas and resources but it must be for a purpose, i.e saving money, for example it is understood CDDFRS recently collaborated with TWFRS and Northumberland Fire Service in a recruitment campaign but only TWFRS benefited from it as they were the only service to take on new firefighters, from a public point of view it seems that a lot of money was wasted by CDDFRS during this process in aiding with the test and interviews but as they never took any new firefighters on does this not seem as money down the drain.	We fully agree with the comments relating to meaningful collaboration. All collaboration options are considered carefully including the recruitment campaign with Tyne and Wear FRS. Both Northumberland FRS and County Durham and Darlington FRS may draw on the list of potential trainees that was generated from that process. Operating one joint process was significantly more cost effective than operating three separate processes.
9	Taking an appliance from durham is endangering lives . Student accommodation in durham city is increasing every term these people are high risk	Please see the response to comment 6.

10	I'm not sure any of these are a good idea but if you have to make a change then option 3 is the best option.	Agreed.
11	More funding for more staff and equipment would also be of benefit to all.	Agreed but this is unlikely to be the reality of our funding position going forward.
12	Neither	N/A
13	This survey would be better if it was clear how many firefighter posts would be lost due to changes being put forward. The public will be unaware of how many less firefighters will be on duty to attend incidents	Please see the response to comment 1.
14	Employ more firemen	The Service employs firefighters and has done so for over 27 years. Firemen is an outdated and sexist term that isn't appropriate in this day and age.  Given the funding cuts that the Authority has endured over the last 8 years employing more firefighters is not currently an option although we are doing everything we can do to protect frontline posts.
15	Firefighters are not given enough credit for the job they do. Thank you.	Agreed. Thank you.
16	I feel unqualified to make these decisions. I would like a service that is not just adequate but good for the community and importantly, best supports it's firemen.	The Service employs firefighters and has done so for 27 years. Firemen is an outdated and sexist term that isn't appropriate in this day and age.

		The Service will be subject to detailed assessment from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in 2019. This will give an independent judgement of our performance.
17	Would the crewing levels move to 2 retained appliances and 2 whole time at spennymoor or would you cut one retained pump at spennymoor?	There will not be a need for 2 on-call (retained) appliances at Spennymoor as the station will have a full-time and an on-call appliance if option 3 is implemented.
18	With the resources you have, you do a brilliant job. Thank you.	Agreed. Thank you.
19	Option 3 in question 3 seems like the best choice. But I wonder at the hardship and inconvenience of the existing staff in moving from one station to service another.	The impact of any change will be fully discussed with staff and the trade unions and they will be involved in how any of the options are implemented.
20	This would be dependent on demand and as this is not outlined it is difficult to determine the need. But it is likely that there are not sufficient calls during the night to warrant full time service	The demand data was fully considered during the Emergency Response Review. Your assumptions are correct in that we receive less calls during the night. About 80% of our calls occur between 10 a.m. and 10 p.m. we also however need to consider risk factors and ensure we can respond effectively at all times of the day and night.
21	Would like to have had more information but trust the fire brigade to do what's right for their community	Thank you.
22	It makes more sense to have equal assets over a wider area (but not too far) 365 days a year as opposed to having two engines, with the possibility only one being used. If a fire is too big for one engine	We endeavour to listen to the views of all staff during any proposed changes. Staff have featured heavily in this consultation process. We cannot always

	<p>the other is pulled from a neighbouring station. All said, it's easy to speculate from the outside and hope the fighters are getting an equal say on their day to day shift pattern potentially changing.</p>	<p>meet everyone's needs but we will always do what we can to agree a way forward even during a very challenging financial climate for the Authority.</p>
23	<p>There's no mention of Sedgefield so I assume no changes are planned there. As a growing town with many smaller villages nearby I would hope that cover continues with a base in Sedgefield.</p>	<p>Sedgefield has been fully considered as part of the Emergency Response Review.</p>
24	<p>Should have more funding to do your jobs without having to mess about with staffing arrangements and how you operate as a service. Keep up the good work</p>	<p>Agreed. Thank you.</p>
25	<p>Have you considered following SFRS in having full time retained staff. This would in turn help with staffing issues on retained stations allowing fire cover when needed. Keeping full time pumps on their home stations.</p>	<p>We already operate full-time/retained staff and benefit significantly from this model. We are always looking for innovative ideas in order to improve our efficiency and effectiveness and will review the approach in Scotland (SFRS) than you for your suggestion.</p>
26	<p>None of these proposals make any sense at all. Option 1 - By downgrading DCP+ to Day Crewed is only going to make the night time cover nil. Both stations may struggle on the appliance availability which has not been given on this IRMP consultation. This needs to be rewrote with correct figures on the availability of the Seaham and Newton Aycliffe RDS appliances.</p>	<p>Changing the Day Crewing Plus (DCP) model at Seaham and Newton Aycliffe has been forced onto the Service following the legal ruling in South Yorkshire. We have fully considered the availability of all on-call appliances when undertaking the Emergency Response Review. Neither station will be left without cover during the night. We have procedures in place to cover any drop in on-call availability.</p> <p>We have fully modelled the impact of all the options on response times.</p>

Option2. By removing the second pump from both Peterlee (to Seaham) and Durham (to Newton Aycliffe) effectively down grades both Peterlee to one pump on a night and Durham to one pump wholetime/retained. This will mean for both these areas that longer response times for 'Persons reported' incidents will happen. Peterlee 1 will have to rely on Wheatley Hill on responding and Durham 1 will have to wait that extra 10-15mns for the RDS at Durham to attend. It would be far more easier to remove the RDS at Durham as they are 'off the run' more times over the 24hrs. Again no availability have been provided for any of the retained stations through out this consultation.

#### Option 3

Again this consultation has not provided any data on how many times an appliance has turned out during the day or night. Spennymoor 1 0800-1700 spends more time on standby duties at other stations do to appliance availability.

This proposal looks at also removing 5 firefighters but has not said what would happen to them. If the service is trying to save money then it reads that they are having to create 16 posts (including 4 WMs and 4 CMs) to replace the current arrangements.

It would be far easier to keep Spennymoor 1 as a pump but use it as a 'roving pump' especially when

We have fully considered the availability of all on-call appliances when undertaking the Emergency Response Review. We have used a significant amount of risk and demand data when considering all of the options. It would not be practical to outline all of this data during a public consultation.

No staff will face redundancy. The five posts will be lost through natural wastage. The 16 posts are not growth they are redistributed from the overall staffing model. There is a requirement to increase the number of watch manager posts but this has been factored into the savings for option 3.

	other two pump stations are on exercises or at Training Centre.	
27	None of the above options.	N/A
28	Having worked at Peterlee and Seaham station I feel option 2 would be more practicable and better for the business. Any fire fire call in the Murton area 04 2nd appliance would make a quicker attendance anyway and vice versed 03 to Hawthorn. So for that, I would go with option 2.	The impact on response standards for all of the options has been fully considered.
29	<p>The loss of firefighters and/or the reworking of their roll seems to be the preferred option all the time. Have you considered removing one ACO and several ADM posts instead? The brigade ran perfectly well with just one person running the stations in the past.</p> <p>The options above are bias and skewed towards only giving one answer.</p>	<p>Over the last 8 years we have done everything we can to protect frontline posts although when we have faced the levels of cuts we have over that period it is inevitable reductions will occur. There are currently 10 staff in the District Management Team structure. To go back to one person per station would require 15 staff and therefore significant growth.</p> <p>The decision to restructure the Service Leadership Team was taken in September 2017 based on the increasing demands at Principal Officer level. An Area Manager post was taken out of the structure to facilitate this change.</p>
30	look to maintain current fire cover at Seaham & Newton Aycliffe with a variant of current shift pattern. Therefore not increasing risk in these areas	We are continuing to talk to the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) about alternative options for both stations. Given the doubts about whether the existing system complies with the Working Time Regulations or not, we have to consider the implications for staff and the Authority of any new proposals that are made.



31	Seaham requires immediate cover during night time hours not wait five plus minutes for Retained Firefighters to turn out.	We have fully considered the impact on response standards at every station when undertaking the Emergency Response Review.
32	would seem to be the option with the least amount of disruption.	Agreed. Thank you.
33	None of the above. Focus on finding a solution to resolving the issue with Dcp. Options will only reduce cover.	Please see the response to comment 30.
34	Option 3 seems to have implications for the workforce greater than those of options 1 & 2 so have the workforce been consulted in a timely fashion?	Please see the response to comment 22.
35	Durham and Spennymoor having identical cover !!! Surely not ,Durham city must require more fire cover than Spennymoor	Please see the response to comment 6.
36	The ruling in SY should be explained as it was due to illegal shift patterns. Option 1 relies on retained cover so when off the run = no cover this is a failing duty nationwide. When taking away a 2nd appliance you leave that area with reduced fire cover Residents of Country Durham are going to receive a poorer service so will we see a reduction in Fire Authority charge on Council Tax	The legal ruling in South Yorkshire is complex and applies only to that specific shift system. We believe we have explained the impact on County Durham and Darlington adequately during the consultation.  There are more on-call (retained) appliances in our Service than wholetime (fulltime) appliances and the duty system is an integral part of our response model.

	<p>Questions are very leading.          Why has a small Brigade like DDFRS not merged with a similar sized Brigade like CFB ?          Would this not result in a major saving by reducing 1 CFO and numerous senior managers and saving front line jobs ?</p>	<p>While the restrictions around Council Tax Equalisation exist a merger with any FRS in the North East would not be financially viable. FRS mergers don't align with government policy and therefore unlikely to attract any funding to support such a move. No other FRS has shown a desire to merge although we are actively pursuing collaboration opportunities.</p>
37	<p>Maybe a review of salaries would be a good idea. As a public service maybe limit wages across the board no matter what position is held to £30000. The money saved could then be spent on extra crews and vehicles where needed!</p>	<p>FRS salaries are set nationally through the National Joint Council.</p>
38	<p>I wonder why all these options are deliberately written to totally confuse the general public?</p>	<p>We don't believe the options are confusing especially if the supporting video is watched.</p>
39	<p>Well I don't think any of the above as I feel things should be left as they are as Durham is a big area to cover and time is of the essence with a fire it will be like the ambulance service cut backs lives at risk what price on life does this government not understand I feel things should stay as they are more staff needed plus pay rise in my book</p>	<p>Please see the response to comment 26. Leaving things as they are is not an option.</p>
40	<p>Options 2 and 3 will lose firefighters jobs. Do some job cuts in your headquarters where staff exceed the number of firefighters on duty. This will save you money and prevent the loss of firefighters.</p>	<p>Please see the response to comment 7.</p>



	<p>Moving a 2nd pump from Peterlee or Durham doesn't seem well thought through. It leaves a lot of risk for one pump crewed by 4 firefighters.</p> <p>Also the current night shift is only 11 hours long so how can a pump be sent to Aycliffe &amp; Seaham for 12 hours without night shift crews working longer?</p> <p>As you're just about to take the beds away the public are already going to have tired firefighters arriving at incidents having been awake all night after potentially being awake during the day beforehand.</p> <p>The risk of accidents etc is already increasing without then putting extra pressure on these crews by only having 1 whole time pump with 4 firefighters at Peterlee &amp; Durham to potentially deal with an escalating house fire, while the next arriving pump is going to be 10-15 mins away if not longer? Not to mention the extra risk and pressure of tired firefighters driving fire appliances. Is this really a risk worth taking?</p> <p>Also what will happen to the accommodation blocks built at Aycliffe &amp; Seaham. They seem to have been a waste of money.</p>	<p>The Service's preferred option is option 3. If Peterlee reduced to a single pump station the crewing levels would increase to 5. This has been costed in to option 2.</p> <p>There are various options available to meet this demand. Resources could be moved on a permanent basis if this option was implemented rather than just on a night shift.</p> <p>The working routine for wholetime staff on stations in CDDFRS was amended in 2013 removing the requirement for beds. This is the subject of a collective local agreement with the FBU.</p> <p>We monitor the health and safety of all our staff carefully and the collective agreement around the wholetime shift system allows for changes to be made if accident rates increase. We are confident the FBU would support a review of the existing arrangements should the health and safety of our wholetime firefighters become an issue.</p> <p>The accommodation blocks at Seaham and Newton Aycliffe were fully funded from government grant. The change at these stations has been forced upon us due to the ruling in South Yorkshire.</p>
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49	None of these options are a viable choice as they all have an impact on attendance times and fire cover throughout the county and further options should be considered	We have fully considered the impact on response standards at every station when undertaking the Emergency Response Review.
50	I would like to offer my deepest thanks to the Fire and Rescue Service for the outstanding work they do. Heroes one and all.	Agreed. Thank you.
51	Although none of these options seem to be positive we must remember that it is the conservative governments approach to public sector funding that has driven the fire brigade to have to propose these Changes In the first place. Fund our hard working public sector workers properly!	N/A
52	I'm not sure I agree with moving fire engines away from Durham city but I trust the fire Brigade to make the right decisions for the public.	The impact on Durham City has been fully considered as part of the Emergency Response Review.
53	I disagree with option 3 as moving an appliance to Spennymoor does not increase resource availability in Aycliffe or Seaham overnight. Although beneficial for Spennymoor, this does nothing to aid the overnight response for Aycliffe or Seaham and	We have fully considered the impact on response standards at every station when undertaking the Emergency Response Review. Relocating an appliance to Spennymoor does have a positive impact on response standards in the South of Durham's station area and the north of Newton Aycliffe's station area. This gives the overall increase in response standards across the Service area.

	decreases the level of fire cover in Durham City and surrounding areas.	
54	Aycliffe does not have that many fires during the night , so the retained will manage fine to cover through the night .	Please see the response to comment 20.
55	I understand the financial problems but they work as they are now and moving the second fire engine would be wrong	Our medium-term financial plan (MTFP) predicts that the financial challenges will increase over the next four years.
56	Moving Durham's second fire engine away from Durham so they are just left with one whole time fire engine is really quite unbelievable. Is this where we have gotten to?!?!	We have fully considered demand and risk data while undertaking the Emergency Response Review and formulating the options.
57	Saves the most money??	Option 3 does deliver the greatest saving, but it is also the only option that improves the response standards across the Service area.
58	Continued cuts MUST have safety issues for both CDDFR and the general public, it will end up costing lives. It's disgraceful.	The Authority and Service have continually lobbied for additional funding and/or flexibility on the Council Tax Precept. We will continue to do so going forward.
59	You guys do great job	Agreed. Thank you.
60	No option to say that I would prefer a growing town like Seaham to have FULL cover, I. e. 24hrs whole time. Why the sudden change after spending millions	Please see the response to comments 5 and 26.

	<p>on the accommodation block only five years ago?  Don't understand the logic. This appears to be simply a cost cutting exercise regardless of the safety for the people of Seaham and Aycliffe. Hope you take notice of this comment and it is not ignored!</p>	<p>The accommodation blocks at Seaham and Newton Aycliffe were fully funded from government grant. The change at these stations has been forced upon us due to the ruling in South Yorkshire.</p> <p>The Service is examining options for the accommodation blocks.</p>
61	<p>Seaham station should remain as full time firefighters there is some major development in the next few years bringing in more business and also homeowners and children none of these options are a benefit to the area this is not making the area safer it is the opposite.</p>	<p>Please see the response to comment 26.</p>
62	<p>Is it safe for only 4 fire fighters on a fire engine, especially in major fires.  Given the chemical and industrial factories at Aycliffe should they not have 24 full time cover, thinking back to the large fire at Stillers and the neighbouring chemical factories. You need to put safety of fire fighters and the public first.</p>	<p>The majority of fire appliances in the Service are crewed by 4 firefighters. None of the options would increase this position and option 3 increase the crewing from 4 to 5 of Durham's first appliance.</p> <p>The demand and risk data for Newton Aycliffe has been fully considered as part of the Emergency Response Review.</p>
63	<p>There should not be a dilution of service if at all possible. I pay the same amount of council tax every year and deserve the same level of public service and protection, every year.</p>	<p>Council tax is only makes a proportion of our funding. The money we receive from government has been cut by 58% over the last 8 years so providing the same level of service to the community is extremely challenging.</p>
64	<p>Services should not be watered down and therefore risk increased when we pay the same amount of</p>	<p>Please see the response to comment 63.</p>

	council tax every year. We should receive the same cover.	
65	Option 3 would mean the loss of a fire appliance in the county and I think it is dishonest not to highlight this in the consultation.	The consultation clearly outlined the options that reduced the number of fire appliances. See the table on page 10 of the consultation document  <a href="https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/Final%20draft%207.pdf">https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/Final%20draft%207.pdf</a>
66	Durham will become a 1 pump station. Absolutely unacceptable , it is the heart of our county and 1 pump covering such heritage and life risk is shambolic. All down to cuts but it is ok to appoint another senior officer the day before this! disgraceful!!	Please see the response to comments 6 ,26, 52 and 56
67	24 hours a day 7 days a week has got to be the best option for public safety but also for the firefighters who do a magnificent job always. It must be far less stressfull for them to be on site and ready to go rather than being called in through the night to attend emergencies There wellbeing must be of prime importance	Having every fire appliance staffed by wholetime personnel would improve the level of service to the public but is unrealistic in any financial climate. The majority of fire appliances are crewed by on-call staff who equally do a magnificent job for our communities.



68	<p>Very difficult decision for me to make as I don't know or understand what has been past or present situation at all the fire stations.</p> <p>Providing a safe and effective service is paramount. I can't agree with option 1 as feel fire fighters need to be on site to respond as quickly as they can. I am agreeing to option 3 as this is the fire service preferred option so I'm assuming this provides a public services as well as staff well being. Good luck.</p>	<p>Option 3 does provide the best level of service to the public. Any staffing system introduced will comply with national terms and conditions of service and the trade unions will be fully consulted with.</p>
69	<p>Employ more firefighters!</p>	<p>Please see the response to comment 9.</p>
70	<p>None of the above. Try reducing the amount of backroom staff, by that I mean officers' who don't actually attend fires. There should be no reduction to any cover. Moving existing resources from one station to another reduced the cover in the original station.</p>	<p>Please see the response to comment 7.</p>
71	<p>I think we should ensure we have coverage 24 hours a day -we must learn from Grenfell although I think this was down to mismanagement and not the fire service .I think you should travel with fire and rescue ,trained medical personnel ,and police .Maybe someone who has the skills of both ( medical, police) .Have one per station and they travel with you in addition to all services attending say an RTA .i think each homeowner should have an extinguisher ( home insurance void if they don't)</p>	<p>Please see the response to comment 67.</p> <p>We already operate Tri-responders in rural areas and are discussing the opportunities to expand this provision although this requires the agreement of other partners.</p>

72	Option 3 would put public safety at risk	Please see the response to comment 26.
73	You are putting lives at risk with constantly cutting back the services. An absolute disgrace.	Please see the response to comment 26.
74	Constantly cutting staffing levels will most Definitely put lives at risk let it be on your heads ! This service is so very much needed and why would you wish to cut staffing levels ??	Please see the response to comment 26.
75	Why don't you ride 5 on Bishops pump and 2 on the SRU at all times. Stop putting the lives of the public at risk by cutting FF posts when your communications department has expanded. Leave Bishop alone and get rid of your comms clique.	The trial of the option at Bishop Auckland was suggested by staff from that station and has been a success.  The Communication and Governance Team was formed by merging two separate teams together. Overall we have reduced our support staff by over 30% in the last 8 years.
76	Outrageous to move Durham's fire Engine to Spennymoor	Please see the response to comment 6.
77	Taking a fire engine from Durham during the night will leave managers open to corporate manslaughter charges should there be a fire death due to resources being reduced . Durham city is expanding every year with students living quarters .	Please see the response to comment 6.
78	There's a much greater risk in Durham City than in Spennymoor surely!	Please see the response to comment 26.

79	<p>Q1 How can you deploy the SRU immediately if the BA crews are out on a job? You would need to wait for 4 RDS to come in. Presumably the crews needed to man the SRU need specialist training?</p> <p>Q2 Be careful, its a VERY short step from efficiency measures to combining the 3 fire services.</p> <p>Q3 Without seeing the recent &amp; historic call rates and the response times I am unable to give an answer to question 3</p>	<p>Please see the response to comment 62.</p> <p>Please see the response to comment 36.</p> <p>Please see the response to comment 26.</p>
80	<p>The following comment has been received from Great Aycliffe Town Council - As the town continues to grow with both new housing estates being built together with a planned further 900 houses as indicated in the Durham Local Plan to the East of the Town, together with an expansion of the business park, a reduction in emergency response would seem to be in the wrong direction. Concern was expressed that if the present level of service is reduced it is unlikely to be increased in the future to meet the expansion of the town and surrounds. It was noted that the result of the preferred option would be to increase the response time for non-domestic incidents. Concern was expressed that the Aycliffe Business Park (the largest in Co. Durham)</p>	<p>Please see the response to comment 20.</p>

	<p>also brings with it a potential risk of incidents. In particular members pointed out the proximity of two COMAH sites and were concerned over any reduction in response times given the proximity to Newton Aycliffe/School Aycliffe. Whilst it was explained that data modelling has taken place and used to identify frequency of incidents, members felt that changes to health strategies, which encouraged older residents to stay in their home and receive home care, may increase the risk of incidents in domestic properties now and in the future with a resultant increased demand for emergency service responses. Members also commented on the recent rise in RTA's between J58 and J60 on the A1 (M) and the increased demand this creates. The Council requests these concerns are taken into account during the consultation process.</p>	
81	As long as question 2 does not mean consideration of a merger with other services/authorities.	Please see the response to comment 36.
82	More funding should be made available ASAP	Please see the response to comment 55.
83	More money required	Please see the response to comment 55.
84	need more funding	Please see the response to comment 55.

85	More funding required urgently	Please see the response to comment 55.
86	All of the above options point to a reduction in fire cover in one area or another, with the constant rises in my council tax there should be NO increase in attendance times and there should be more firefighters riding all of the engines including full time staffing of special appliances.	Please see the response to comment 63.
87	Or option 4 - a revised version of DCP at Seaham and Aycliffe comprising of day crew on call with the same crew. No loss of fire cover or response time.	Please see the response to comment 30.
88	All of the above options are about fire cover/turn out time. I feel its in the best interests of the Fire Service to find a solution to the DCP situation. A large number of employees are under unnecessary stress and worry due to prospect of losing a shift system they are very happy with.	Please see the response to comment 30.
89	All options result in reduction in response standards in some part of the county. Current staffing at Seaham and Aycliffe is a very cost effective staffing model and every avenue should be explored in order to maintain it.	Please see the response to comment 30.

90	Cannot choose one of the above 3 options as all will reduce fire cover somewhere in the county. This is UNACCEPTABLE.	Please see the response to comment 1.
91	When looking at the above 3 options it becomes very apparent that all will bring a reduction in vital fire cover somewhere within Co. Durham and Darlington which is in no way beneficial to the tax payers and community its supposed to serve.	Please see the response to comment 1.
92	To keep the county safe we have to protect the family	We are unsure as to the relevance of this comment.
93	I have ticked option one however I don't believe your staff will want to work such an anti family friendly shift pattern .Further more I believe that the service were aware that this shift system was bordering on being illegal and would be taken to task via the courts, I would question whether the cost of building the accommodation blocks at Seaham and Newton Aycliffe has yet being recouped by savings in firefighters salaries at these stations. With regards to Spennymoor fire station the amount of calls would quite easily be covered by a totally retained station, the new station was built to fulfil a PFI agreement with other services in the region and in my opinion has been a total waste of tax payers money and the service have tried various ways to use it to justify the cost.	Any shift system introduced would need to comply with national terms and conditions which specifies are requirement for it to be family friendly. We would negotiate the details of any shift system with the trade unions.  Please see the response to comments 6 and 26.

	I believe that if the service listened more to their staff then they would find working arrangement's that would be mutually agreeable to staff and management and within budget.	
94	Bishop Auckland should be staffed with 5 firefighters on the pumping appliance and two firefighters on the heavy rescue vehicle, with the second appliance at bishop being retained there will be many times when this pump is not on the run and therefor turning out with 4 would not give our tax paying public the cover they need and could be hazardous to the health and safety of the firefighters.	Please see the response to comment 75.
95	You should look at putting a Paramedic on your vehicles too.	This would require the agreement of the ambulance service or a significant investment in training staff to that level who may struggle to maintain competence.
96	I think if something that isn't broken doesn't need fixing. I think that the Emergency services are the services local money should be put into. The personal risk their lives just like Armed Services is they should be respected and given hours and pay to match. On the info you give I've completed the response however if I've been misinformed my answers would not be valid.	Please see the response to comment 55.
97	Durham Red is a City	Please see the response to comment 6.

	<p>Spennymoor is a town, a much smaller scale area in all capacities which DDFRS has risk factored as such since the year dot, why and how now is it now deemed to be identical as a main city area with wider area, population and risks.</p> <p>Incredible decision making, one would think weak and political planning may be at play here!</p> <p>If Durham council tax payers are aware that they're receiving a reduced service on a life risk scale I would expect us to push our local councillors for some honest answers and explanation!</p>	
98	<p>Durham city alone has a population of 65000 people, a large university, a world heritage site in the form of Durham Cathedral, multiple student accommodation, a hospital and the list goes on. Spennymoor has a population of 20000 and nothing of any significance what so ever. Who thinks Durham City and Spennymoor town requires the same level of fire cover? Plus Spennymoor station gets around 300 call outs a year, even if you call it one a day and assume the crew are off station for 1 hour at a time, what is £150000 a years worth of 5 wholetime firefighters going to do for 23 hours of the day. The proposal to have a 24/7 wholetime crew sat in Spennymoor station is an absolute sacrilege and a blatant waste of tax payers money.</p>	Please see the response to comment 6.



99	Crazy to think of Durham having one fire appliance. A hospital. 3 prisons. Cathedral. Castle. A larger population and risk than Spennymoor in my opinion.	Please see the response to comment 6.
100	If staffing is short on fire stations why not reduce the pen pushers at HQ and put them back on fire stations where they can do the job they are paid to do	This is a derogatory comment. Please see the response to comment 7.
101	I have chosen option 2 as I am unclear as to whether option one "on call fire fighters" means whole time on call from the accommodation or retained duty system?	On call firefighters does refer to wholetime firefighters responding from the accommodation blocks. This would be day crewing plus.
102	Newton Aycliffe has a big industrial estate with a few chemical plants and needs a 24 hr fire station and it's fire engines should not be reduced we are also very close to the A1 which has a good few accident s on	Please see the response to comment 20.
103	Taking the appliance out from Peterlee is madness, look at the stats which clearly show Peterlee is one of the busiest, behind Darlington.	Please see the response to comment 48.
104	Seriously ??? Taking away 24 hour cover from Seaham with the extra 1000's of houses been built locally and severe RTC that happen at Seaham on the A19 daily ? A disaster waiting to happen -  Will you be reducing the amount we pay to you	Please see the response to comment 5.

	through our council tax by 50% to reflect a service we wouldn't be receiving ?	
105	<p>Seriously ??? Taking away 24 hour cover from Seaham with the extra 1000's of houses been built locally and severe RTC that happen at Seaham on the A19 daily ? A disaster waiting to happen -</p> <p>Will you be reducing the amount we pay to you through our council tax by 50% to reflect a service we wouldn't be receiving ?</p>	Please see the response to comment 5, 58 and 63.
106	I am highly concerned that none of these options will be enough when all the new builds proposed for Seaham and the Garden Village plus surrounding areas are completed	Please see the response to comment 5.
107	<p>None of the above!</p> <p>I think it is appalling that you say "The tragedy that unfolded at Grenfell Tower last year served as a poignant reminder of the critical role we play in protecting our communities and has only made us more determined and passionate than ever to do the job we do and to do it well". When the root cause of the Grenfell disaster was down to money and this is clearly the case once again.</p> <p>While it is 'dressed' up because of the ruling in South Yorkshire, that came about purely because you are asking the crew to do more with less, because of</p>	Please see the response to comment 58.

	<p>previous budget cuts - the fact that the firefighters who have been affected, have worked in contravention of the work time regulations only goes further to demonstrate their commitment to the the role they perform.</p> <p>The lives of people should AND HAVE to come first and the senior managers in the authorities need to do their job in balancing the books to make sure it can be achieved.</p> <p>Stop spending money on 'gloss' to make somewhere look better or to satisfy the needs of the favoured few.</p> <p>People matter - this is what should be the number one priority!</p>	
108	No way should Durham City be only covered by 1 Wholetime Fire Engine. Disgrace to be even on the agenda	Please see the response to comment 6.
109	Do not water down your Fire service any more. One fire engine to cover Durham. Really???	Please see the response to comments 6, 58 and 63.
110	Durham city is a vast area with a rising number of students. A cathedral & castle as well as heritage buildings which need a quick response if needed, spennymoor is too far away to cover the city in an emergency. Why have a full time fire engine at a place like spennymoor? There's nothing there I'm sure a part time fire engine could cover spennymoor.	Please see the response to comment 6.

	<p>Taking a fire engine from Durham city to sit at spennymoor is nonsense and I will be speaking to my local MP &amp; councillor .Ive never heard anything so ridiculous.Option 1 is my vote no matter how much extra council tax i have to pay to keep Durham city covered by 2 if not 3 fire engines &amp; safe. Stick to your saying "safest people,safest places " and keep Durham city well covered because 1 full time fire engine in the city centre certainly isn't safest.</p>	
111	<p>I'm confused where at the bottom of option 3 it says "this is the preferred option of CDDFRS??As my neighbour is a serving firefighter in durham and I asked why option 3 was the preferred which he said it's not the preferred option by the firefighters on the fire engines? so I find your bottom statement very misleading and untruthful. The preferred option of the lads n lasses riding and working the shifts who it's going to effect should be put on the bottom of their preferred option if you going to put preferred option of HQ or senior officers....hang your head in shame it's bad enough this government being dishonest we don't need it from our local fire service.</p>	<p>It is important that the funding position facing the Authority is considered. All staff in the Service have had the opportunity to respond to the consultation, we have conducted station/section visits and hold regular communications forums. We are fully aware of the views of staff at every level in the organisation. Staff from various stations have differing views about their preferred options. Unfortunately we still have to present a balanced budget following significant budget pressures over many years. Ultimately it is for the Chief Fire Officer to consider the available options and make a recommendation on efficiency savings. Option 3 is the preferred option although we accept that some staff hold different views.</p>
112	<p>Taking a fire engine from durham is playing with fire. Durham city's population is expanding every year including high rise buildings have you forgot about Grenfell tower block fire . ???????</p>	<p>Please see the response to comment 6.</p>

113	Why reduce the cover of durham where the population and risk are higher than in Spennymoor.	Please see the response to comment 6.
114	Does Spennymoor need a full time pump after cover being ably supplied by on call firefighters for a long time This is a good opportunity to further cut front line services whilst maintaining a hugely overly staffed management system and office staff. This is nothing more than a cost cutting exercise at the detriment of public safety	Please see the response to comment 6.
115	1 full time fire engine in durham city is a no go. Spennymoor is too far away for emergency cover for the city and why have a full time fire engine at spennymoor anyway?	Please see the response to comment 5.
116	Not knowledgeable enough to decide between the 3 options	Noted
117	Cooperation and collaboration should always be the watchwords!	Please see the response to comment 8.
118	Sorry but I don't feel I have enough information to make a better judgement. I have picked this option as it seems to be a half way solution to availability of a response but not diluting the current provision excessively.	There is a limit around the amount of information that we can realistically include in a consultation document without confusing the public. This is why we held a series of open nights at various stations around the service area to enable greater levels of detail to be explained.

	<p>Now give me a full copy of a risk assessment of all the types of potential fires and types of businesses and residential categories I could possibly give a better response. I look to you as experts to have my best interests at the fore and not listen to nimby or anti change communities.</p> <p>Keep up the good work and long may I not need your services.</p>	<p>Thanks you for your kind remarks, staff appreciate them.</p>
119	<p>Durham has to cover a number of high responses to hospitals 3 prisons and local and civil government buildings plus one of the biggest university campuses and the A1(m) they need full cover at all times .How is High Handenhold Pelton staffed?</p>	<p>Please see the response to comment 5.</p> <p>High Handenhold has one wholetime appliance and one on-call appliance.</p>
120	<p>Durham risk too great to remove a fire engine from the area</p>	<p>Please see the response to comment 5.</p>
121	<p>Durham area far too high risk with university, cathedral and motorways to remove a fire engine from the area. Do not remove!!!</p>	<p>Please see the response to comment 5.</p>
122	<p>Durham left with one fire engine. Really???</p>	<p>Durham will have two fire appliances if option 3 is implemented. Please see the response to comment 6.</p>

123	<p>Seaham and Newton Aycliffe require a full time crew 24/7.</p> <p>Moving a Pump from Durham is a total red herring and is your preferred Option as it saves the most money. CDDFRS is at it bare bones already and has been for a number of years.</p> <p>A 5 minute delay in the deployment of a Pump from Seaham/Aycliffe will at some point in the future be the cause of a death, you are playing Russian Roulette with the people of Seaham and Newton Aycliffe.</p> <p>Yes a slick and polished performance of a Presentation disguised as "a Consultation" to suit your means.</p>	Please see the response to comment 5 and 20.
124	<p>Get your act together Durham and Darlington Fire &amp; Rescue Service and stop losing fire appliances. Once gone you'll never get them back. Show some back bone and find another way!!!</p>	Please see the response to comment 58 and 63.
125	<p>Downgrading fire cover in Seaham when there is over 2000 new homes to be built in a new development in the next few years is not sustainable. The council tax gains from these homes should cover the cost of maintaining Seahams cover. Until then maintain it using reserves.</p>	Please see the response to comment 5.

126	Survive without making any changes until there's a change of government. It's on the cards, so keep the fire engines!!!	The Authority has a legal duty to set a balanced budget and plans to balance it over the medium term.
127	Keep the fire engines at Durham. Crazy idea!!!?	Please see the response to comment 6.
128	Am I reading this right? Are you thinking of leaving Durham with just one whole time fire engine?!?!? Good God! Let's hope there isn't 2 incidents at the same time. Get your act together Durham!!	Please see the response to comment 6.
129	Disgraceful options!!!! Keep the fire engines	Please see the response to comment 58, 63 and 126.
130	The whole point of having "emergency services" is to have spare capacity to deal efficiently with any eventuality. It seems there is no spare capacity left after decades of the three E's plus 'effectiveness'. The question is, has 'effectiveness' been sacrificed?	Please see the response to comment 58, 63 and 126.
131	Ref question 3. Certainly not option 1 as I think it dangerous to have no staffing overnight at Seaham. And the 5 minute response for on call fireman is somewhat ambitious, unless you have a crew of firemen who live in the IMMEDIATE vicinity of the fire station! Seaham is a growing town therefore not a brilliant idea to base important	The Service employs firefighters and has done so for over 27 years. Firemen is an outdated and sexist term that isn't appropriate in this day and age.  We already operate an on-call model with a 5 minute response standard at Seaham as we do employ firefighters who live within 5 minutes of the station.  Please see the response to comment 5 in relation to growth in Seaham.  The modelling data simply informs decisions we also apply professional judgement.



	decisions wholly on a computer model. Everything is not black or white. There are grey areas.	
132	All the above choices seem a sensible and practical way of dealing with reduced resources in a cost effective way.	Noted.
133	No change to Durham at all!	Please see the response to comment 6.
134	But will this not have a detrimental impact on the response for Durham incidents?	Please see the response to comment 6.
135	Quite honestly whoever came up with these ideas are absolute idiots keep the Durham fire fighters in there brand new headquarter in Durham Bishop Auckland is too far away for any emergency the other side if Durham	We believe you have the misunderstood options. In option 3 the proposal is to move an appliance to Spennymoor not Bishop Auckland.
136	None of these options are acceptable. They may be called out within 5 mins but how long will it take them to get there. Why remove services from a city? If they're needed in Durham area its not a quick journey to get there from n aycliffe etc	We believe you have the misunderstood options. In option 3 the proposal is to move an appliance to Spennymoor not Newton Aycliffe.  On-call firefighters respond to the station within five minutes from the call coming in. We do not wait five minutes to call them into the station. The majority of appliances in County Durham are staffed by on-call firefighters.
137	Option 3 seems by far the best option in terms of maintaining the service provided, and at a lower cost.	Noted.

138	This appears to be the best way for safety reasons	Noted.
139	Aycliffe needs 24hour cover as we have one of the largest industrial estates and we are closer to the A1M motorway and it seems we pay one of the highest council taxes so we should keep 24 hour cover	Please see the response to comment 20.  The council tax precept level for fire and rescue is standard for everyone in the same band across County Durham and Darlington. We believe you are referring to the Town Council precept level that does not fund the fire and rescue service.
140	Do not reduce number of fire engines at Durham, this city is expanding with the student population in high rise properties	Please see the response to comment 6.
141	Removing a fire engine from Durham station is endangering lives in Durham city whose population is mostly students in high rise properties	Please see the response to comment 6.
142	Surly option two and three is robbing Peter to pay Paul. Leaving Durham with sub standard provision for a vast area. Leave Durham station alone and employ more staff to cover other areas. Improvements need to be made to encourage more into the local fire service instead of being reliant on other areas. Local MPs need to be lobbying parliament for more money for better and more workable provisions which makes it safe for all areas of this district.	Please see the response to comment 6 and 58.  Local MPs do regularly lobby the government for increased funding for the fire and rescue service.

143	<p>In the event of an incident occurring over night at Newton Aycliffe or Seaham Option 2 gives the greatest chance of lives being saved. I can appreciate the cost implications but think the cost of losing a single life would balance out finances saved. I think the savings should be considered elsewhere.</p>	<p>Please see the response to comment 5 and 20.</p> <p>Over the last 8 years we have been forced to make savings across all areas of the organisation.</p>
144	<p>Hello</p> <p>No option is a good option in my opinion. It would be beneficial to carry out the proposed changes that were issued 12 months ago by the fire service. - Changes to DCP were not mentioned in this list.</p> <p>Asking for the public's thoughts and opinions seems to be a PR stunt as it's already confirmed as to what changes will be made. Very much like asking the firefighters who currently work the DCP System their thoughts and feelings, before doing the exact opposite.</p> <p>It is my understanding that dcp plus will be changed to a 9-9, 4 on-4 off 'FAMILY FRIENDLY' shift system commencing April 2019.</p> <p>I myself work full time, have a young family and a partner employed by DDFRS. my job is very demanding meaning I leave the family home at 7.30am and return early evening 6/7pm</p>	<p>Please see the response to comment 26.</p> <p>This is a meaningful consultation and all comments will be fully considered prior to any decisions being made.</p> <p>No final decisions will be made until the end of February 2019.</p> <p>Thank you for a detailed explanation of the impact of these changes on you and your family. Please see the response to comment 93.</p>

<p>I value my time away from work and weekends are very important to me. The 9till9 shift system is, in your words, 'family friendly' .... please correct me if I'm wrong , but what evidence do you base this on?</p> <p>It doesn't take a mathematical genius to calculate the time away from home and hours of potential family weekend time lost to a shift that pattern that I imagine to be the least preferred choice of current staff.</p> <p>For example, it's wednesday, my partner leaves the family home at 7.30am for his first 9-9 shift. We live 50 minutes away but he will now be traveling at peak times so let's provide extra time for traffic.</p> <p>Now the fire service has moved on from drinking tea all day so I imagine he will have a busy day??? Fast forward to 9pm, peak time for call outs in the area. High chance he will be off station at incident. If he is lucky he will be home for 10pm. I say lucky because the stats for call outs beteeen 7-9pm are higher than other times. So this could possibly mean he doesn't return home till 10.30/11pm. At this time his family will be in bed.</p> <p>Let's repeat this for the next 3 days. Thursday through to Saturday night. Where is the family time here ??? I understand family time to be time spent together as a family during day time hours. So this</p>	<p>We will take full account of your feedback as we discuss alternative arrangements.</p> <p>Please see the response to comment 30.</p>
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week I get one day. The Sunday. Let's hope he is refreshed !

Roll onto the next week. Thursday - Sunday. Nope , no family time here. What about the week after?

Friday till Monday. No. Again family time is non existent. How about week 4, Saturday through to Monday evening. Well I return home at 6.30 Friday evening, so yes, we will have 15 minutes together before our daughter goes to bed.

1 day and 15 minutes over a 4 week period. If you are being pedantic you could total the other 15 minutes a day when I return home and he is on his rest days.

Family friendly? I think not.

You may argue that other stations work 4 shifts in a row over multiple weekends. This is correct however the 2/2/4 system with family friendly start/Finish times allow for more freedom before and after shifts.

You may also argue that 9-9 is better than working 4/5 continuous shifts similar to what they do now which to some may seem to be less favorable. Well my partner chose to do that, he is paid an enhancement to do it and his family can visit anytime. Add on to that flexible working shifts, a maximum of 10 shifts falling on a Friday Saturday or Sunday and it becomes very appealing. 3 shifts

<p>Friday - Sunday ( plus 1 more shift ) over a two month period is far more appealing and family friendly.</p> <p>Now I think I have covered the 'family friendly' issue. It would be interesting to know the financial implications of changing the shift system. Despite being told that DDFRS supports DCP and does not want to change this system, it seems that changes will be made imminently.</p> <p>We have recently remortgaged, taking into account total family income. This will change when his shift pattern changes so how does the service plan to soften the financial blow and problems that may arise?</p> <p>Looking towards the future it was our intention to increase our family. With the drop in family income this will have a detrimental affect on time spent on maternity leave. Time that was supported by DCP to give that special family time a new born requires.</p> <p>I fully understand there are many other issues connected to this topic. Budget, fire cover, retained availability, or lack of it, but as someone who doesn't work for CDDFRS but has a family member who does, then this is my greatest concern.</p> <p>Thank you</p>	
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145	<p>The City of Durham Parish Council has carefully considered the details of County Durham and Darlington's Fire and Rescue Service's integrated risk management plan for 2018/19.</p> <p>Keeping residents safe and secure is at the core of the service the Fire and Rescue Authority provides. We believe that 0 deaths in house fires in 2017/18, a 17% reduction in domestic fire-related injuries in 2017/18 and 88% of survey respondents describing themselves as feeling either safe or very safe in County Durham and Darlington is testament to the outstanding work the Authority does on a daily basis. Equally, the City of Durham Parish Council recognises the growing demands on the service at a time of significantly increased financial pressures, with funding from central Government continuing to decline and a shortfall in funding from 2019/20 onwards. The need for the service to identify £448,000 of savings in 2019/20, rising to £735,000 in 2021/22 undoubtedly represents a real challenge and we welcome the opportunity to give our views on the proposals as set out in the Risk management plan.</p> <p>In relation to the Bishop Auckland crewing arrangements, following the review of emergency response provision in 2017, the City of Durham Parish Council does believe that, if successful, this staffing arrangement should be made permanent. We recognise the importance of the review which took place in relation to emergency response and believe that the staffing arrangements as proposed</p>	<p>Thank you for your supportive words, staff appreciate them.</p> <p>Please see the response to comment 6.</p>
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<p>would ensure both the fire engine and the SRU are immediately available to respond to incidents. Furthermore, this also means that swift water rescue capability, also based at Bishop Auckland, can be immediately deployed.</p> <p>The City of Durham Parish Council also supports the CDDFRS's intention to explore further collaboration opportunities with the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS) and Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) as a way and means to improve efficiency, effectiveness, increase public safety and deliver better value for money. It is right that the CDDFRS enhances collaborations like this as a key strategic objective and it is positive to hear of the range of successful partnerships in areas such as: shared estates; shared operational resources; shared community engagement; and tri-service responders in rural areas, which the service have entered into.</p> <p>In relation to the proposed revised crewing options as set out in the integrated risk management plan, the City of Durham Parish Council recognises that Option 3 is the preferred option of CDDFRS and we confirm that this would be our preferred option. While we are aware of the timescale with which decisions have to be made, we would indicate our confirmation in response to the current situation. This option would ensure that there are firefighters on duty at Seaham and Newton Aycliffe for 12 hours during the day and on call firefighters available within 5 minutes</p>	
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of receiving an emergency call. In addition, moving Durham's second fire engine and crew permanently to Spennymoor to replace the current arrangements would mean both sites would be able to offer an immediate response 24 hours a day, seven days a week with identical resources when responding to incidents. We recognise that this option is based on a wide variety of statistical analysis, with delivering improved outcomes and better value for money at its core. This option would ensure that firefighters are geographically stationed in the best possible place to respond to incidents across the service and resources would be allocated where they were most effective; at the same time creating annual efficiency savings of £450,000.

However, we would wish to qualify our confirmation in terms of future risk and would invite the CDDFRS to provide us with appropriate reassurance in relation to the loss in the number of fire engines from the Durham station. As a Council, we are concerned about the impact this will have on both response times and on those occasions where there are multiple simultaneous incidents in our area which reduced capacity and fire engine availability would no doubt exacerbate. In particular we are concerned that this reduction takes place at a time when the City is subject to a number of large Purpose-Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) buildings which are often four or more storeys in height, will be densely

	<p>populated, often with students from overseas, and in locations where there is not always easy access other than from the front. Should the need arise that a fire crew were needed from Spennymoor to attend an incident in Durham, this will no doubt have an impact on response times and also on the potential for a bigger risk by a reduction in level of proximate service. We would welcome a response to assure ourselves that, in supporting the option, sufficient attention has been given to this issue when deciding to withdraw the engine from the Durham station.</p>	
146	Trust the Experts!	Thank you.
147	1 engine is not enough at Durham - it's a world heritage site and if there is a major incident you'll be in trouble.	Please see the response to comment 6.
148	as a resident at Newton Aycliffe, we already have a shared police/fire station. Aycliffe is a growing town and deserve to maintain a full time 24 hour service.	Please see the response to comment 20.
149	<p>The reason i did not chose option 3 is it feels where I live we have very little fire cover from CDDFRS and this would make things worse.</p> <p>I appreciate the time taken for the presentation, the issue and solutions were clearly presented and easy</p>	Please see the response to comments 5 and 6.

	to understand - much easier to digest than the one I read for TWFRS (I have family that live in their area).	
150	Use W/T crews for cover roles only - not nightshifts from stn's 6 and 4. This may be required on occasion as RDS cover is not guaranteed. Bishop Auckland - ensure station staffing is at competent levels, leave 6 trained personnel on duty. If collaboration saves money then do it, plus save on uniform, ppe etc etc	Noted
151	Please leave High Handenhold FS alone	There are no plans at present to change the crewing arrangements at High Handenhold.
152	It seems sensible to spread resources across 3 geographical areas rather than the other options	Noted.
153	Keep up the good work...we trust your judgement and that of the Fire Authority	Thank you for your kind words.
154	If response times and standards are met	Noted.
155	Parish of Brancepeth will be better served under option 3 2 important Grade 1 listed buildings are there, castle and saxon church	Noted.
156	Sensible to provide cover to the Brandon area	Noted.

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Contact: Tom Gorman  
 Direct Tel: 03000 268060  
 e-mail: [Tom.gorman@durham.gov.uk](mailto:Tom.gorman@durham.gov.uk)  
 Your ref:  
 Our ref:



Stuart Errington,  
 Chief Fire Officer,  
 County Durham and  
 Darlington Fire and Rescue Service,  
 Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters,  
 Belmont Business Park,  
 Durham,  
 DH1 1TW

25 January 2019

### **Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Consultation**

Dear Stuart,

As Chairman of the Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee, I would like to thank you for presenting the Fire Authority's IRMP at the Committee's meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2019.

Members welcome the opportunity to provide comment on this consultation document and acknowledge that in previous years our views have been valued by the Fire Authority.

With regard to the consultation document, comment was requested on Question 3 relating to three options on future crewing of fire appliances at Seaham, Newton Aycliffe, Spennymoor and Durham fire stations. Following consideration of this question, Members in attendance unanimously supported Option 3 for both Seaham and Newton Aycliffe stations to have firefighters on duty during the day time and be staffed by on call firefighters on an evening and to permanently move Durham Station's second fire engine and crew to Spennymoor.

In reaching this conclusion, Members acknowledge the continuing financial challenges that the Service are experiencing and the methodology used to illustrate the risk and financial impact of all three options within the consultation document.

The Committee also acknowledge the approach to seek comment through a wide range of formats including AAPs, Residents Forums and online. As requested at the Committee's meeting, details of consultation opening nights at fire stations and a link to the online consultation has been circulated to Members of the committee.

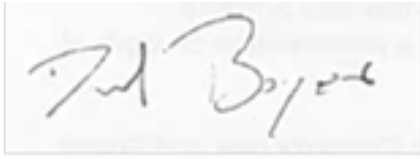
Transformation & Partnerships  
 Durham County Council, County Hall, Durham DH1 5UF  
 Switchboard 03000 260000 Minicom (0191) 383 3802 Text (07786) 026 956

Website: [www.durham.gov.uk](http://www.durham.gov.uk)  
 Lorraine O'Donnell - Director of Transformation and Partnerships



To conclude, thank you once again for attending the Committee's meeting and I look forward to receiving progress reports on implementation of the plan.

Yours Sincerely

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in black ink. The signature appears to read "David Boyes" in a cursive style.

Councillor Dr. David Boyes  
Chairman Safer and Stronger Communities  
Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Westminster  
Tel: 020 7219 1283

GRAHAME MORRIS MP  
Easington Constituency

Constituency Office  
Glebe Centre Annex  
Durham Place  
Murton, Seaham  
Co. Durham, SR7 9BX

Constituency  
Tel: 0191 526 2828



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

21 January 2019

Stuart Errington  
Chief Fire Officer  
Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters  
Belmont Business Park  
Durham, DH1 1TW

Dear Stuart,

Please find enclosed a copy of my correspondence to The Rt Hon Nick Hurd MP, Police and Fire Minister in relation to funding cuts and the ongoing County Durham and Darlington Fire & Rescue Service consultation.

I am concerned about any funding cuts that will lead to the reduction of local service, and I am particularly concerned at the option that would result in an appliance being moved from Peterlee to Seaham to provide cover at night.

In view of the high number of incidents in Peterlee and the surrounding, there are no circumstances in which I could support an appliance being moved from Peterlee. This option has caused widespread concern in the local area and I hope it can be confirmed at the earliest opportunity that such a proposal will not proceed.

I would greatly appreciate if you consider my views in relation to the ongoing consultation.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Graham Morris'.

Grahame Morris, M.P.



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

21 January 2019

The Rt Hon Nick Hurd MP  
Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service  
Home Office  
Direct Communications Unit  
2 Marsham Street  
London, SW1P 4DF

Dear The Rt Hon Hurd,

**Fire & Rescue Service**

I am writing to raise my concerns about government spending cuts to the County Durham and Darlington Fire & Rescue Service and the threat to this vital public service in East Durham.

County Durham and Darlington Fire & Rescue Service need to cut almost £450,000 from next year's budget, and due to government austerity, they will need to bridge a £735,000 by 2021/22. I believe there is no clearer example of the austerity threat than the downgrading of a frontline life-saving service.

There is no justification for the downgrading of Fire & Rescue Services in East Durham at a time when they are dealing with more Accidental, Primary and Secondary Fires than at any point in the last five years.

In the Peterlee area, there has been a 12% increase in accidental dwelling fires, a 98% increase in primary fires and 55% increase in secondary fires. I am therefore shocked that an option being considered could see an appliance moved from Peterlee to Seaham to provide cover at night. This option defies all reason in view of the number of incidents in the Peterlee area compared to Seaham. It should not have been suggested and should be rejected by County Durham and Darlington Fire & Rescue Service immediately.

I will be raising my concerns directly with the Fire & Rescue Service, however, they are only in this situation due to the government cuts and the decisions made by your department. I hope you will make a commitment to safeguard Fire & Rescue Services and ensure that areas where incidents are increasing will not face service downgrades.





Thank you in advance for your kind attention to this enquiry.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'G. Morris', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Grahame Morris, M.P.

cc: Stuart Errington, Chief Fire Officer, Durham and Darlington Fire & Rescue

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## **COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY**

**22 FEBRUARY 2019**

## **EMERGENCY RESPONSE REVIEW UPDATE**

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### **REPORT OF ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE OFFICER – SERVICE DELIVERY**

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#### **Purpose of the report**

1. This report provides members with an update on changes to the Emergency Response (ER) arrangements which are set to be trialled from 1 April 2019, following the ER Review and the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) consultation carried out in 2018/19.

#### **Background**

2. Following the Combined Fire Authority (CFA) planning day on 10 May 2018, members were informed that the options generated by the ER Review would be presented to staff as part of a wider consultation exercise and that their comments and concerns would be captured and considered. This consultation took place at two Leadership Forums in November 2018 and during a round of station visits by Service Leadership Team (SLT) members. This provided an opportunity for staff to feed in their own ideas on additional or alternative efficiency saving options.
3. In addition, the proposed changes to the Service's ER provision were included in the IRMP public consultation which ran from November 2018 to February 2019. The results of the consultation are set out in a separate report (item 7 on today's agenda). Within a separate paper on the agenda for today's meeting (item 10), members were asked to agree a Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) which shows a balanced budget for 2019/20 and a shortfall in funding of £0.460m in 2020/21 rising to £1.531m in 2022/23. It is therefore essential that work continues through the ER Review to identify savings options to assist in balancing the budget in future years.

#### **Additional Ideas for Efficiency Saving**

4. Previous ER Reviews generated suggestions for efficiency savings by staff and from these, 2 were identified to be trialled during 2018/19:
  - 4 Whole Time (WT) staff crew the fire appliance instead of 5 and 2 WT staff crew the Special Rescue Unit (SRU). This would ensure the Type B Swiftwater Rescue capability would remain immediately available utilising the staff on duty at Bishop Auckland;
  - Reduce the pool of staff used to crew the Day Crewing Plus (DC+) stations at Seaham and Newton Aycliffe from 14 to 13.

## **2018/19 Emergency Response Review Trials**

### **Crewing at Bishop Auckland Fire Station**

5. Following consultation with the representative bodies and staff, the Service agreed to trial this alternative crewing option at Bishop Auckland from 1 April 2018 to identify any issues and capture lessons learned from this alternative staffing model. For the purposes of the trial the staffing at Bishop Auckland was incrementally reduced from 36 (9 per shift) to 32 (8 per shift) and if successful, the staffing would reduce further to 28 (7 per shift) from 1 April 2019. This would realise a total saving of 8 WT posts from 2019/20 onwards.
6. The total saving of £280,000 per annum from this option is less than the original option identified in the 2017 ER Review however, additional savings were also suggested involving staffing arrangements at the Service's 2 DC+ stations.
7. Following a successful ongoing trial and supportive feedback from the IRMP consultation, the recommendation is to embed this new way of working permanently from 1 April 2019.

### **Crewing at Seaham and Newton Aycliffe**

8. There are 14 staff allocated to each of the DC+ stations at Seaham and Newton Aycliffe. This allows a self-rostering system that ensures 5 DC+ staff are available every day to crew the appliances at each station. The suggestion put forward from staff, including those working at the DC+ stations, was that this pool could be reduced to 13 for each station with no negative impact on cover or increase in the total number of shifts worked by the DC+ staff. This is due to the contingency built in to the current DC+ system for sickness, training, etc.
9. The retirement profile at both DC+ stations allowed for the pool at each station to be reduced to 13 by the end of Summer 2018 through natural wastage. The Service therefore decided to conduct a trial with the DC+ shift system operating with 13 staff from the end of Summer 2018 until 31 March 2019. The revised staffing arrangements produce an annual saving of £110,000.
10. Consultation has taken place with the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) and whilst they have raised concerns as both options will result in a reduction of staffing, they are aware of the need to address the current MTFP deficit.
11. The total savings to be realised from both trials, if fully implemented on 1 April 2019, would be £390,000 per annum. Although this is less than the saving estimated in the original ER review option, the Service feels, when balanced against the reduced training requirements for the RDS staff, the ability to maintain an effective Swiftwater Rescue capability and to promote continued staff engagement in the efficiency savings process, these options should be implemented from 1 April 2019. These savings have been incorporated into the 2019/20 budget and MTFP presented to members today.

## **2019/20 Emergency Response Trials**

12. The Service's IRMP public consultation included 3 alternative options in relation to the removal of the DC+ shift system at Seaham and Newton Aycliffe. The Service's preferred option was number 3 which saw the introduction of a Day Crewing (DC) only shift system at Seaham and Newton Aycliffe along with the movement of Durham's second WT appliance from Durham to Spennymoor fire station which would leave the allocation of resources as:
  - Durham – 1 x WT appliance (5 riders) / 1 x RDS appliance;
  - Spennymoor – 1 x WT appliance (5 riders) / 1 x RDS appliance.

13. When modelled, based on the last 3 years of incident data, these proposed changes would see an overall improvement of the Service's Response Standards to life risk incidents as well as releasing efficiency savings to help meet the projected MTFP budget deficit.
14. Although ongoing work to find a mutually acceptable system to replace DC+ has continued with both the FBU and DC+ staff, as of the date of writing this report, no acceptable alternative shift system to that proposed by the Service has been identified.
15. Consultation and negotiations will continue with these stakeholders however, it is the Service's recommendation that a trial of the DC system, as outlined in the IRMP consultation, be implemented at Seaham and Newton Aycliffe on 1 April 2019 which will protect the CFA from continuing to operate a DC+ system that has been legally ruled as being non-compliant with the Working Time Directive.
16. Following feedback from the public, staff and local elected members during the IRMP consultation period, the Service has decided to trial a staffing system similar to the successful trial at Bishop Auckland that would see Durham fire station staffed with 6 WT firefighters instead of the proposed 5, with them operating a 4 and 2 system:
  - 1 x WT appliance (4 riders);
  - 1 x Targeted Response Vehicle - TRV (2 riders);
  - Aerial Ladder Platform (ALP) – dual crewed with staff from the TRV.

## Conclusion

17. This alternative staffing system would see a reduction in the projected annual efficiency savings as Durham would be riding with 6 staff and not 5 but the Service considers that it will provide a more effective use of resources based on the demand and risk profiles of Durham station area as well as improving the response and availability of the ALP based at Durham.
18. The Service will continue to work with staff and their representative bodies to ensure these changes and trials are implemented with the least disruption possible. We will continue to review the ER capability to ensure resources are allocated to risk, we provide the most effective and efficient Fire and Rescue Service and we continue to work towards our vision of *Safest People, Safest Places*.

## Recommendations

19. Members are asked to:

- (a) **agree** to the permanent introduction of the revised staffing system of 4 and 2 at Bishop Auckland and reduction of the Day Crewing plus staffing pool from 14 to 13 at Seaham and Newton Aycliffe from 1 April 2019.
- (b) **agree** to the 2019/20 Emergency Response Review trials of:
  - a. Introducing a Day Crewing only shift system at Seaham and Newton Aycliffe from 1 April 2019;
  - b. Moving the second Whole Time Durham appliance to Spennymoor from 1 April 2019;
  - c. Operating a 4 and 2 staffing system at Durham.
- (c) **receive** further reports on the progress of the Emergency Response review options.

Dominic Brown, Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Service Delivery, 0191 375 5610

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## **COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY**

**22 FEBRUARY 2019**

**BUDGET 2019/20**

**REPORT UNDER SECTION 25 OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2003**

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### **REPORT OF TREASURER**

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#### **Purpose of Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide members with information on the robustness of the estimates and the adequacy of reserves, so that members have authoritative advice available when they make their budget decisions.

#### **Background**

2. Fire and rescue authorities decide each year how much they are going to raise from council tax. They base their decision on a budget that sets out estimates of what they plan to spend on the service.
3. The decision on the level of the council tax is taken before the year begins and it cannot be changed during the year, so allowance for risks and uncertainties that might increase service expenditure above that planned, must be made by:
  - a) making prudent allowance in the estimates for each of the services, and;
  - b) ensuring that there are adequate reserves to draw on if the service estimates turn out to be insufficient.
4. Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 requires that an Authority's Chief Financial Officer reports to the Authority when it is considering its budget and council tax. The report must deal with the robustness of the estimates and the adequacy of the reserves allowed for in the budget proposals, so that members will have authoritative advice available to them when they make their decisions.

Section 25 also requires members to have regard to the report in making their decisions.

## **Robustness of Estimates**

5. The budget process has involved members and staff in a thorough examination of the budget now recommended to the Authority.
6. The proposals for savings identified for 2019/20 have been reviewed and reported to the Finance Committee. Based on the Committee's recommendation to the Authority, a decision has been taken to incorporate these areas into the budget for 2019/20.
7. In coming to the decision to include the savings in the budget, risks have also been identified. It is anticipated that these risks can be managed using contingencies and if necessary, reserves.
8. The budget has been the subject of extensive consultation and challenge. Community representatives and the representatives of the National Non-Domestic Rate Payers have had the opportunity to comment on the budget and the proposals.
9. In my view, the robustness of the estimates has been ensured by the budget process, which has enabled all practical steps to be taken to identify and make provision for the Authority's commitments in 2019/20.
10. It should be noted that plans for 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 are based on a range of assumptions. Estimates for these years are therefore less robust at this stage.

## **Adequacy of Reserves**

11. The CIPFA Local Authority Accounting Panel (LAAP) has issued a guidance note on Local Authority Reserves and Balances (LAAP Bulletin 55) to assist local authorities in this process. This guidance is not statutory, but compliance is recommended in CIPFA's 2003 Statement on the Role of the Finance Director in Local Government. It would be best practice to follow this guidance.
12. The guidance however, states that no case has yet been made to set a statutory minimum level of reserves, either as an absolute amount or a percentage of the budget. Each local authority should take advice from its Chief Financial Officer and base its judgement on local circumstances.
13. The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England document, makes specific reference to reserves and requires fire and rescue authorities (FRA's) to provide information to enable understanding of the purpose for which each reserve is held and how holding each reserve supports the FRA's medium-term financial plan. In addition, authorities are required to provide justification for holding a general reserve larger than five percent of budget.
14. A general reserve of 5% of budget is considered to be adequate taking account of the risks associated with the medium-term financial plan and the Authority's track record of delivering efficiency savings and sound budget management.
15. The reserves policy is that the Authority will:



- Set aside sufficient sums in earmarked reserves as it considers prudent to do so. The Treasurer will be authorised to establish such reserves as required and to review them for adequacy and purpose on a regular basis.
  - Aim to maintain a general reserve of 5% of net expenditure, currently £1.425m.
16. In coming to a view on the adequacy of reserves, account needs to be taken of the risks facing the Authority. The Annual Governance Statement, within the Authority's Statement of Accounts, gives assurance in relation to the organisation's arrangements for the management of risk and ensuring proper arrangements are in place for governing its affairs and looking after the resources at its disposal.
17. The risk management process has identified a number of key risks which could impact on the Authority's resources. These risks which are outlined in the Authority's medium-term financial plan are likely to impact in the short to medium term.
18. The setting of the level of reserves is an important decision, not only in the budget for 2019/20, but also in the formulation of the medium-term financial plan.
19. In my view, if the Authority were to accept the Finance Committee's recommendations regarding the level of council tax, savings and capital expenditure then the level of risks identified in the budget process, alongside the Authority's financial management arrangements, suggest that the level of reserves is adequate.

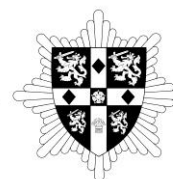
## **Recommendation**

20. Members are **recommended** to:
- i) to note the Treasurer's assessment of the robustness of estimates and adequacy of reserves: and
  - ii) have regard to this report when approving the budget and the level of council tax for 2019/20.

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Safest People, Safest Places

County Durham and Darlington  
Fire and Rescue Authority



## **COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY**

**22 FEBRUARY 2019**

### **2019/20 REVENUE BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX, CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL PLAN**

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#### **REPORT OF TREASURER AND CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**

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##### **PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT**

- 1 The purpose of the report is to enable the Authority to:
  - approve a revised revenue budget for 2018/19;
  - set a revenue budget for 2019/20;
  - approve the Medium-Term Financial Plan;
  - approve the capital budgets for 2019/20 to 2022/23;
  - determine the Fire Authority Council Tax Requirement;
  - approve the associated resolutions.
  
- 2 The report is divided into 12 sections:
  - Section A - Background (page 2)
  - Section B - Consultation (page 3)
  - Section C - Local Government Finance Settlement (page 4)
  - Section D – Efficiency Plan Progress (page 6)
  - Section E – Reserves Strategy (page 9)
  - Section F – Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) (page 13)
  - Section G – Revenue Budget (page 18)
  - Section H - Capital Strategy (page 19)
  - Section I - Fire Authority Council Tax Requirement (page 23)
  - Section J - Prudential Code (page 26)
  - Section K - Treasury Management (page 31)
  - Section L - Summary of Recommendations (page 44)

## **SECTION A**

### **BACKGROUND**

- 1 A meeting of the Finance Committee was held on 29 January 2019 to consider the revenue and capital budgets, together with the MTFP. This report incorporates the recommendations of the Committee regarding the overall budget amount and the level of council tax for 2019/20.

## SECTION B

### CONSULTATION

- 1 The Authority has undertaken on-going consultation with a wide range of stakeholders on the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) action plan and the budget. The consultation process involved a wide range of stakeholders including:
  - Our staff;
  - Representative Bodies;
  - The public;
  - Our partner agencies;
  - Local councillors;
  - Parish councils;
  - Residents associations;
  - Area Action Partnerships;
  - Community groups;
  - Representatives of the Non-Domestic Ratepayers.
  
- 2 Various methods of communication have been used in the consultation process and these included:
  - An on-line survey;
  - Station open night events at the stations impacted specifically by the options;
  - Durham County Council and Darlington Borough Council staff;
  - Messages about the survey and links to it from Twitter and Facebook via the Service accounts as well as the partner organisations (listed above);
  - Presentations to various strategic groups of Darlington Borough Council and Durham County Council including Overview and Scrutiny Committees;
  - Presentations at Resident Association meetings;
  - Presentations at Parish and Town Council meetings;
  - Presentations to Area Action Partnership meetings;
  - Briefings to all CDDFRS staff. Information also included in several staff bulletins and Communications Forums;
  - Information to neighbouring fire and rescue services.
  
- 3 A separate report (agenda item 7) on the outcome of the consultation process will be presented to members at today's meeting for consideration alongside this report.
  
- 4 Consultation on the budget and proposals for achieving efficiency savings have taken place with staff and the representative bodies on a regular basis. Meetings have been productive and focused on considering savings options that minimise any increase in risks in local communities.
  
- 5 It is **recommended** that members take into account the views of those consulted as they consider the budget and MTFP proposals.

## SECTION C

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE SETTLEMENT

#### Four Year Funding Settlement

- 1 As part of the 2016/17 settlement, the Government stated that it would offer any local authority (including fire and rescue authorities) that wishes to accept it up a four-year funding settlement covering the period 2016/17 to 2019/20. The Authority agreed to accept the Government's offer which provided the Authority with the ability to plan ahead with a degree of certainty. Formal confirmation of the multi-year settlement offer was received in a letter from the Home Office dated 14 December 2016.
- 2 The settlement funding assessment has been calculated by formula and is the Government's assessment of the financial resources to be provided from a combination of revenue support grant, local business rates income and top-up grant. Table 1 below sets out the four-year settlement figures covering the period 2016/17 to 2019/20.

**Table 1: Settlement Funding Assessment 2016/17 – 2019/20**

Description	2016/17 £m	2017/18 £m	2018/19 £m	2019/20 £m
Total Government Funding	10.853	9.836	9.325	9.024
Local Business Rates	1.479	1.345	1.370	1.409
	<b>12.332</b>	<b>11.181</b>	<b>10.695</b>	<b>10.433</b>
<b>Reduction in Funding</b>	<b>-0.943</b>	<b>-1.151</b>	<b>-0.486</b>	<b>-0.262</b>
<b>% Reduction in Funding</b>	<b>-7.05%</b>	<b>-9.33%</b>	<b>-4.35%</b>	<b>-2.45%</b>

- 3 The Authority's funding from central government will reduce by a further £0.262M in 2019/20. This takes the total reduction in government funding to £2.842M over the four-year period.
- 4 The funding position beyond 2019/20 is currently unknown. There will be a full departmental spending review during 2019 which will set out the departmental allocations across government the outcome of which will not be known until the autumn. There are likely to be extremely challenging negotiations between government departments and the Treasury during the course of this spending review as the Treasury struggles to reconcile demands for higher spending in the midst of Brexit uncertainty. The government has only committed to setting an overall path for public spending in 2020 and beyond potentially leaving departments having to bid for funding in departmental spending reviews in both 2019 and 2020. There is also a view that there will be another lean settlement for public services outside the NHS where the government has agreed to spend an additional £25bn by 2022/23.
- 5 The government are also in the process of undertaking a full review of how government funding is allocated and redistributed between local authorities. The 'Fair Funding Review: a review of relative needs and resources' will supposedly address concerns that the current formula is unfair, out of date and overly complex. Currently the government is working towards an implementation date of 2020/21 and at this

stage the potential impact on the Authority's funding is unknown

### **Local Council Tax Referendum Limit**

- 6 The Government has also previously announced details of the local council tax referendum limits for 2019/20. Any fire authority that wishes to increase council tax by more than 3%, as compared to the 2018/19 council tax level will be required to hold a referendum. The limit is the same as the limit set for 2018/19. The new 3% limit was confirmed for 2018/19 and 2019/20 only.

### **Recommendation**

- 7 It is **recommended** that the Authority notes the 2019/20 settlement funding assessment and the uncertainty around the funding position from 2020/21 onwards.

## SECTION D

### EFFICIENCY PLAN PROGRESS

#### Background

- 1 In return for the Government's commitment to provide central funding allocations for four years, local authorities were required to publish an efficiency plan. The Authority's efficiency plan was published on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2016 in accordance with the requirements set out in the offer letter from Government.
- 2 This section provides details of the progress made in achieving the savings outlined in the Authority's published efficiency plan a copy of which is attached at Appendix A.

#### Efficiency Savings for Implementation in 2016/17

- 3 The Efficiency Plan outlined £1.948M of efficiency savings for implementation during 2016/17 which were built into the 2016/17 budget. Details of these savings are set out in Table 2 below:

**Table 2: Efficiency Savings for Implementation in 2016/17 (Included in 2016/17 budget)**

<b>Efficiency Saving</b>	<b>£M</b>
Establishment level at Durham and Bishop Auckland (alternative to full RDS Provision at Spennymoor)	0.270
Alternative Staffing of Darlington ALP	0.270
Flexi Officer Review	0.240
Reduction in Debt Repayments and Interest	0.241
Reduction in FPS Employer Contributions	0.169
Reduction to Operational Staffing Pool	0.150
Senior Leadership Team Restructure	0.140
Base Budget Review	0.100
Service Transformation Phase 1	0.092
Alternative Provision of Officer's Cars	0.079
Income Generation	0.074
Reduction in Vehicle Running Costs	0.060
Reduction in Vehicle Fleet	0.055
National Insurance Contribution Band Changes	0.008
	<b>1.948</b>

- 4 The savings set out in Table 2 above were fully achieved by 31 March 2017.

#### Efficiency Savings for Implementation During the Period 2016/17 to 2019/20

- 5 The Efficiency Plan also identified further efficiency savings for implementation during the period 2016/17 to 2019/20. Table 3 below sets out details of the actual savings achieved and those forecast to be achieved compared with the estimates included in the Efficiency Plan:



**Table 3: Efficiency Savings for Implementation During the Period 2016/17 to 2019/20**

Efficiency Saving	Estimate	Actual / Forecast	Variance
	£M	£M	£M
<b>2016/17</b>			
Trading Arms Surplus & Contribution to Service Costs	0.025	0.025	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.025</b>	<b>0.025</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>2017/18</b>			
Savings Achieved to 31/03/17	0.025	0.025	0
Review of Command and Control	0.230	0.350	+0.120
Restructure of Strategic & Middle Managers	0.075	0.075	0
Restructure of Corporate Services	0.075	0.245	+0.170
Reduction in Debt Repayments & Interest	0.095	0.095	0
Collaboration initiatives with the Police and other partners	0.250	0.175	-0.075
Trading Arms Surplus & Contribution to Service Costs	0.025	0.025	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.775</b>	<b>0.990</b>	<b>+0.215</b>
<b>2018/19</b>			
Savings Achieved to 31/03/18	0.775	0.990	+0.215
Reduction in Debt Repayments & Interest	0.205	0.205	0
Trading Arms Surplus & Contribution to Service Costs	0.025	0.025	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.005</b>	<b>1.220</b>	<b>+0.215</b>
<b>2019/20</b>			
Savings Achieved to 31/03/19	1.005	1.220	+0.215
Trading Arms Surplus & Contribution to Service Costs	0.025	0.025	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.030</b>	<b>1.245</b>	<b>+0.215</b>

**Note: Figures in Italics are forecast at this stage**

- 6 The majority of the savings outlined in the Efficiency Plan for implementation during the period 2016/17 to 2019/20, have been achieved and the Service is on track to deliver efficiency savings totalling £1.245M which is £0.215M more than anticipated when the Efficiency Plan was published in October 2016.
- 7 Following expressions of interest for early retirement and voluntary redundancy from Command and Control and Corporate Services staff, additional savings of £290,000 (Command & Control - £120,000, Corporate Services £170,000) were realised during 2017/18 over and above the level set out in the Efficiency Plan.
- 8 The proposed savings from collaboration initiatives were less than expected as agreement has not been reached with the Fire Brigade's Union (FBU) to continue providing an Emergency Medical Response (EMR) service with the North-East Ambulance Service (NEAS) on an on-going basis. Discussions are continuing nationally with the FBU on firefighter roles and responsibilities going forward.

## Recommendations

- 9 It is **recommended** that the Authority notes the progress made in achieving the savings set out in the Efficiency Plan.

## **SECTION E**

### **RESERVES STRATEGY**

#### **Background**

- 1 The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England sets out the priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities (FRA's) and makes specific reference to reserves. The document requires FRA's to provide information to enable understanding of the purpose for which each reserve is held and how holding each reserve supports the FRA's medium term financial plan (MTFP).
- 2 The information which FRA's are required to publish includes:
  - How the level of the general reserve has been set;
  - Justification for holding a general reserve larger than 5% of budget;
  - Details of the activities or items to be funded from each earmarked reserve and how they support the FRA's strategy to deliver a good quality service to the public. Where an earmarked reserve is intended to fund a number of projects or programmes (for example a change or transformation reserve), details of each programme or project to be funded should be set out.
- 3 The information on each reserve should make clear how much of the funding falls into the following three categories:
  - a. Funding for planned expenditure on projects and programmes over the period of the current MTFP.
  - b. Funding for specific projects and programmes beyond the current planning period.
  - c. As a general contingency or resource to meet other expenditure needs held in accordance with sound principles of good financial management (e.g. insurance).

#### **Reserves Policy**

- 4 The Authority's reserves are held as:
  - A working balance to help cushion the impact of uneven cash flows and avoid unnecessary temporary borrowing. This forms part of general reserves.
  - A contingency to cushion the impact of unexpected events or emergencies. This also forms part of general reserves.
  - A means of building up funds, often referred to as earmarked reserves, to meet known or predicted liabilities.
- 5 The current reserves policy is that the Authority will:
  - Set aside sufficient sums in earmarked reserves as it considers prudent to do so.

- Aim to maintain a general reserve of 5% of the net expenditure, currently £1.425m.

## Estimated Reserves Position

6 The estimated reserves position for the period 2018/19 to 2022/23 is set out in Table 4 below:

**Table 4: Estimated Reserves Position 2018/19 – 2022/23**

Reserve	2018/19 £m	2019/20 £m	2020/21 £m	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m
<b>General Reserve</b>	<b>1.425</b>	<b>1.425</b>	<b>1.425</b>	<b>1.425</b>	<b>1.425</b>
<b>Modernisation Reserve</b>	2.821	2.197	0	0	0
Use of Reserve – Capital Financing	-0.624	-2.197	0	0	0
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>2.197</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Other Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>2.309</b>	<b>2.209</b>	<b>1.250</b>	<b>1.250</b>	<b>1.250</b>
<b>TOTAL RESERVES</b>	<b>5.931</b>	<b>3.634</b>	<b>2.675</b>	<b>2.675</b>	<b>2.675</b>

## General Reserve

- 7 The Authority has a robust approach to managing risk and there are effective arrangements for financial control in place. However, given the high level of influence that third parties such as the Local Government Employers and government departments have on income and expenditure there is always a risk that the Authority will unexpectedly become liable for expenditure that it has not budgeted for. As a single purpose authority, the Authority has no opportunity to use cross service subsidies to meet unanticipated expenditure therefore proportionally it's general reserve may be slightly higher than a multi-purpose authority.
- 8 The Authority has a policy to maintain the general reserve at 5% of the net expenditure which is a commonly used benchmark across the fire sector. A risk assessment of the adequacy of the Authority's general reserve is carried out at the year-end and any necessary adjustments are made as part of the final accounts process. A general reserve of 5% of net expenditure is considered to be adequate taking account of the risks associated with the MTFP, the level of earmarked reserves and the Authority's track record of delivering efficiency savings and sound budget management.

## Earmarked Reserves

- 9 The Authority holds the following earmarked reserves to meet known or predicted liabilities:

### **Pensions Reserve (General Contingency)**

The purpose of the pensions reserve is to meet any unforeseen pension costs which may arise as a result of changes to pension schemes, or any increase in the level of ill-health retirements over and above the level included in the revenue budget. Each higher tier ill-health retirement can cost in the region of £125K therefore the pensions reserve equates to the equivalent of an additional 4 higher tier ill-health retirements over the four-year MTFP period.

### **Insurance Reserve (General Contingency)**

The excess levels on the Authority's insurance policies are significant and the purpose of this reserve is to meet any unexpected increase in the level of claims excesses that may arise over and above the sums included in the revenue budget. Provision has not been made in the revenue budget to cover the payment of policy excesses which are £50K on the vehicle insurance policy and £100K on the public and employer's liability policies.

### **Resilience (General Contingency)**

The National framework requires the Authority to maintain national resilience capabilities in a high state of operational readiness. The funds in this reserve have been set aside to meet any unforeseen costs which may arise in order to meet this obligation and any costs associated with a business continuity event such as a prolonged period of industrial action or the need to support a significant operational incident over a prolonged period of time, either within our area or elsewhere.

### **Replacement Mobilisation System Reserve (Grant funding for a planned project)**

This reserve comprises of the balance of unspent grant, earmarked to fund the replacement mobilisation system. The funds in this reserve will be utilised during 2019/20 to fund licence and maintenance costs associated with the command and control system.

### **Modernisation Reserve (Funding for a planned project)**

The funds in this reserve will be fully utilised during 2019/20 on the Darlington Fire Station capital replacement project.

### **Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (Grant funding for a planned project)**

The reserve comprises of the balance of unspent grant, earmarked to fund the replacement mobile communications systems. Whilst the funds in this reserve are not legally or contractually committed at this stage, they will be fully utilised over the MTFP period to finance the replacement systems.

- 10 The estimated movement on each of the earmarked reserves during the period 2019/20 to 2022/23 is set out in Table 5 below:

**Table 5: Earmarked Reserves 2019/20 to 2022/23**

<b>Earmarked Reserve</b>	<b>Estimated Balance at 01/04/19 £m</b>	<b>Transfers to Reserves £m</b>	<b>Use of Reserves £m</b>	<b>Estimated Balance 31/03/23 £m</b>
Pensions	0.500	0	0	0.500
Insurance	0.250	0	0	0.250
Resilience	0.500	0	0	0.500
Replacement Mobilisation System	0.100	0	-0.100	0
Modernisation	2.197	0	-2.197	0
ESMCP	0.959	0	-0.959	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4.506</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-3.256</b>	<b>1.250</b>

## **Recommendations**

11 It is **recommended** that the Authority:

(a) Agrees to the policy for reserves, that the Authority will:

- Set aside sufficient sums in earmarked reserves as it considers prudent to do so.
- Aim to maintain a general reserve of 5% of the net expenditure, currently £1.425m.

## **SECTION F – MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL PLAN**

This section provides a summary of the Medium-Term Financial Plan for 2019/20 to 2022/23.

### **Basis of the Preparation of the Medium-Term Financial Plan**

- 1 The Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) has been revised to take account of the settlement information and to incorporate 2019/20 and future year's expenditure and income estimates.

#### **Resources**

##### **Government Funding**

- 2 Details of the Local Government Finance Settlement are outlined in Section C. As part of the four-year settlement the Government provided indicative funding allocations up to 2019/20. The funding position beyond 2019/20 is currently unknown however it is likely that there will be further cuts in government funding going forward.
- 3 Government funding for 2019/20 is based upon the figures provided as part of the four-year settlement. Due to the uncertainty surrounding the government funding position beyond 2019/20 an assumption has been made that further reductions in funding will continue at the rate of 5% per annum from 2020/21 onwards.

##### **Council Tax**

- 4 The MTFP has been calculated based on the assumption that council tax will increase by 2.95% in 2019/20 and by 2.00% thereafter. Members will need to review these assumptions noting that each 1% change in council tax results in a variation of approximately £173,000.

#### **Budget Pressures**

- 5 A number of budget pressures have been identified which have been incorporated into the MTFP:

##### **Pay Awards**

- 6 The MTFP includes an allowance for pay increases of 2% in each year. Each additional 1% increase in firefighters pay costs approximately £170,000 and for the whole workforce costs in the region of £195,000. The Fire Brigades Union (FBU) are still in discussion with the national employers regarding broadening the role of firefighters in return for a significant increase in pay and have tabled a request for a 17% pay increase. Whilst the sector has made it clear that any increase in firefighter's pay above 2% would need to come with assurances of additional funding from government any unfunded pay increase above 2% would have a significant impact on the forecast deficit.

##### **Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)**

- 7 A valuation of the Pension Fund as at 31 March 2016 resulted in an increase in the employer contribution rate from 1 April 2017. In order to give employers some choice on how to budget for this increase there were two options, one with no stepping applied

to employer deficit contribution payments, and one showing increases to employer deficit contributions being stepped over 3 years. In order to minimise the impact on the revenue budget we decided to opt for the stepped deficit contribution option. This resulted in an increase in employer contributions of £49,000 in 2017/18 rising to £128,000 in 2019/20.

### **Firefighters Pension Scheme (FPS)**

- 8 The Government Actuary's Department has completed a valuation of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme. This has resulted in an average increase of 12.6% in the employer's contribution rate which is significantly more than the 3% increase we had included in the 2018/19 MTFP. At this stage the rate of increase in the employer's contribution rate for each of the individual firefighter's pension schemes is unknown. However, based on an average 12.6% increase, this will lead to an increase of £1.3M in the overall cost. The government have stated that grant funding will be made available towards the additional cost in 2019/20 and the position from 2020/21 onwards will be addressed as part of the forthcoming spending review.

### **Savings**

- 9 Details of planned efficiency savings are set out in the efficiency plan which was provided to the Home Office as a condition of the four-year funding settlement. The proposals include staffing reductions in Command and Control, Corporate Services and strategic/ middle management, a reduction in debt repayment and interest, further collaboration and income generation from the trading arms.
- 10 Efficiency savings totalling £1.245m in 2019/20 have been incorporated into the MTFP. Further details of the savings are set out in Table 3 in Section D.
- 11 At the Fire Authority strategic planning day on 8 October 2018, members received an update on the Emergency Response Review which included proposals for achieving further efficiency savings in response to ongoing reductions in the Authority's grant funding. The Authority consulted with the public on some of these options via the IRMP action plan consultation which closed on 4 February 2019. The savings options identified in the Emergency Response Review are set out in Table 6 below:

**Table 6: Emergency Response Review Options**

Option	Annual Saving
1. Reduce the day crewing plus station establishment from 14 to 13	£110K
2. Change Bishop Auckland crewing to 4:2	£280K
3. Move Durham's second appliance to Spennymoor	£110K
4. Change DC+ to day crewing only at Seaham and Newton Aycliffe	£350K
5. Ride with a crew of 4 on all appliances	£740K
6. Change Spennymoor's wholetime appliance to day crewing	£400K
7. Wholetime appliance change to day crewing	£400K- £450K
8. Removal of on call second appliances at stations 08,09 and 14	£180K- £250K



- 12 Options 1 and 2 above have been the subject of extensive trials during 2018/19 and the options will be made permanent from 2019/20 onwards. These savings have been incorporated into the 2019/20 budget and MTFP. This will produce a balanced budget for 2019/20 as illustrated in the MTFP set out in Table 7 below:

### Medium Term Financial Plan

- 13 The MTFP incorporating the above information is set out in Table 7 below:

**Table 7: Medium Term Financial Plan 2019/20 – 2022/23**

	2019/20 £m	2020/21 £m	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>28.409</b>	<b>28.851</b>	<b>29.520</b>	<b>30.223</b>
Total Government Funding	9.024	8.573	8.144	7.737
Local Business Rates	1.409	1.409	1.409	1.409
Council Tax	17.865	18.409	18.969	19.546
Surplus on Collection Fund	0.111	-	-	-
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>28.409</b>	<b>28.391</b>	<b>28.522</b>	<b>28.692</b>
<b>Shortfall</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-0.460</b>	<b>-0.998</b>	<b>-1.531</b>

- 14 The MTFP above shows a balanced budget position in 2019/20 and a shortfall in funding of £0.460m in 2020/21 rising to £1.531m in 2022/23. Work is continuing through the Emergency Response Review to identify further savings options to assist in balancing the budget in future years.
- 15 It should be noted that the estimates for 2020/21 onwards are less robust as they are based on a number of assumptions. Therefore, there is a risk that the actual position could turn out to be different. They do, however, provide a good indication of the level of savings which will need to be identified in future years in order to balance the budget.

### Risks

- 16 The Authority has embedded risk management as part of its overall control framework and reviews financial risks on a regular basis. Risks have also been fully reviewed as part of the overall budget setting process for 2019/20 and over the medium term.
- 17 There are a number of risks associated with the MTFP that need to be considered as part of the budget setting process:

**(a) Local Business Rates Retention**

The Local Business Rates Retention Scheme introduces risks in relation to the Authority being exposed to fluctuations in business rates income in County

Durham and Darlington. The Authority is also exposed to collection rate risk and if collection rates fall, then there will be a direct impact on the Authority's available financial resources.

**(b) Local Council Tax Benefit Schemes**

The introduction of local council tax benefit schemes by Durham County Council and Darlington Borough Council exposes the Authority to a further council tax collection rate risk.

**(c) Expenditure and Income Assumptions**

A number of assumptions have been made in relation to government grant, pay, prices and pension costs across the MTFP period. Whilst the assumptions are considered to be reasonable at this stage, there is a risk that the actual position could turn out to be different. Tables 8 and 9 below outline the potential impact of changes to these assumptions on the MTFP position.

**Table 8: Impact of Reductions in Government Funding on the MTFP Shortfall Position**

Assumption	2020/21 £m	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m
No further reductions after 2019/20	-0.009	-0.118	-0.244
5% annual reduction in funding from 2020/21	-0.460	-0.998	-1.531
7.5% annual reduction in funding from 2020/21	-0.686	-1.421	-2.126
10% annual reduction in funding from 2020/21	-0.911	-1.833	-2.690

**Table 9: Impact of Changes to Expenditure Assumptions**

Impact of Changes to Expenditure Assumptions	Annual Impact £m
Additional 1% Pay Award	+0.195
Additional 1% Inflation	+0.066
Loss of government funding for Increase in FPS contribution rate	+1.337

- 18 The above risks will be monitored closely, and the Authority will be notified of any significant movement in the financial assumptions and projections that have been made within the MTFP.

**Value for Money**

- 19 The Authority's approach to identifying efficiency savings is based on the principle of providing value for money to local taxpayers. The savings that have been identified as part of the budget setting process are focused on reducing cost whilst at the same time

minimising the impact on the level of risk in local communities.

## **Recommendations**

20 It is **recommended** that the Authority:

- (a) Agrees the Medium-Term Financial Plan.
- (b) Notes the Treasurer's comments on the robustness of the estimates, the adequacy of reserves and the risks in the budget, as set out in the separate report under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003.

## SECTION G

### REVENUE BUDGET

#### Introduction

- 1 This section deals with the revised revenue budget for 2018/19 and the revenue budget for 2019/20.

#### Revised Revenue Budget 2018/19

- 2 During the year, the revenue budget is monitored and reports outlining spending against budget are regularly considered. Estimates are revised as pressures and opportunities for savings are identified and virement is exercised in accordance with the financial regulations of the Authority. Details of the revised 2018/19 revenue budget are set out in Appendix B.
- 3 Based upon expenditure and income to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018, net expenditure for 2018/19 is forecast to be within the approved budget.

#### Revenue Budget 2019/20

- 4 The revenue budget for 2019/20 includes provision for pay awards, inflation, capital financing and any known variations. Due to the current financial climate, attention has been focussed on the achievement of further efficiencies during the preparation of the budget.
- 5 The savings set out in the Efficiency Plan together with the further savings identified through the emergency response review have enabled a balanced budget to be set for 2019/20.
- 6 The net revenue budget for 2019/20 totals £28,409,200 Details of the revenue budget are set out in Appendix B.

#### Recommendations

- 7 The following resolutions are **recommended** to the Authority:
  - (a) That the revised revenue budget for 2018/19 as set out in Appendix B be approved;
  - (b) That the Treasurer be authorised to make any proper accounting transactions that would be in the interests of the Authority in relation to the accounts for 2018/19.
- © That the revenue budget for 2019/20 as set out in Appendix B be approved.

## **SECTION H**

### **CAPITAL STRATEGY 2018/19 TO 2022/23**

#### **Background**

- 1 The revised CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities, which was issued in December 2017, sets out key objectives to ensure capital programme decisions are affordable, prudent and sustainable. Under the revised guidance, the Authority is now required to produce a Capital Strategy, which must be considered and approved annually by Members.

#### **Purpose and Principles**

- 2 The principles of the Capital Strategy are:
  - To ensure capital resources are aligned with the corporate priorities of the Authority;
  - To maintain the Authority's assets and infrastructure;
  - To maintain an affordable rolling capital programme;
  - To only undertake Prudential Borrowing where there are sufficient monies to meet the full borrowing and running costs of capital expenditure.
- 3 These principles have been followed when developing the capital programme, within the framework of the MTFP.
- 4 It is essential that the Authority ensures that its assets are in good condition and that it delivers a good service through the best use of its assets. Where assets are identified as surplus to requirements, they will be disposed of appropriately and, where possible, will generate a capital receipt. Such capital receipts contribute towards the costs of future asset investment and development.

#### **Monitoring**

- 5 The Authority will undertake frequent monitoring of the agreed capital programme, including the funding of this programme. All expenditure incurred in delivering the capital programme must be compliant with the defined Finance and Procurement policies and procedures.

#### **Funding**

- 6 There are a number of available options for the financing of capital expenditure. Typically, this will be financed through a combination of revenue contributions or use of reserves, capital grants, capital receipts and borrowing, as defined below:
  - Revenue Contributions – the revenue budget can include an amount allocated to support the funding of the capital programme.
  - Use of Reserves – revenue resources held in the Authority's modernisation reserve

are set aside in order to fund capital expenditure.

- Capital Grants – external grant funding may be available for some projects. Such funding must be applied for and utilised for the specific project. The Government have not announced any available capital grant funding for 2019/20.
- Capital Receipts – cash receipts generated from the disposal of assets deemed to be surplus to requirements will be used to support new capital investment or to offset any future debt.
- Borrowing – prudential borrowing can be used to fund capital expenditure. This is on condition that any borrowing is affordable, prudent and sustainable over the medium term. As part of the annual budget setting process, a range of calculations, known as prudential indicators, are completed in order to demonstrate this and ensure that when developing the MTFP, the cost of interest charges and the repayment of principal is taken into account.

### **Capital Receipts Strategy**

- 7 Prior to the start of each financial year, under the statutory guidance issued by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), Local Authorities are required to publish a strategy on the planned use of capital receipts. Generally, capital receipts must only be utilised to support the purchase of capital expenditure. However, in March 2016, statutory guidance issued by the Government allowed a variation to this.
- 8 The Statutory Guidance on the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts allowed capital receipts to fund revenue expenditure costs which would generate ongoing savings, relating to sharing back office services, service reform, collaboration and driving digital delivery. This permission was initially applied from 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2019, but it was subsequently confirmed in the Local Government Finance Settlement, issued in February 2018, that this would be extended by a further 3 years to April 2022. Any transformation revenue costs which will be incurred by 31 March 2022 and funded from capital receipts received between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2022 must be detailed in the strategy.
- 9 The utilisation of capital receipts to fund expenditure that would usually be funded from revenue resources prevents these receipts from being available for investment in capital. To date, the Authority has not made use of the option to fund any revenue reform costs from capital receipts and the MTFP does not include any such funding. Any changes to this plan in the future would be considered on an individual project basis and any expected savings or service transformation proposals would be reported to the Authority for their consideration. The Authority is not expected to receive a significant level of capital receipts in 2019/20, but any received will be used to fund capital expenditure, reducing the need to borrow.

### **Significant Capital Projects**

- 10 The main capital projects included in the Authority's Capital Programme are outlined

below:

- **Premises** – work is currently in progress to replace the fire station at Darlington. This work will span the 2018/19 and 2019/20 financial years. In addition, the capital programme includes a budget for minor works in order to ensure that the condition of the Authority's property portfolio is maintained, and any improvements or enhancements are undertaken whenever it is necessary and appropriate.
- **Vehicle Replacement** – a comprehensive plan is in place to replace the operational fleet of fire appliances and specialist vehicles, pool cars and response vehicles when they reach the end of economic life. This is reviewed on an ongoing basis to identify any changes in the number and types of vehicles required to facilitate operational capacity.

11 All capital projects are subject to an assessment of risk and outcomes, as well as identifying any savings and efficiencies that can be achieved. The Authority seeks to collaborate with other partner agencies wherever possible, in order to maximise efficiencies and improvements to service.

## Capital Expenditure

12 The Prudential Code requires that all decisions made by the Authority in relation to capital expenditure, investments and borrowing are prudent and sustainable. Therefore, the Authority must consider arrangements for debt repayment, risk and the impact on overall fiscal sustainability. The Authority should make reasonable estimates of the anticipated capital expenditure throughout the period covered by the MTFP.

13 The estimates of capital expenditure, along with the proposed sources of finance are outlined in Table 10 below:

**Table 10: Capital Budgets 2018/19 – 2022/23**

	<b>2018/19 Revised £000</b>	<b>2019/20 £000</b>	<b>2020/21 £000</b>	<b>2021/22 £000</b>	<b>2022/23 £000</b>
Premises	500	4,250	250	250	250
IT	100	100	100	100	100
Equipment	450	107	302	460	107
Vehicles	74	1,202	777	54	250
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,124</b>	<b>5,659</b>	<b>1,429</b>	<b>864</b>	<b>707</b>
Funded by:					
Use of reserves	-1,124	-2,197	0	0	0
External borrowing	0	-3,462	-1,429	-864	-707
<b>TOTAL FUNDING</b>	<b>1,124</b>	<b>5,659</b>	<b>1,429</b>	<b>864</b>	<b>707</b>

14 A significant amount of work has been undertaken to ensure that the capital budgets proposed for the medium term are reflective of the Authority's priorities and are affordable in terms of associated revenue expenditure. The revenue costs associated with the capital programme have been incorporated into the MTFP.

## Capital Financing Requirement

- 15 Under the Prudential Code, it is necessary for the Authority to calculate its Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), which relates to all unfunded capital expenditure, not yet permanently financed through the revenue account. The Authority's Capital Financing Requirement is set out in Table 11 below:

**Table 11: Capital Financing Requirement 2018/19 – 2019/20**

	2018/19 £000	2019/20 £000
<b>Opening CFR</b>	<b>8,702</b>	<b>8,444</b>
Capital Expenditure	1,124	5,659
Sources of Finance:		
Revenue Contributions	-500	0
Transfers from Reserves	-624	-2,197
Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)	-258	-355
<b>Closing CFR</b>	<b>8,444</b>	<b>11,551</b>

## External Debt

- 16 All borrowing is undertaken from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB). The Authority currently has no debt outstanding. The estimated borrowing requirement based upon the capital programme contained within the MTFP is set out in table 12 below:

**Table 12: Estimated Borrowing Requirement 2019/20 – 2022/23**

2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
3,462	4.891	5.686	6,295	5.487

## Knowledge and Skills

- 17 Capital and Treasury Management are managed by professionally qualified accountants, who also have significant experience within local government. External professional advice is procured where required and members receive appropriate training on a variety of financial subjects, provided by officers and external providers.

## Recommendations

- 18 It is **recommended** that the Authority approves the revised capital budget for 2018/19 and the capital budgets for 2019/20 to 2022/23.



## SECTION I

### FIRE AUTHORITY COUNCIL TAX REQUIREMENT

#### Council Tax

- 1 Taking into account the information outlined in Sections F and G, the budget has been constructed to include the assumption that council tax will be increased by 2.95%.
- 2 This will increase basic council tax from the 2018/19 level of £100.53 to £103.50 in 2019/20.
- 3 *Members are **requested** to determine the level of Council Tax for 2019/20.*

#### Calculation of the Council Tax Requirement

- 4 The calculation of the council tax requirement takes the Authority's net expenditure and deducts contributions from Government in respect of revenue support grant and top up grant, together with the business rates income receivable from Durham County Council and Darlington Borough Council. Allowance also has to be made for the Authority's share of any surplus or deficit on Durham County Council and Darlington Borough Council Collection Funds.
- 5 Assuming net expenditure of the calculation is shown in table 13 below:

**Table 13: Calculation of the 2019/20 Council Tax Requirement**

	£	£
Fire Authority's Net Expenditure		28,409,200
Less:		
Revenue Support Grant	3,424,035	
Top Up Grant	5,599,886	
Business Rates Income	1,408,885	
Collection Fund Surplus / Deficit	111,000	
		10,543,806
<b>Council Tax Requirement</b>		<b>17,865,394</b>

## Council Tax Base

- 6 The 'council tax bases' of Durham County Council and Darlington Borough Council are used to calculate the proportion of the Fire Authority's total precept to be levied on each local authority. The tax base is the estimated full year equivalent number of chargeable 'Band D' dwellings with two or more liable adults in respect of which tax will be received. The 'council tax bases' for 2019/20 as notified to the Fire Authority are set out in Table 14 below:

**Table 14: Council Tax Base and Precept 2019/20**

Authority	Council Tax Base	Precept
		<b>£</b>
Durham County Council	139,738.80	14,462,965.80
Darlington Borough Council	32,873.70	3,402,427.95
<b>Total</b>	<b>172,612.50</b>	<b>17,865,393.75</b>

## Calculation of Fire Authority's Basic Council Tax

- 7 The basic council tax for the Authority is calculated by dividing the council tax requirement by the aggregate of the tax bases as shown below:

$$\frac{\text{Council Tax Requirement}}{\text{Aggregate Council Tax Base}} = \text{Basic Council Tax (At Band D)}$$

$$\frac{17,865,393.75}{172,612.50} = \text{£103.50}$$

- 8 A Basic Council Tax of £103.50 represents a 2.95% increase from the 2018/19 level.

## Precept Instalments

- 9 Following discussions with the Treasurers of the collecting authorities, the following dates for the payment of the precept in ten equal instalments have been agreed:

- (a) Durham County Council:

3 <sup>rd</sup> April 2019	3 <sup>rd</sup> September 2019
3 <sup>rd</sup> May 2019	4 <sup>th</sup> October 2019
4 <sup>th</sup> June 2019	1 <sup>st</sup> November 2019
5 <sup>th</sup> July 2019	3 <sup>rd</sup> December 2019
2 <sup>nd</sup> August 2019	3 <sup>rd</sup> January 2020

(b) Darlington Borough Council:

18 <sup>th</sup> April 2019	17 <sup>th</sup> October 2019
29 <sup>th</sup> May 2019	21 <sup>st</sup> November 2019
3 <sup>rd</sup> July 2019	30 <sup>th</sup> December 2019
7 <sup>th</sup> August 2019	4 <sup>th</sup> February 2020
12 <sup>th</sup> September 2019	10 <sup>th</sup> March 2020

10 It is proposed that Durham County Council and Darlington Borough Council also use these payment dates for income from business rates.

## Recommendations

11 Based on the net expenditure of £28,409,200 and a Band D Council Tax of £103.50 it is **recommended** that the Authority adopts the following resolutions:

That for the year ended 31 March 2020:

- (i) the 'council tax base' for the whole of the Authority's area be 172,612.50;
- (ii) there be no Authority expenses relating to a part only of the Authority's area;
- (iii) the 'basic amount of council tax' be £17,865,393.75 and the amount of the council tax for each category of dwelling be as set out in Table 15 below:

**Table 15: 2019/20 Council Tax by Valuation Band**

Valuation Band	Proportion of 'Basic Amount'	Council Tax
		£
A	6/9	69.00
B	7/9	80.50
C	8/9	92.00
D	'basic amount'	103.50
E	11/9	126.50
F	13/9	149.50
G	15/9	172.50
H	18/9	207.00

- (iv) the Net Expenditure be £28,409,200 and that, after taking into account revenue support grant of £3,424,035 business rates income of £1,408,885, top up grant of £5,599,886, and a surplus on the collection fund of £111,000, precepts totalling £17,865,393.75 be issued to Durham County Council and Darlington Borough Council.

## SECTION J

### PRUDENTIAL CODE

#### Background

- 1 The framework of the prudential capital finance system, which came into effect from 1 April 2004, is contained in the Local Government Act 2003. Under the Act, Government borrowing controls based on “credit approvals” were abolished with effect from 1 April 2004. The Authority is now free to borrow and take out leases without Government consent, provided these commitments can be afforded. The Prudential Code is designed to guide the Authority’s decision on what it can afford. The Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003 specifies the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities, issued by CIPFA, as the code of practice to which local authorities must have regard when setting and reviewing their affordable borrowing limit.
- 2 The key objectives of the Prudential Code are to ensure that within a clear framework the capital investment plans of the Authority are affordable, prudent and sustainable. A further key objective is to ensure that treasury management decisions are taken in accordance with good professional practice and in a manner that supports prudence, affordability and sustainability.
- 3 To demonstrate that the above objectives have been fulfilled, the Prudential Code sets out the indicators that must be used, and the factors that must be taken into account. The Code does not include limits; these are for the Authority to set.
- 4 Previously, credit approvals from Central Government set the limit of a local authority’s long-term borrowing and attracted Revenue Support Grant (RSG) towards the financing costs of loans (interest and repayment of principal). Under the new system, unless, exceptionally, a national limit is imposed, the Authority is free to make its own borrowing decisions according to what it can afford. Central Government support for borrowing through RSG continues to be given on the basis of a named amount of capital expenditure which borrowing will support. The Authority will take the totality of Central Government support into account in setting its prudential limits.

#### Prudential Indicators

- 5 The estimates of capital expenditure to be incurred for the current and future years are contained in Section H of this report and summarised in Table 16 below:

**Table 16: Prudential Indicators – Capital Expenditure**

Capital Expenditure				
2017/18 Actual £000	2018/19 Estimate £000	2019/20 Estimate £000	2020/21 Estimate £000	2021/22 Estimate £000
487	1,124	5,659	1,429	864

- 6 Estimates of the end of year Capital Financing Requirement for the Authority for the current and future years and the actual Capital Financing Requirement at 31 March 2018 are set out in Table 17 below:

**Table 17: Prudential Indicators – Capital Financing Requirement**

Capital Financing Requirement				
2017/18 Actual £000	2018/19 Estimate £000	2019/20 Estimate £000	2020/21 Estimate £000	2021/22 Estimate £000
8,702	8,444	11,551	12,607	13,072

- 7 The Capital Financing Requirement measures the Authority’s underlying need to borrow for a capital purpose. In accordance with best professional practice, the Fire Authority does not associate borrowing with particular items or types of expenditure. The Authority has an Integrated Treasury Management Strategy and has adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services. The Authority’s Treasury Management Strategy and annual plan for 2019/20 is shown in Section J. The Fire Authority has, at any point in time, a number of cash flows both positive and negative, and manages its treasury position in terms of its borrowings and investments in accordance with its approved Treasury Management Strategy. In day-to-day cash management, no distinction can be made between revenue cash and capital cash. External borrowing arises as a consequence of all the financial transactions of the Authority and not simply those arising from capital spending. In contrast, the Capital Financing Requirement reflects the Authority’s underlying need to borrow for a capital purpose.
- 8 CIPFA’s Prudential Code for Capital Finance includes the following as a key indicator of prudence:

*“In order to ensure that over the medium term net borrowing will only be for a capital purpose the local authority should ensure that net external borrowing does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of capital financing requirement in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional capital financing requirement for the current and next two financial years.”*

- 9 There are no difficulties envisaged for the current or future years in meeting this requirement. This view takes into account current commitments, existing plans, and the proposals contained in this budget report.
- 10 Estimates of the ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream for the current and future years, and the actual figures for 2017/18 are set out in Table 18 below:

**Table 18: Prudential Indicators – Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream**

Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream				
2017/18 Actual %	2018/19 Estimate %	2019/20 Estimate %	2020/21 Estimate %	2021/22 Estimate %
1.0	1.0	1.4	1.8	1.9

## Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement

- 11 The Authority is required to pay off an element of the accumulated General Fund capital spend each year through a revenue charge (the Minimum Revenue Provision – MRP). CLG Regulations have been issued which require the full Authority to approve an MRP Statement in advance of each year. A variety of options have been provided to replace the existing Regulations, so long as there is a prudent provision. The Authority is recommended to approve the following MRP Statement:
- i. For capital expenditure incurred before 1 April 2008, or which in the future will be Supported Capital Expenditure, the MRP policy will be:
    - **Existing practice** - MRP will follow the existing practice outlined in former CLG Regulations (Option 2).
  - ii. From 1 April 2008 for all unsupported borrowing the MRP policy will be:
    - **Asset Life Method (Annuity)** - MRP will be based on the estimated life of the assets, in accordance with the proposed regulations (Option 3).

## External Debt

- 12 In respect of external debt, the Authority has set Authorised Limits for its total external debt, gross of investments, for the current (2018/19) and the next three financial years. These limits separately identify borrowing from other long-term liabilities such as finance leases. The authorised limits are set out in Table 19 below:

**Table 19: Prudential Indicators – Authorised Limit for External Debt**

Authorised Limit for External Debt				
	2018/19 Estimate £m	2019/20 Estimate £m	2020/21 Estimate £m	2021/22 Estimate £m
Borrowing	0.801	3.808	5.381	6.255
Long-term liabilities	8.119	7.893	7.657	7.408
Total	8.920	11.701	13.038	13.663

- 13 The Authorised Limits are consistent with the Authority's current commitments, existing plans and the proposals in this budget report for capital expenditure and financing, and with its approved treasury management policy statement and practices. They are based on the estimate of most likely, prudent but not worst-case scenario, with the addition of sufficient headroom over and above this to allow for operational management. An assessment of risk has been taken into account, as have plans for capital expenditure, estimates of the Capital Financing Requirement and estimates of cash flow requirements.
- 14 The Operational Boundary for external debt is based on the same estimates as the Authorised Limit but reflects directly the Treasurer's estimate of the most likely, prudent but not worst-case scenario, without the additional headroom included within the

Authorised Limit. The Operational Boundary represents a key management tool for in year monitoring by the Treasurer. Within the Operational Boundary, figures for borrowing and other long-term liabilities are separately identified. The operational boundary limits are set out in Table 20 below:

**Table 20: Prudential Indicators – Operational Boundary for External Debt**

Operational Boundary for External Debt				
	2018/19 Estimate £m	2019/20 Estimate £m	2020/21 Estimate £m	2021/22 Estimate £m
Borrowing	0.728	3.462	4.891	5.686
Long-term liabilities	7.380	7.175	6.961	6.735
Total	8.108	10.637	11.852	12.421

- 15 The Authority's actual external debt at 31 March 2018 was £7.904m, comprising £0.728m borrowing and £7.176m long-term liabilities. It should be noted that actual external borrowing differs from the Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary, since actual external debt reflects the position at one point in time.

### Council Tax

- 16 The Prudential Indicators have been calculated using a 2.95% Council Tax increase in 2019/20 and assuming a 2% increase in subsequent years.
- 17 The capital programme outlined in Appendix C is funded by a mix of capital grants, contributions from revenue and borrowing under the Prudential Code.
- 18 The estimate of the incremental impact of this prudential borrowing for Band D Council Tax is set out in Table 21 below:

**Table 21: Prudential Indicators – Incremental Impact of Borrowing**

Incremental Increase on Band D Council Tax		
2019/20 %	2020/21 %	2021/22 %
1.30	1.01	0.98

## Recommendations

- 19 It is **recommended** that the Authority:
- (a) Notes the prudential indicators.
  - (b) Approves the MRP Statement
  - (c) Approves the following limits for external debt in 2019/20:
    - (i) Authorised Limit of £11.701m
    - (ii) Operational Boundary of £10.637m



## SECTION K

### TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2019/20

- 1 The CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services makes the following key recommendations:
  - (i) Public service organisations should put in place formal and comprehensive objectives, policies and practices, strategies and reporting arrangements for the effective management and control of their treasury management activities
  - (ii) Their policies and practices should make clear that the effective management and control of risk are prime objectives of their treasury management activities
  - (iii) They should acknowledge that the pursuit of best value in treasury management and the use of suitable performance measures are valid and important tools for responsible organisations to employ in support of their business and service objectives; and that within the context of effective risk management, their treasury management policies and practices should reflect this.
  
- 2 The Authority has formally adopted the key recommendations of the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services and has created and maintains, as the cornerstone for effective treasury management:
  - a treasury management policy statement stating the policies and objectives of its treasury management activities. This is attached as Annex K1.
  - suitable treasury management practices (TMPs), setting out the manner in which the Authority will seek to achieve those policies and objectives, and prescribing how it will manage and control those activities. These are attached as Annex K2.
  
- 3 Reports will be presented to members of the Authority on its Treasury Management policies, practices and activities, including an annual strategy and plan in advance of the year, and an annual report after its close, in the form prescribed in the TMPs. The annual strategy for 2019/20 is shown in Annex K3. In implementing this strategy, the Authority will give priority to security and liquidity rather than yield. However, the Authority will aim to achieve the highest rate of interest consistent with proper levels of security and liquidity. In particular, members' attention is drawn to the key objectives of the Investment Strategy, which is firstly safeguarding the repayment of principal and interest of its investments on time and secondly ensuring adequate liquidity. The investment return is the third objective. The Authority delegates responsibility for the execution and administration of treasury management decisions to the Treasurer, who will act in accordance with the Policy Statement, Treasury Management Practices and CIPFA's Standard of Professional Practice on Treasury Management.

### Treasury Management Indicators

- 4 The Authority has set an upper limit on its *fixed* interest rate exposures for 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22 of 100% of its net outstanding principal sum.

- 5 The Authority has further set an upper limit on its *variable* interest rate exposures for 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22 of 30% of its net outstanding principal sums.
- 6 The Authority's upper and lower limits for the maturity structure of its borrowings are set out in Table 22 below:

**Table 22: Maturity Structure of Borrowings**

Amount of projected borrowing that is fixed rate maturing in each period as a percentage of total borrowing that is fixed rate		
	Upper Limit %	Lower Limit %
Under 12 months	20	0
12 months and within 24 months	20	0
24 months and within 5 years	30	0
5 years and within 10 years	50	0
10 years and above	100	0

- 7 The Authority does not intend to invest sums for periods longer than 364 days. This is seen as prudent interest rate risk management.

## Recommendations

- 8 It is **recommended** that the Authority:
  - a) Continues to adopt the key recommendations of the CIPFA code.
  - b) Notes the Annual Treasury Management Strategy as set out in Annex K3.
  - c) Sets an upper limit on the Authority's fixed interest rate exposures for 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22 of 100% of its net outstanding principal sum.
  - d) Sets an upper limit on the Authority's variable interest rate exposures for 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22 of 30% of its net outstanding principal sums.

## **Annex K1: Treasury Management Policy Statement**

1 The Authority defines its treasury management activities as:

*“The management of the organisation’s cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks”.*

2 The Authority regards the successful identification, monitoring and control of risk to be the prime criteria by which the effectiveness of its treasury management activities will be measured. Accordingly, the analysis and reporting of treasury management activities will focus on their risk implications for the organisation.

3 The Authority acknowledges that effective treasury management will provide support towards the achievement of its business and Service objectives. It is therefore committed to the principles of achieving best value in treasury management, and to employing suitable performance measurement techniques, within the context of effective risk management.

## Annex K2: Treasury Management Practices

### 1 TMP1 - TREASURY RISK MANAGEMENT

#### 1.1 The Treasurer shall:

- Design, implement and monitor all arrangements for the identification, management and control of the treasury management risks shown below;
- Report at least annually on the adequacy/ suitability thereof, and
- Report, as a matter of urgency, the circumstances of any actual or likely difficulty in achieving the Authority's objectives in this respect, all in accordance with the procedures set out in **TMP6 Reporting requirements and management information arrangements**.

#### 1.2 *Liquidity*

The Authority will ensure it has adequate, but not excessive, cash resources, borrowing arrangements, overdraft or standby facilities, to enable the Authority at all times to have the level of funds available which are necessary for the achievement of its service objectives.

#### 1.3 *Interest Rates*

The Authority will manage its exposure to fluctuations in interest rates with a view to containment of its net interest costs, or securing its interest revenues, in accordance with the amounts provided in the Revenue Estimates in accordance with **TMP6 Reporting requirement and management information arrangements**.

#### 1.4 *Credit and Counterparties*

The Authority regards a prime objective of its treasury management activities to be the security of the principal sums invested. A formal counterparty list will be maintained and the named organisations and limits will reflect a prudent attitude towards organisations with which funds may be deposited, and will limit the Authority's investment activities to the instruments, methods and techniques referred to in **TMP4 Approved Instruments, methods and techniques**.

#### 1.5 *Rescheduling & Refinancing of Debt*

The Authority will ensure that all borrowing, private financing and partnership arrangements will be negotiated, structured and documented, and the maturity profile of debt will be managed with a view to obtaining terms for renewal or refinancing, if required, which are competitive and as favourable to the organisation as can reasonably be achieved in the light of market conditions prevailing at the time.

Relationships with counterparties in these transactions will be managed in such a manner as to secure this objective and will avoid over-reliance on any one source of funding if this might jeopardise achievement of the above.

## 1.6 *Legal and Regulatory*

The Authority will ensure that all of its treasury management activities comply with its statutory powers and regulatory requirements. The Authority will demonstrate such compliance, if required to do so, to all parties with whom it deals in such activities. In framing its credit and counterparty policy under **TMP1.4 Credit and Counterparties**, the Authority will ensure that there is evidence of counterparties' powers, authority and compliance in respect of the transactions they may affect with the organisation, particularly with regard to duty of care and fees charged.

The Authority will seek to minimise the impact of future legislative or regulatory changes on its treasury management activities so far as it is reasonably able to do so.

## 1.7 *Fraud, Error and Corruption, and Contingency Management*

The Authority will seek to ensure that it has identified the circumstances which may expose the Authority to the risk of loss through fraud, corruption or other eventualities in its treasury management dealings. Accordingly, it will design and implement suitable systems and procedures, and will maintain effective contingency management arrangements to counter such risks.

## 1.8 *Market Risk*

The Authority will seek to ensure that its stated treasury management policies and objectives will not be compromised by adverse market fluctuations in the value of the principal sums invested.

## **2 TMP2 - BEST VALUE AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT**

2.1 The Authority will actively work to promote best value in its treasury management activities. The treasury management function will be the subject of regular reviews to identify scope for improvement.

## **3 TMP3 - DECISION-MAKING AND ANALYSIS**

3.1 The Authority will maintain full records of its treasury management decisions, and of the processes and practices applied in reaching those decisions to demonstrate that reasonable steps have been taken to ensure that all issues relevant to those decisions were taken into account.

## **4 TMP4 - APPROVED INSTRUMENTS, METHODS AND TECHNIQUES**

4.1 The Authority will undertake its treasury management activities by employing only those instruments, methods and techniques detailed in the Treasury Management Strategy that is shown in Annex J3.

## **5 TMP5 - ORGANISATION, CLARITY AND SEGREGATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES, AND DEALING ARRANGEMENTS**

- 5.1 The Authority's treasury management activities will be properly structured in a clear and open fashion and a rigorous discipline of segregation of duties will be enforced to ensure effective control and monitoring of its treasury management activities, for the reduction of the risk of fraud or error, and for the pursuit of optimum performance.
- 5.2 The principle on which this will be based is a clear distinction between those charged with setting treasury management policies and those charged with implementing and controlling these policies, particularly with regard to the execution and transmission of funds, the recording and administering of treasury management decisions, and the audit and review of the treasury management function.
- 5.3 If and when the Authority intends, as a result of lack of resources or other circumstances, to depart from these principles, the Treasurer will ensure that the reasons are properly reported in accordance with **TMP6 Reporting requirements and management information arrangements**, and the implications properly considered and evaluated.
- 5.4 The Treasurer will ensure that there are clear written statements of the responsibilities for each post engaged in treasury management, and the arrangements for absence cover.
- 5.5 The Treasurer will ensure there is proper documentation for all deals and transactions, and that procedures exist for the effective transmission of funds.
- 5.6 The Treasurer will fulfil all delegated responsibilities in respect of treasury management in accordance with Authority's Treasury Management Policy Statement, Treasury Management Practices and the CIPFA Standard of Professional Practice on Treasury Management.

## **6 TMP6 - REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND MANAGEMENT INFORMATION ARRANGEMENTS**

- 6.1 Regular reports will be prepared for consideration by the Authority on:
- the implementation of its treasury management policies
  - the effects of decisions taken and the transactions executed in pursuit of those policies
  - the implications of changes resulting from regulatory, economic, market or other factors affecting its treasury management activities; and the performance of the treasury management function
- 6.2 As a minimum, Authority will receive:
- an Annual Report on the strategy and plan to be pursued in the forthcoming year
  - an Annual Report on the performance of the treasury management function in the previous year and on any circumstances of non-compliance with the organisation's Treasury Management Policy Statement and Treasury Management Practices

## **7 TMP7 - BUDGETING, ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT ARRANGEMENTS**

- 7.1 The Authority will account for its treasury management activities in accordance with appropriate accounting practices and standards, and with statutory and regulatory requirements.
- 7.2 The Authority will ensure that its auditors, and those charged with regulatory review, have access to all information and papers supporting the activities of the treasury management function as are necessary for the proper fulfilment of their roles, and that such information and papers demonstrate compliance with external and internal policies and approved practices.

## **8 TMP8 - CASH AND CASH FLOW MANAGEMENT**

- 8.1 All Authority monies shall be aggregated for treasury management purposes and will be under the control of the Treasurer. Cash flow projections will be prepared on a regular and timely basis, and the Treasurer will ensure that these are adequate for the purposes of monitoring compliance with **TMP1.2 Liquidity**.

## **9 TMP 9 - MONEY LAUNDERING**

- 9.1 Procedures will be enforced for verifying and recording the identity of counterparties and reporting suspicions and will ensure that staff involved in this area are properly trained.

## **10 TMP 10 - STAFF TRAINING AND QUALIFICATIONS**

- 10.1 The Authority will seek to appoint individuals to the treasury management function who are both capable and experienced and will provide training for staff to enable them to acquire and maintain an appropriate level of expertise, knowledge and skills. The Treasurer will recommend and implement the necessary arrangements.

## **11 TMP 11 - USE OF EXTERNAL SERVICE PROVIDERS**

- 11.1 When external service providers are employed by the Authority, the Treasurer will ensure that this is done for reasons which have been submitted to a full evaluation of the costs and benefits. The terms of their appointment and the methods by which service providers' value will be assessed will be properly agreed and documented and subjected to regular review.
- 11.2 Where feasible and necessary, a spread of service providers will be used to avoid over-reliance on one or a small number of companies. Where services are subject to formal tender or re-tender arrangements, Authority Standing Orders and Financial Regulations plus legislative requirements will always be observed. The monitoring of such arrangements rests with the Treasurer.

## **12 TMP 12 - CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

- 12.1 The Authority is committed to the pursuit of proper corporate governance throughout its businesses and services, and to establishing the principles and practices by which this can be achieved. Accordingly, the treasury management function and its activities will

be undertaken with openness and transparency, honesty, integrity and accountability.

- 12.2 The Authority has adopted and implemented the key recommendations of the Code of Practice on Treasury Management in the Public Services. This, together with other arrangements that the Treasurer will put in place, is considered vital to the achievement of proper corporate governance in treasury management, and the Treasurer will monitor and, if and when necessary, report upon the effectiveness of these arrangements.



## **Annex K3: Treasury Management Strategy 2019/20**

The CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services recommends that the Authority draw up an annual Treasury Management Strategy before the start of each financial year, which it may vary at any time.

In implementing this strategy, the Authority will give priority to security and liquidity, rather than yield. However, the Authority will aim to achieve the highest rate of interest consistent with the proper levels of security and liquidity. In order to achieve this, the strategy deals with the use of specified investments, non-specified investments and the liquidity of investments.

The strategy also covers the Authority's approach to borrowing and the use of external managers.

### **1. Borrowing Strategy 2019/20 – 2021/22**

The uncertainty over future interest rates increases the risks associated with treasury activity. As a result, the Authority will take a cautious approach to its treasury strategy.

Long-term fixed interest rates are at risk of being higher over the medium term, and short-term rates are expected to rise, although more modestly. The Treasurer, under delegated powers, will take the most appropriate form of borrowing depending on the prevailing interest rates at the time, taking into account the risks shown in the forecast above. It is likely that shorter term fixed rates may provide lower cost opportunities in the short/medium term.

With the likelihood of long-term rates increasing, debt restructuring is likely to focus on switching from longer term fixed rates to cheaper shorter term debt, although the Treasurer and treasury consultants will monitor prevailing rates for any opportunities during the year.

Continuing to postpone borrowing and running down investment balances will also be considered. This would reduce counterparty risk and hedge against the expected fall in investments returns.

### **2. Investment Strategy 2019/20 – 2021/22**

#### **2.1 Key Objectives**

The primary objectives of the Authority's investment strategy are firstly safeguarding the repayment of the principal and interest of its investments on time and secondly ensuring adequate liquidity. The investment return is the third objective. With the current economic background, the current investment climate has one over-riding risk consideration; that of counterparty security risk. As a result of these underlying concerns, officers are implementing an operational investment strategy which tightens the controls already in place in the approved investment strategy.

## 2.2 Risk Benchmarking

A development in the revised Codes and the CLG consultation paper is the consideration and approval of security and liquidity benchmarks. Yield benchmarks are currently widely used to assess investment performance. Discrete security and liquidity benchmarks are new requirements to the Member reporting, although the application of these is more subjective in nature.

These benchmarks are simple targets (not limits) and so may be breached from time to time, depending on movements in interest rates and counterparty criteria. The purpose of the benchmark is that officers will monitor the current and trend position and amend the operational strategy depending on any changes. Any breach of the benchmarks will be reported, with supporting reasons in the mid-year or Annual Report.

Security - The Authority's maximum-security risk benchmark for the current portfolio, when compared to these historic default tables, is:

- 0.08% historic risk of default when compared to the whole portfolio.

Liquidity – In respect of this area, the Authority seeks to maintain:

- Liquid short-term deposits of at least £0.5m available with a week's notice
- Weighted Average Life benchmark is expected to be 0.25 years (3 months), with a maximum of 0.5 years (6 months)

Yield - Local measure of yield benchmarks is:

- Investments - Internal returns above the 7-day London Interbank Bid Rate (LIBID)

## 2.3 Investment Counterparty Selection Criteria

The primary principle governing the Authority's investment criteria is the security of its investments, although the yield or return on the investment is also a key consideration. After this main principle the Authority will ensure:

- It maintains a policy covering both the categories of investment types it will invest in, criteria for choosing investment counterparties with adequate security, and monitoring their security. This is set out in the Specified and Non-Specified investment sections below.
- It has sufficient liquidity in its investments. For this purpose it will set out procedures for determining the maximum periods for which funds may prudently be committed. These procedures also apply to the Authority's prudential indicators covering the maximum principal sums invested.

The Treasurer will maintain a counterparty list in compliance with the following criteria and will revise the criteria and submit them to the Authority for approval as necessary. These criteria are separate to those which choose Specified and Non-Specified investments, as they provide an overall pool of counterparties considered high quality that the Authority may use, rather than defining what its investments are.

The rating criteria use the **lowest common denominator** method of selecting counterparties and applying limits. This means that the application of the Authority's minimum criteria will

apply to the lowest available rating for any institution. For instance if an institution is rated by two agencies, one meets the Authority's criteria, the other does not, the institution will fall outside of the lending criteria. This is in compliance with a CIPFA Treasury Management Panel recommendation in March 2009 and the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice.

Credit rating information is supplied by our treasury consultants on all active counterparties that comply with the criteria below. Any counterparty failing to meet the criteria would be omitted from the counterparty (dealing) list. Any rating changes, rating watches (notification of a likely change), rating outlooks (notification of a possible longer-term change) are provided to officers almost immediately after they occur and this information is considered before dealing. For instance, a negative rating watch applying to a counterparty at the minimum Authority criteria will be suspended from use, with all others being reviewed in light of market conditions.

## **2.4 Specified Investments**

Specified Investments are defined as those satisfying the following conditions:

- a) Denominated in sterling
- b) To be repaid or redeemed within 12 months of the date on which the investment was made
- c) Do not involve the acquisition of share capital or loan capital in any body corporate
- d) Are made with the UK Government, local authorities, parish councils, community councils, housing associations or with a body or in an investment scheme which has been awarded a high credit rating by a credit agency.

The criteria for providing a pool of high-quality investment counterparties are:

### **Banks 1 - Good Credit Quality**

The Authority will only use banks which:

- (a) Are UK banks; and/or
- (b) Are non-UK and domiciled in a country which has a minimum Sovereign long-term rating of AAA;
- (c) And have, as a minimum, the following Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poors credit ratings (where rated):
  - i. Short Term – F1
  - ii. Long Term – A
  - iii. Individual / Financial Strength – C- (Fitch / Moody's only)
  - iv. Support – 3 (Fitch only)

### **Banks 2 - Guaranteed Banks with suitable Sovereign Support**

In addition, the Authority will use banks whose ratings fall below the criteria specified above if all of the following conditions are met:

- (a) wholesale deposits in the bank are covered by a government guarantee;
- (b) the government providing the guarantee is rated "AAA" by all three major rating agencies (Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poors); and
- (c) the Authority's investments with the bank are limited to amounts and maturities within the terms of the stipulated guarantee.

### **Banks 3 - Eligible Institutions**

The Authority is an eligible institution for the HM Treasury Credit Guarantee Scheme initially announced on 13 October 2008, with the necessary short and long-term ratings required in Banks 1 above. These institutions have been subject to suitability checks before inclusion and have access to HM Treasury liquidity if needed.

**Banks 4 - The Authority's own banker** for transactional purposes if the bank falls below the above criteria although in this case balances will be minimised in both monetary size and time.

### **Building Societies**

The Authority will use all Societies which meet the ratings for banks outlined above.

### **Money Market Funds – AAA**

**UK Government** (including gilts and the Debt Management Account Deposit Facility (DMADF))

### **Other Local Authorities, Parish Councils, Community Councils, Housing Associations**

## **2.5 Non - Specified Investments**

Non-Specified investments are those not meeting the definition in the Specified Investments section above. It is proposed that during 2019/20, the Authority will not invest in Non-Specified Investments, including those to be repaid or redeemed more than 12 months from the date on which the investment was made.

## **2.6 Use of additional information other than credit ratings**

Additional requirements under the Code of Practice now require the Authority to supplement credit rating information. Whilst the above criteria rely primarily on the application of credit ratings to provide a pool of appropriate counterparties for officers to use, additional operational market information will be applied before making any specific investment decision from the agreed pool of counterparties. This additional market information (for example credit default swaps, negative rating watches/ outlooks) will be applied to compare the relative security of differing investment counterparties.

## **2.7 Time and Monetary Limits applying to Investments**

The time and monetary limits for institutions on the Authority's Counterparty List are set out in Table 23 below:

**Table 23: Time and Monetary Limits of Investments**

	<b>Fitch (or equivalent)</b>	<b>Money Limit</b>	<b>Time Limit</b>
Limit 1 Category	AAA	£4m	1 year
Money Market Funds	AAA	£4m	1 year
Limit 2 Category	AA	£4m	1 year
Eligible Institutions	AA	£4m	1 year
Limit 3 Category	A	£1m	3 months
Eligible Institutions	A	£1m	3 months
UK Government		unlimited	1 year
Other Local Authorities		£2m	1 year

Due to the uncertainty in the financial markets it is recommended that the Investment Strategy is approved on a similar approach to previous years which will provide officers with the flexibility to deal with any unexpected occurrences. Officers will restrict the pool of available counterparties from these criteria to safer instruments and institutions. Currently this involves the use of the UK Government Debt Management Account Deposit Facility, AAA rated Money Market Funds and institutions with higher credit ratings than those outlined in the investment strategy or which are provided support from the Government. Investments are being maintained short term to also improve the security of investments.

## **2.8 Sensitivity to Interest Rate Movements**

Whilst most of the risks facing the treasury management service are addressed elsewhere in this report (credit risk, liquidity risk, market risk, maturity profile risk), the impact of interest rate risk is discussed but not quantified.

The estimated impact of a 1% increase or decrease in interest rates to the estimated treasury management income for the Authority in 2019/20 is an increase or decrease of £39,000.

## **3. External Managers (Other than those relating to the Pension Fund)**

The Authority may, upon the recommendations of the Treasurer, appoint one or more external managers to manage the short-term investment of surplus Authority money. Any such managers appointed are to be bound by this Treasury Management Policy Statement.

## **SECTION L**

### **SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

Set out below is a summary of the recommendations on which Members' views are sought.

#### **SECTION B – Consultation (page 3)**

That Members take into account the views of those consulted as they consider the budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan proposals.

#### **SECTION C – Local Government Finance Settlement (page 5)**

That the Authority notes the 2019/20 settlement funding assessment and the uncertainty around the funding position from 2020/21 onwards.

#### **SECTION D – Efficiency Plan (page 8)**

That the Authority notes the progress made in achieving the savings set out in the Efficiency Plan

#### **SECTION E – Reserves Strategy (page 12)**

That the Authority agrees to the policy for reserves, that the Authority will:

- Set aside sufficient sums in earmarked reserves as it considers prudent to do so.
- Aim to maintain a general reserve of 5% of the net expenditure; currently £1.425m.

#### **SECTION F – Medium-Term Financial Plan (page 17)**

That the Authority:

- (a) Agrees the Medium-Term Financial Plan.
- (b) Notes the Treasurer's comments on the robustness of the estimates, the adequacy of reserves and the risks in the budget, as set out in the separate report under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003.

#### **SECTION G – Revenue Budget (page 18)**

That the Authority adopts the following resolutions:

- (a) That the revised revenue budget for 2018/19, as set out in Appendix B be approved;
- (b) That the Treasurer be authorised to make any proper accounting transactions that would be in the interests of the Authority in relation to the accounts for 2018/19.
- (c) That the revenue budget for 2019/20, as set out in Appendix B be approved.

## **SECTION H – Capital Strategy (page 22)**

That the Authority approves the revised capital budget for 2018/19 and the capital budgets for 2019/20 to 2022/23.

## **SECTION I – Fire Authority Council Tax Requirement (page 25)**

That Members determine the level of Council Tax for 2019/20 based on the Net Expenditure of £28,409,200. Based on the recommendation of the Finance Committee, it is recommended for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020:

- (i) That the 'council tax base' for the whole of the Authority's area be £172,612.50
- (ii) That there be no Authority expenses relating to a part only of the Authority's area
- (iii) That the Authority increases Council Tax by 2.95% to £103.50 for a Band D property
- (iv) That the Net Expenditure be £28,409,200 and that, (after taking into account revenue support grant of £3,424,035 business rates income of £1,408,885, top up grant of £5,599,886, and a surplus on the collection fund of £111,000, precepts totalling £17,865,393.75 be issued to Durham County Council and Darlington Borough Council.

## **SECTION J – Prudential Code (page 30)**

- (a) That the Authority notes the prudential indicators.
- (b) That the Authority approves the MRP Statement.
- (c) That the Authority approves the following limits for external debt in 2019/20:
  - (i) Authorised Limit of £11.701m
  - (ii) Operational Boundary of £10.637m

## **SECTION K – Treasury Management (page 32)**

- (a) That the Authority formally adopts the key recommendations of the CIPFA code.
- (b) That the Authority notes the Annual Treasury Management Strategy.
- (c) That the Authority sets an upper limit on its fixed interest rate exposures for 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22 of 100% of its net outstanding principal sum.

- (d) That the Authority sets an upper limit on its variable interest rate exposures for 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22 of 30% of its net outstanding principal sums.



**COUNTY DURHAM AND DARLINGTON  
FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY  
EFFICIENCY PLAN 2016/17 – 2019/20**



Safest People, Safest Places

County Durham and Darlington  
**Fire and Rescue Authority**



## BACKGROUND

1. In the face of an ongoing reduction in government funding, County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority remains committed to protecting front line services to the public ensuring that there is no increase in risk and no change to emergency response standards. The Authority's funding from central government reduced by £4.9M during the period 2010/11 to 2015/16. Over the same period the Authority's net revenue budget reduced by £2.7M ignoring the effects of pay awards and inflation, meaning that the real reduction is significantly more than this. In spite of the challenging financial circumstances, the Authority has been successful in achieving savings through its Service Transformation Programme which has enabled it to balance the budget whilst at the same time protecting front line services.
2. In order to balance the budget the Authority has taken a number of difficult decisions many of which have directly impacted on staff. We believe our crewing arrangements and shift systems are now amongst the most efficient in the country. We also have a very lean support staff and management structure and we have worked hard to help staff understand the reasons behind changes and how they can make a contribution by changing working practices and taking on new work to improve efficiency.
3. The Authority's approach to Service Transformation is based on the principle of providing value for money to local taxpayers. The Service Transformation Programme and the efficiencies that have been identified as part of the budget setting process are focused on reducing cost without increasing the level of risk in local communities.
4. The Authority has set a balanced budget for the current year (2016/17) and needs to identify a further £1.5M of savings during the period 2017/18 to 2019/20. Work is ongoing to identify additional savings through the service transformation programme and this Efficiency Plan sets out how the Authority intends to make the savings required in order to produce a balanced budget over the medium term.

## STRATEGIC PLAN

5. The Authority's strategy for the provision of fire and rescue services is driven by the approved Strategic Plan which has been designed to comply with the Government's guidance in relation to the preparation of integrated risk management plans. A link to the Strategic Plan 2015/16 to 2017/18 is provided below together with a link to the Integrated Risk Management Plan Consultation document for 2016/17:

[https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/IMRP\\_2015\\_0.pdf](https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/IMRP_2015_0.pdf)

[https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/IRMP-consultation\\_2016-2017\\_v9.pdf](https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/IRMP-consultation_2016-2017_v9.pdf)

## MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

6. The Authority has agreed in principle to accept the Government's offer of a four year funding settlement however this will still result in a significant reduction in Government funding (19%) over the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) period. The MTFP set out in Table 1 below outlines the financial position of the Authority over the next 4 years:

**Table 1: Medium Term Financial Plan 2016/17 to 2019/20**

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
	£M	£M	£M	£M
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>28.609</b>	<b>28.183</b>	<b>28.774</b>	<b>29.062</b>
Total Government Funding	10.945	9.676	9.134	8.884
Local Non Domestic Rates	1.479	1.508	1.552	1.602
Council tax	15.861	16.254	16.646	17.047
Surplus on Collection Fund	0.324	0	0	0
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>28.609</b>	<b>27.438</b>	<b>27.332</b>	<b>27.533</b>
<b>Shortfall</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-0.745</b>	<b>-1.442</b>	<b>-1.529</b>

A link to the Authority's detailed 2016/17 budget and MTFP is provided below:

<https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/16-17%20budget%20book.pdf>

### MTFP Assumptions

7. A number of assumptions have been made when preparing the MTFP which are set out in Table 2 below. At this stage the assumptions are believed to be prudent based upon the information that is available.

**Table 2: MTFP Assumptions**

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
<b>Income Assumptions</b>				
<b>Settlement Funding</b>	<b>-7.05%</b>	<b>-9.30%</b>	<b>-4.39%</b>	<b>-1.87%</b>
<b>Council Tax Base</b>	<b>+2.50%</b>	<b>+0.50%</b>	<b>+0.50%</b>	<b>+0.50%</b>
<b>Council Tax Level</b>	<b>+1.90%</b>	<b>+1.90%</b>	<b>+1.90%</b>	<b>+1.90%</b>
<b>Expenditure Assumptions</b>				
<b>Pay Awards</b>	<b>+1.0%</b>	<b>+1.0%</b>	<b>+1.0%</b>	<b>+1.0%</b>
<b>Inflation</b>	<b>+1.0%</b>	<b>+1.0%</b>	<b>+1.0%</b>	<b>+1.0%</b>
<b>Pensions Costs</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0.00%</b>
<b>NI Changes</b>	<b>+3.00%</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0.00%</b>

8. The assumptions relating to grant cuts beyond 2016/17 are based upon the four-year funding figures provided as part of the settlement.
9. The Authority's share of council tax collection fund surplus (the excess council tax collected over that which was budgeted to collect) amounts to £324,000 in 2016/17. No surplus or deficit has been incorporated into the plan for future years.

### Other Budget Pressures

10. The Government Actuary's Department is carrying out a valuation of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme during 2016/17 which could potentially lead to an increase in the employer

contribution rate from 2017/18. This has not been factored into the MTFP at this stage as there is no clear indication of the impact (if any) on the contribution rate going forward.

## EFFICIENCY SAVINGS

### Savings 2016/17

11. In order to arrive at a balanced budget for 2016/17 the following efficiency savings totalling £1.948M were incorporated into the 2016/17 budget:

**Table 3: Efficiency Savings for Implementation in 2016/17**

Saving	2016/17 £M	RAG Rating
Establishment level at Durham and Bishop Auckland (alternative to full RDS Provision at Spennymoor)	0.270	
Alternative Staffing of Darlington ALP	0.270	
Flexi Officer Review	0.240	
Reduction in Debt Repayments and Interest	0.241	
Reduction in FPS Employer Contributions	0.169	
Reduction to Operational Staffing Pool	0.150	
Senior Leadership Team Restructure	0.140	
Base Budget Review	0.100	
Service Transformation Phase 1	0.092	
Alternative Provision of Officer's Cars	0.079	
Income Generation	0.074	
Reduction in Vehicle Running Costs	0.060	
Reduction in Vehicle Fleet	0.055	
National Insurance Contribution Band Changes	0.008	
	<b>1.948</b>	

12. Based upon the latest available information, the Authority is on track to deliver all of the above savings in 2016/17.

### Potential Savings 2016/17 to 2019/20

13. The MTFP set out in Table 1 above shows a shortfall in available funding of £1.529M over the plan period. In order to produce a balanced budget, further efficiency savings have been identified through the Authority's Service Transformation Programme. The following potential savings have been identified for implementation during the period 2016/17 to 2019/20:

**Table 4: Potential Savings 2016/17 to 2019/20**

Potential Saving	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
	£M	£M	£M	£M
<b>Staffing</b>				
Review of Control	0	0.230	0.230	0.230
Restructure of Strategic & Middle Managers	0	0.075	0.075	0.075
Restructure of Corporate Services	0	0.075	0.075	0.075
<b>Capital Financing</b>				
Reduction in Debt Repayments & Interest	0	0.095	0.300	0.300
<b>Collaboration</b>				
Collaboration initiatives with the Police and other partners	0	0.250	0.250	0.250
<b>Income Generation</b>				
Trading Arms Surplus	0.025	0.050	0.075	0.100
<b>Total Potential Savings</b>	<b>0.025</b>	<b>0.775</b>	<b>1.005</b>	<b>1.030</b>
<b>MTFP Deficit</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-0.745</b>	<b>-1.442</b>	<b>-1.529</b>
<b>Revised MTFP Surplus / Deficit (-)</b>	<b>0.025</b>	<b>0.030</b>	<b>-0.437</b>	<b>-0.499</b>

14. Assuming all of the above savings are achieved, the Authority will still need to identify a further £0.5M of savings in order to set a balanced budget each year. Work is ongoing through the service transformation process to identify further savings, the outcome of which will be considered later this year during the preparation of the 2017/18 budget and revised MTFP.
15. At this stage it is envisaged that all of the potential savings identified are achievable. The key risks and mitigation strategies in relation to each of the potential savings are set out in Table 5 below:

**Table 5: Potential Savings – Key Risks and Mitigation Strategies**

Potential Saving	Key Risks	Mitigation	RAG Rating
Staffing	Staff numbers not sufficient to meet operational needs.	Introduction of a revised staffing model following a robust review of operational requirements. This has now been agreed by elected members and the unions.	
Capital Financing	Insufficient reserves and/or borrowing headroom to fund future capital programme.	Agreed reserves strategy in place. Robust process in place for scrutiny of all bids for future capital expenditure.	
Collaboration	Failure to generate income or deliver operating efficiency savings.	Collaboration statement of intent in place with Durham Constabulary for shared use of facilities. Progress is monitored via a Strategic Board chaired by the PCC and Chair of the Fire Authority. Positive ongoing negotiations at a senior level with NEAS to extend EMR response on a cost recovery basis.	
Income Generation	Trading Arms fail to generate a surplus.	Detailed business plans and income targets in place for the trading arms. Financial position monitored by management and the Board on an ongoing basis.	

16. The Authority's External Auditor has recently issued an unqualified Value for Money conclusion following the 2015/16 audit stating:

*'The Authority has an excellent track record of delivering planned savings whilst minimising the impact on service delivery. In 2015/16 savings targets were delivered with an additional £700K underspend against budget after taking into account contributions to reserves. The Authority has already identified a number of potential savings in future years and the gap in the medium-term financial plan has reduced to circa £0.5m.'*

*'Our overall conclusion is that in all significant respects the Authority had in place proper arrangements to ensure it took properly informed decisions and deployed its available resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes. Overall the Authority has responded well to the financial pressure it has faced, at a time of unprecedented reductions in public sector spending and continues to have a strong record of delivering savings and keeping within budget.'*

A link to the 2015/16 Audit Completion Report can be found here:

<https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/CDD%20FRA%20Audit%20Completion%20Report%202015-16%20%28version%20with%20follow%20up%20report%29.pdf>

17. The Authority is committed to protecting front line services and have agreed that a reduction in the number of front-line appliances and/or fire stations will only be considered as a last resort when all other options for savings have been exhausted. Should the Authority need to reduce front line service provision in order to balance the budget, the retirement profile of operational staff would allow further staffing reductions to be made without requiring compulsory redundancies.

## **COLLABORATION**

18. The Authority has a strong track record of collaboration with partners and has secured Government funding to progress a number of high-profile collaborative projects including:
- The building of the first quad station in the country at Barnard Castle which, when complete, will provide a joint facility for the Fire, Police, Ambulance and Mountain Rescue services.
  - A joint facility with the Police at our Belmont Training Centre for incident command training.
  - The provision of Community Safety Tri Responders at Stanhope where staff work for the Fire, Police and Ambulance services according to demand.
19. In order to maximise the use of the Authority's buildings, a number of fire stations are shared with either the Police and/or the Ambulance Service. Work is also ongoing to explore opportunities for collaboration with a number of other partners to secure further efficiencies to assist in protecting front line service provision.
20. The Service is taking an innovative approach working collaboratively with councils, the police, health providers and charities to meet changing community safety needs. This is illustrated in a short video 'Beyond Blue Lights' produced for the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) conference in September 2016. A link to the Beyond Blue Lights video can be found here:
- <https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/beyond-blue-lights-video>
21. The Authority has signed a Statement of Intent with Durham Constabulary which sets out our intention to work more closely together to enhance co-operation and collaboration. A link to the Statement of Intent can be found here:
- <https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/Durham-Police-and-Fire-Collaboration-Statement-of-Intent.pdf>
22. With regard to procurement, the Authority endeavours to ensure that a collaborative approach is taken on a national and regional basis for the purchase of major items of fire service specific items, such as vehicles, equipment and key services. Procurement of uniform and firefighting PPE has been undertaken as part of a regional collaboration for over

5 years. The last five fire appliances were procured in partnership with 2 other FRS that this Service proactively sought out to establish.

23. The Service has also been nominated as the category sponsor for the fleet category of the Fire Commercial Reform Programme supported by the Chief Fire Officers Association. Wherever possible all other items of a non-fire service nature are purchased from public sector consortia arrangements, taking account of the needs of the service and the aim of ensuring value for money.

## **FLEXIBLE WORKING**

24. County Durham and Darlington is served by 27 front line fire appliances and 16 specialist vehicles based at 15 fire stations. More than 55% of our fire appliances are crewed by on-call (retained) firefighters who are generally located in rural communities, small towns and villages. They also provide the second or third appliance at a number of stations in more urban areas.
25. By continually reviewing our working practices and implementing more efficient ways of working, the Service has been able to protect front line services whilst reducing the cost to the taxpayer. Since 2002/03, despite maintaining the same number of fire appliances and actually increasing the number of specialist vehicles to meet the increasingly diverse range of incidents we attend, the number of wholetime firefighters employed has reduced by 25%, from 411 to 309. Over the same period the proportion of on-call (retained) firefighters employed has increased from 29% to 35% of the total operational workforce.
26. Mixed crewing of fire appliances is well established across the service with retained firefighters providing cover on wholetime appliances through RDS Detachments and wholetime firefighters providing cover on RDS appliances. A number of staff provide wholetime/retained cover and the service make use of both RDS and wholetime staff in roles such as Associate Trainers.
27. The Service staffing model is under continuous review and significant changes in operational working practices have been implemented in recent years to reflect modern working practices. This includes changes to the wholetime shift system to increase productive time, the introduction of a day crewing plus staffing model at 2 stations, the introduction of tri-service responders at Stanhope and the introduction of operational cover contracts and additional voluntary hours arrangements across both the retained and wholetime workforce. An annualised hours duty system has been in place for wholetime staff since 2009 and special appliances are dual crewed by wholetime staff or crewed by RDS staff.
28. The Service currently employs 5 business administration apprentices and 2 apprentice mechanics. Work is underway to develop an apprenticeship scheme for operational firefighters which will offer a comprehensive programme of learning and development on which to build a skilled and flexible workforce aligned to the Service's culture and values.

## **PERFORMANCE INFORMATION**

29. Performance is monitored by management on an on-going basis and considered in detail by elected members at the end of each quarter. A comprehensive suite of performance



indicators (PI's) are employed to measure both operational and corporate performance and targets are set with the aim of achieving continuous improvement.

30. During 2015/16, 72% of the strategic PI's met or exceeded their target level and 60% either maintained or improved when compared to the previous year's performance.
31. In 2015/16 the Service responded to 1,343 emergency medical response (EMR) incidents on behalf of the ambulance service as part of a national trial.
32. By focusing our resources on reducing risk in our communities, the number of total incidents attended by the Service has reduced by almost 47% from 11,397 in 2002/03 to 6,053 in 2015/16 (excluding EMR incidents).
33. The Authority commits to publication of transparent performance information. This includes but is not limited to:
  - Budget reports
  - Operational performance reports
  - Statement of Accounts
  - Annual Governance Statement
  - Statement of Assurance
  - Information required by the prevailing Local Government Transparency Code

A link to our financial and performance information can be found here:

<https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/about>

## **RESERVES STRATEGY**

34. In order to assist with the management of the budget over the medium term, the Authority has agreed to adopt a strategy which involves the prudent use of reserves to balance the budget. This approach provides the Authority with flexibility to fully consider its options for implementing savings over the medium term.
35. The reserves strategy is set out in Table 6 below and assumes that the MTFP deficits are fully funded from a contribution from reserves over the MTFP period. This is considered a worst case scenario as the Authority will need to agree further savings options for implementation over the MTFP period which, when implemented, will reduce the requirement for reserves to be used to balance the budget.

**Table 6: Reserves Strategy 2016/17 to 2019/20**

<b>Reserve</b>	<b>2016/17 £m</b>	<b>2017/18 £m</b>	<b>2018/19 £m</b>	<b>2019/20 £m</b>
<b>General Reserve</b>	<b>2.824</b>	<b>2.824</b>	<b>2.824</b>	<b>2.824</b>
<b>Modernisation Reserve</b>				
Opening Balance	2.500	1.878	1.908	1.471
Use of Reserve - MTFP	0.025	0.030	-0.437	-0.499
Redundancy Payments	-0.647			
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>1.878</b>	<b>1.908</b>	<b>1.471</b>	<b>0.972</b>
<b>Capital Modernisation Reserve</b>				
Opening Balance	3.056			
Use of Reserve	-3.056			
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>0</b>			
<b>Other Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>1.543</b>	<b>1.543</b>	<b>1.543</b>	<b>1.543</b>
<b>TOTAL RESERVES</b>	<b>6.245</b>	<b>6.275</b>	<b>5.838</b>	<b>5.339</b>

**PROGRESS OF THE EFFICIENCY PLAN**

36. The Authority is committed to publishing an annual report on the progress of our Efficiency Plan. This will be published on an annual basis on our website alongside our Statement of Assurance.

**APPENDIX B**

**COUNTY DURHAM AND DARLINGTON FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**REVENUE BUDGET**

<b>Original Estimate 2018/19</b>	<b>Revised Estimate 2018/19</b>	<b>Budget Heading</b>	<b>Original Estimate 2019/20</b>
£	£		£
18,051,365	17,992,605	<b>Employees</b>	18,386,608
2,462,486	2,403,810	Salaries and Wages	3,692,889
551,000	551,000	Pension Contributions	559,000
477,136	477,136	Ill Health Charges	456,349
		Other	
<b>21,541,987</b>	<b>21,424,551</b>	<b>Total Employees Costs</b>	<b>23,094,846</b>
2,624,549	2,624,549	<b>Premises</b>	2,729,646
598,504	598,504	<b>Transport</b>	616,621
4,096,345	4,096,345	<b>Supplies &amp; Services</b>	4,261,384
1,544,089	1,544,089	<b>Capital Financing</b>	1,221,227
335,274	452,710	<b>Contingencies</b>	418,306
2,570,333	2,582,567	<b>Capital Charges</b>	2,800,033
<b>33,311,081</b>	<b>33,323,315</b>	<b>GROSS EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>35,142,063</b>
-1,971,213	-1,971,213	<b>Income</b>	-3,832,501
-262,367	-262,367	<b>Contribution from Reserve</b>	-100,329
-2,570,333	-2,582,567	<b>Reversal of Capital Charges</b>	-2,800,033
<b>28,507,168</b>	<b>28,507,168</b>	<b>NET EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>28,409,200</b>

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Safest People, Safest Places

County Durham and Darlington  
Fire and Rescue Authority



## COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

22 FEBRUARY 2019

### CHARGING FOR UNWANTED FIRE SIGNALS TRIAL

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## REPORT OF AREA MANAGER COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT

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### Purpose of the report

1. This report proposes to introduce a 12-month trial to charge for repeated Unwanted Fire Signals (UwFS) in premises that the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO) applies to. It also highlights the changes to OP/1/24 Service Response to Automatic Fire Alarm Systems and other arrangements to enable a trial.

### Background

2. County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS) categorise calls to a fire, where on attendance, there is found to be no fire as 'False Alarms'. These calls include:
  - calls from individuals which are made with genuine intention but turned out to be incorrect are recorded as a 'false alarm - good intent';
  - calls from individuals deliberately providing false information are recorded as 'false alarm – malicious';
  - automatic fire alarm and detection systems may be activated deliberately by a person for either good intent or malicious reasons, however, where alarms operate due to a mechanical or electrical fault, or false activation by non-fire conditions e.g. cooking fumes, dust, cigarette smoke etc. and the fire service attend, these are recorded as 'Unwanted Fire Signals' (UwFS).
3. In 2017/18 CDDFRS received a total of 751 UwFS calls to non-domestic premises which equates to 9.4% of all incidents attended by the Service that year, these included factories, offices, shops, hospitals and student accommodation.
4. The Localism Act 2011 introduced amendments to the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 which enabled a Fire Authority to recover costs for attending repeated UwFSs.
5. CDDFRS recognises the value of fire detection in protecting people from fire and reducing the numbers of fire deaths and injuries. CDDFRS's objectives through this cost recovery process would be to encourage correct use and management of these systems. To ensure that those responsible have a suitable system with appropriate management processes in place and reduce the number of UwFS caused by these systems.

6. Additionally, where there is a persistent concern with automatic fire detection systems generating UwFS and where it is appropriate to do so, ensure that filtering is applied to prevent unnecessary calls being made to CDDFRS.
7. Fire alarms which actuate when there is no fire can be an indication of poor fire safety management in the premises, those false alarms that result in an attendance by CDDFRS have a significant impact on the availability of operational resources.
8. A considerable amount of work has been carried out in relation to UwFS previously and a downward trend in CDDFRS attendance to these incidents has been seen in previous years, but this appears to have plateaued. A large amount of new student accommodation has been built in Durham City and this appears to be one area that is having a detrimental effect on the number of UwFS that CDDFRS are attending.
9. The inclusion of suitable automatic fire detection in certain circumstances within the Building Regulations and the requirements imposed on certain types of premises under fire safety legislation means that the potential for false alarms will continue to increase year on year. Therefore, there must be a robust procedure in place to ensure that sites giving rise to persistent UwFS are identified and remedial action taken if CDDFRS are to continue driving down the number of UwFS received each year.

#### **Power to introduce cost recovery for UwFS**

10. The legal basis for charging comes from the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (FRSA) as amended by the Localism Act 2011.
11. The Fire Authority has no legal power to make a profit from any charges. FRSA (amended) states;

*“Section 18A Charging by authorities,*

*(5) In setting the amount of a charge under subsection (1), a fire and rescue authority must secure that, taking one financial year with another, the authority’s income from charges does not exceed the cost to the authority of taking the action for which the charges are imposed.”*

12. The Localism Act also introduced a new power into the FRSA, which allows the Fire Authority to charge for attendance at unwanted fire signals due to an automatic fire alarm (AFA). The FRSA (amended) states:

*“Section 18C Cases where a charge may be made for responding to report of fire etc*

*(3) This section applies to a report of fire if*

- (a) the report is of fire at premises that are not domestic premises,*
- (b) the report is false,*
- (c) the report is made as a direct or indirect result of warning equipment having malfunctioned or been misinstalled, and*
- (d) there is a persistent problem with false reports of fire at the premises that are made as a direct or indirect result of warning equipment under common control having malfunctioned or been misinstalled.*

(5) In subsection (3)

*“domestic premises” means premises occupied as a private dwelling (including any garden, yard, garage, outhouse or other appurtenance of such premises which is not used in common by the occupants of more than one such dwelling);*

*“warning equipment” means equipment installed for the purpose of*

*(a) detecting fire, or*

*(b) raising the alarm, or enabling the alarm to be raised, in the event of fire.”*

### **Amendments to OP/1/24**

13. To enable a trial to commence, the Service’s operations policy (OP/1/24) has been reviewed and amended to include brief details in section 3 of how the charge for UwFS will be applied, in section 4 the Authority’s legal powers to charge for UwFS and responsibilities within the Service and in section 5 the right to appeal a charge.
14. The amended policy is attached as Appendix A.

### **Application of cost recovery**

15. Details of the new policy for charging for UwFS would be published on the Service website and promoted via social media to inform businesses of the change in policy.
16. The charge for attending an UwFS will be based on the rate within CDDFRS for charging for special services, which is currently £291 per appliance, per hour or part thereof. The special service charge is reviewed regularly by the Service and is based on recovering salary costs for the crew and other associated costs such as fuel and wear and tear to the vehicle.
17. Cost recovery could be applied to all Non-Domestic premises where the Fire Safety Order (FSO) applies, these being:
  - all workplaces and commercial premises;
  - all premises the public have access to;
  - the common areas of multi-occupied residential buildings.
18. The following alarm actuation causes will not generate a charge under the cost recovery process:
  - false alarm incidents resulting from the testing of the system;
  - false alarm incidents resulting from the activation of a break-glass call point.
19. To allow time for improvement, it is proposed that cost recovery could be applied to a premises on the third and any subsequent UwFS generated over a rolling 12-month period.
20. Premises would receive a letter after one UwFS in a rolling 12-month period stating the policy of charging from the third UwFS. Following a second UwFS a follow up letter would be sent to inform the premises that the next UwFS will incur a charge.

21. Discussions would take place with the Area Manager for Emergency Response regarding the possibility of reducing the pre-determined attendance (PDA) for all subsequent automatic fire alarms (AFA) calls in the rolling 12-month period.
22. UwFS incidents would be attributed to the unique property reference number (UPRN) on the Service's community fire risk management information system (CFRMIS) ensuring that it corresponds with one premises only. If the premises have multiple buildings connected to one alarm system this would be classed as one building for the process of charging for UwFS.
23. If the policy had been applied in the year 2017/18 there would have been 135 chargeable incidents for multiple UwFS resulting in up to £39,285 costs being recovered by the Authority.

#### **Other arrangements to implement the trial**

24. Before the Fire Authority begins to charge for UwFS, the Localism Act requires the Authority to consult any persons the Authority considers appropriate. If the trial is approved by the Authority, consultation will take place during March 2019 with businesses who are most likely to be affected by the introduction of this policy, such as education establishments and landlords of student accommodation. Taking into consideration the outcome of the consultation, the trial could commence on 1 April 2019.
25. Information will be published on the Service website and via social media to raise awareness and standard letters will be created on CFRMIS to enable the process of warning the Responsible Person and charging to be streamlined. The current UwFS form handed to the Responsible Person or their representative at the premises by operational crews will be revised to include charging information

#### **Implications to the Fire Authority**

26. There is a risk that charging for these types of incidents could bring criticism that the Service is penalising businesses for genuine mistakes, but evidence has shown that in June 2018, Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service introduced a policy to charge for attending repeated UwFS which has been positively received by fire safety officers in local businesses. With the inclusion of an appeals procedure and continued engagement with local businesses throughout the trial the Service feels confident this will have a positive impact in reducing risk and improving the management of fire safety in premises.

#### **Recommendations**

27. CFA members are requested to:
  - a) **agree** to delegate authority to the Chief Fire Officer to take into consideration the outcome of the consultation process and commence a trial from 1 April 2019 for a 12-month period;
  - b) **agree** to receive further reports as the trial progresses.

Keith Wanley, Area Manager, 0191 3755630





## Service Policy

### No. OP/1/24

## Service Response to Automatic Fire Alarm Systems

### Document Overview

The following areas are covered by this document:

- Introduction
- Terminology
- Policy Statement
- Responsibilities
- Right to Appeal UwFS Charges
- Audit and Monitoring
- Further Documents

### Sign-off process

	Policy	Procedure	Info note	Date
Section head	✓			
Rep bodies				
SMT				
DCFO / ACFO				
SLT / CFA (if applicable)				
Assurance admin				

### Equalities impact assessment

Screening	✓	Full	
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<b>FOI exemption required</b>	Yes		Reason:
	No	✓	

<b>Security level</b>	Restricted	
	Unrestricted	✓

<b>Review date</b>	January 2023
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## Document control

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Author</b>
001	01/02/2013	Pete McDermott
<b>Reason for change</b>		
New policy		

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Author</b>
002	10/01/2019	Chris Hockaday
<b>Reason for change</b>		
Amended to include cost recovering option for UwFS.		

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Traditionally the Fire and Rescue Service have responded to automatic fire alarm calls (AFA) by sending a predetermined response to every activation. In 2005 the Service experienced 2615 calls to AFAs, this equated to approx. 20% of all incidents attended by the Service that year. Through the efforts of the fire safety section, operational crews and the commercial sector these figures were reduced in 2012 to 1036 calls (14.7%). Following this, County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS) decided to introduce a policy whereby fire appliances respond to commercial or non-domestic premises that experience AFAs based on a risk assessed approach.
- 1.2 CDDFRS are committed to improving the service that the public within County Durham and Darlington receive and in-line with the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 CDDFRS will continue to provide advice to the commercial sector regarding how to reduce false alarms and unwanted fire signals. CDDFRS will take every opportunity to proactively promote 'best practice' during fire safety visits.

## **2. TERMINOLOGY**

To understand fully the problems experienced by both the fire and rescue service and the commercial sector it is important that all stakeholders use and understand our terminology. The National Fire Chiefs Council use the following definitions:

- AFA – Automatic fire alarm (AFAs indicate the plural form);
- ARC - Alarm Receiving Centre. A continuously staffed remote centre to which information concerning the status of one or more systems is reported;
- FAMO – Fire Alarm Monitoring Organisation. A combined term developed to include all remote fire alarm monitoring organisations e.g. ARC or Telecare Service Provider (TSP);
- False Alarm – A fire alarm signal resulting from a cause or causes other than a fire, in which a system has responded, either as designed or as the technology can be reasonably expected to respond to any of the following;

- A fire like phenomenon or environmental influence (e.g. smoke from a nearby bonfire dust or insects, processes that produce smoke or flame or environmental effects that can render certain types of detector unstable, such as rapid air flow);
  - Accidental damage;
  - Inappropriate human activity (e.g. operation of a system for test or maintenance purposes without prior warning to building occupants and/or a FAMO);
  - Equipment false alarms, in which the fire alarm has resulted from a fault in the system.
- TSP – Telecare Service Provider. A service that enables people, especially older and more vulnerable individuals, to live independently in their own home. It can be a simple community alarm service, able to respond in an emergency and provide regular contact by telephone. It can include detectors or monitors such as motion or falls and fire and gas that trigger a warning to a response centre staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, e.g. Carelink, Redcare, Care Connect;
  - UwFS – A fire alarm actuation due to a mechanical or electrical fault, or false activation by non-fire conditions (e.g. cooking fumes, dust, cigarette smoke etc) where the Fire Service is summoned;
  - CDDFRS also use the term ANT (Alarm Not Attended) which refers to an UwFS that the Fire Service did not attend.

### **3. POLICY STATEMENT**

3.1 The Service will provide a response to AFAs as set out below,

- (a) Between 09:00 and 17:00 Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays) the Service will not attend AFAs to low and medium risk premises unless accompanied by a confirmation that there is an actual fire;
- (b) High risk, special risk and domestic properties will receive a response.

- 3.2 Examples of High-risk properties include COMAH sites, factories with dangerous processes, any premises with a 'sleeping' risk for example hospitals, care homes, hotels, halls of residence or HMO (houses in multiple occupation).
- 3.3 Special risk properties will include those buildings that have a heritage factor for example Durham Cathedral, Auckland Castle or Darlington Crown Street library. Special risk also includes those premises that contain equipment or data that is of significant importance to the Nation or Region.
- 3.4 The level of risk designated for each premise will be documented within the fire risk assessment for that premises and will include the appropriate emergency action plan.
- 3.5 The Service will provide advice to the business community (in-line with resources available) to ensure that all non-domestic premises are aware of their responsibilities under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- 3.6 In order to minimise the impact from UwFS the Service will send a letter to each premises that have an UwFS in the first instance. This letter will state that a charge will be made upon the third activation within a rolling 12-month period and for any subsequent activation within the rolling 12-month period. The attending operational crew will also leave an UwFS form at the premises which will outline the procedure for charging.
- 3.7 The charge referred to in 3.6 above will provide cost recovery and will be equal to the Service charge for a special service incident.

#### **4. RESPONSIBILITIES**

##### 4.1 Legal responsibilities and powers:

- (a) Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 Part 2 Section 6 (1) and (2) places a responsibility on the Service to promote fire safety and provide advice to the County Durham and Darlington community.
- (b) Section 7 (1) of the Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004 ensures that a fire and rescue authority must make provision for the purpose of (a) extinguishing fires in its area, and (b) protecting life and property in the event of fires in its area.
- (c) The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 places a duty on the Responsible Person to carry out a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment

and ensure that the Relevant Persons within the premises are made aware of fire conditions.

(d) Chapter 2 of the Localism Act 2011 makes amendments to the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and introduces a new power in section 18, which allows the Authority to charge for attendance at unwanted fire signals due to an automatic fire alarm. Section 18C sets out the criteria when a charge may be applied.

#### 4.2 Service Leadership Team (SLT)

Will ensure that this Policy is applied consistently throughout the Service by providing sufficient resources to enable the processes detailed in this policy and any associated procedure to be carried out.

#### 4.3 Performance and Programme Board (PPB)

Will scrutinise performance to confirm that the policy is addressing risk and ensure appropriate corrective measures are taken if necessary.

#### 4.4 Community Risk Management Manager

The Community Risk Management (CRM) manager will monitor the UwFS activity via the CRM Team Leader Meetings, initiate any remedial actions deemed necessary and ensure that an internal audit of the policy and procedures are carried out in-line with the ISO9001.

#### 4.5 Operational Crews

- (a) Will complete the AFA/UwFS Ops documentation (blue forms) at every appropriate incident;
- (b) Provide support and advice to the business community during attendance at AFAs;
- (c) Report AFA issues to the Business Fire Safety Central Team;
- (d) Provide suitable advice during fire safety inspections.

#### 4.6 Business Fire Safety Manager

- (a) Will manage the process of cost recovery for UwFS;
- (b) Will monitor all UwFS on a weekly basis and ensure that letters are sent to all relevant businesses in line with this policy;

- (c) Will raise an invoice with the Finance section to ensure that any charges are sent to the appropriate premises Responsible Person.

#### 4.7 Finance

- (a) Will issue the invoice to the appropriate premises Responsible Person;
- (b) Will monitor the payment of invoices.

#### 4.8 Business Fire Safety District Officers

- (a) Monitor the completed AFA/UwFS documentation;
- (b) Organise specific inspections to premises that generate numerous AFAs;
- (c) Provide support and advice to the business community;
- (d) Consider enforcement actions dependent on the outcome of a fire safety inspection.

### **5. RIGHT TO APPEAL UwFS CHARGES**

5.1 Once a charge has been made for an UwFS, the Responsible Person may make an appeal by writing to the Head of Community Risk Management (CRM) stating the reason for the appeal.

5.2 The Head of Community Risk Management should respond to the appeal within 28 days of receipt with their findings.

### **6. AUDIT AND MONITORING**

6.1 The CRM manager will carry out an internal audit of the policy and procedures in-line with the ISO9001 annual audit programme.

6.2 Any recommendations resulting from policy audits will be implemented into the existing policy and related procedures/guidance.

### **7. FURTHER DOCUMENTS**

7.1 CPP ISO9001 Procedure 4 - Reduction of Unwanted Fire Signals and False Alarm Procedure;

- 7.2 CFOA Policy for the Reduction of False Alarms and Unwanted Fire Signals;
- 7.3 CFOA Guide on response to Remotely Monitored Fire Signals;
- 7.4 The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005;
- 7.5 The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 as amended by the Localism Act 2011.

**30 January 2019**

**Assistant Chief Fire Officer**



**Safest People, Safest Places**County Durham and Darlington  
**Fire and Rescue Authority****COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY****22 FEBRUARY 2019****FIRE AND RESCUE INCIDENT STATISTICS: ENGLAND, APRIL 2017 TO MARCH 2018**

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**REPORT OF AREA MANAGER COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT**

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**Purpose of the report**

1. To present a comparative analysis of key operational performance indicators (PIs) within County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS) against national performance data contained within one of the national reports published annually by the Home Office.

**Background**

2. The report 'Fire and Rescue Incident Statistics: England, April 2017 to March 2018', published by the Home Office presents a range of statistics about the incidents attended by fire and rescue services (FRS) across England in 2017/18 including both fires and non-fire incidents and details on fatalities and non-fatal casualties arising from those incidents.
3. This report compares our strategic PIs relating to key aspects of the operational performance of the service against the national data published by the Home Office.
4. This report only covers the incident related statistics from the Home Office report but fire prevention data from the Home Office data tables released in November are also included.

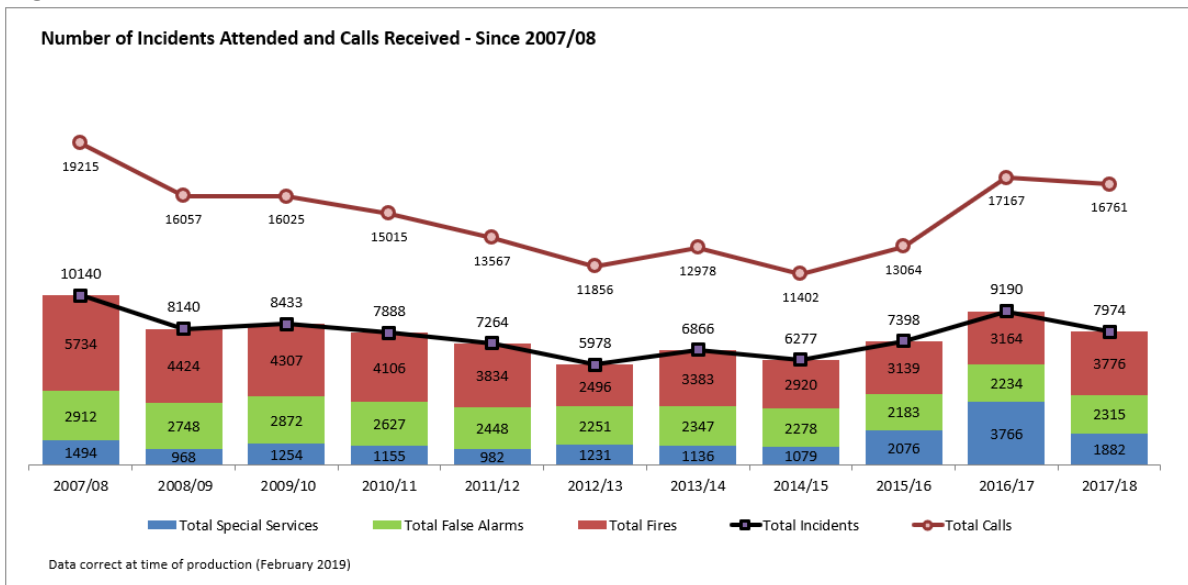
**Comparative analysis**

5. An overview of key strategic operational performance indicators that are readily comparable to the data within the national reports are presented within the report. Some datasets are not directly comparable with our performance measures but noted where this is the case.
6. To make it easier to compare CDDFRS with other FRS, the data is expressed either as a value per head of population or number of property types (e.g. per 10,000 population).

## Total calls and total incidents

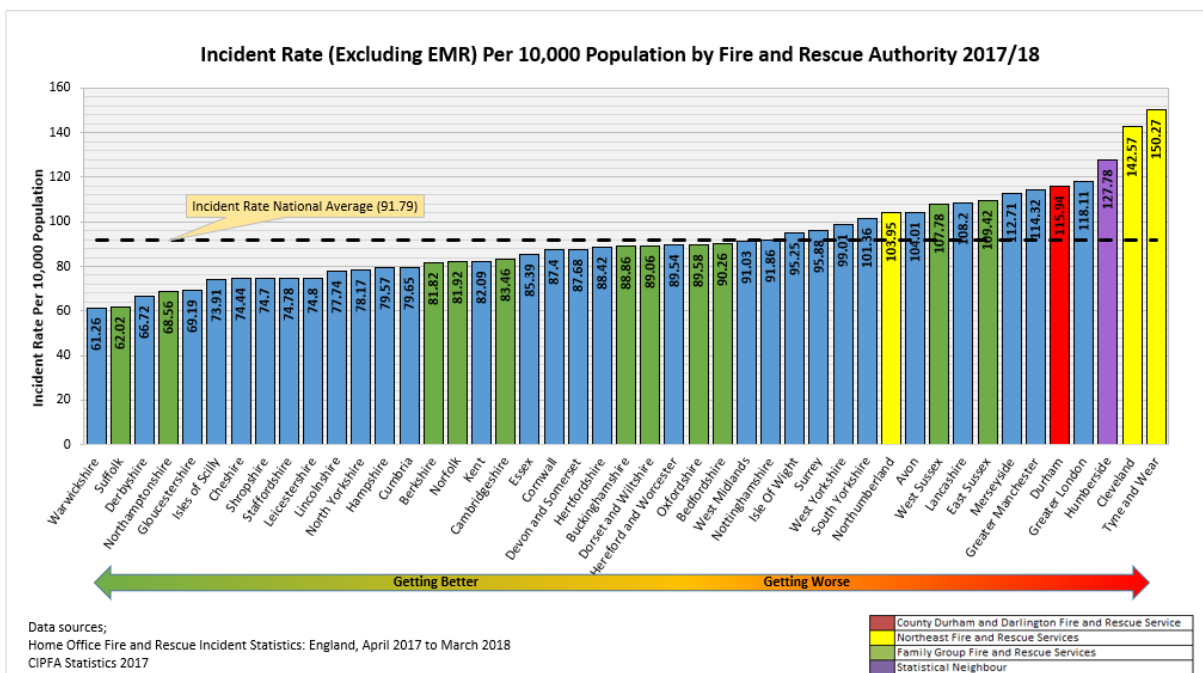
7. Figure 1 below shows the total calls and incidents attended by CDDFRS over the past 10 years.

**Figure 1**



8. Fire and rescue services nationally attended 564,827 incidents in England during 2017/18, 1% higher than the previous year. In CDDFRS, total incidents attended decreased by 13%, mainly due to a decrease in non-fire incidents, the majority being emergency medical response (EMR) calls.
9. In terms of incident rates (excluding EMR) per 10,000 population, CDDFRS was 26.3% higher than the national average, placing CDDFRS 5<sup>th</sup> busiest as figure 2 below shows. This compares to CDDFRS being 8 busiest in 2016/17.

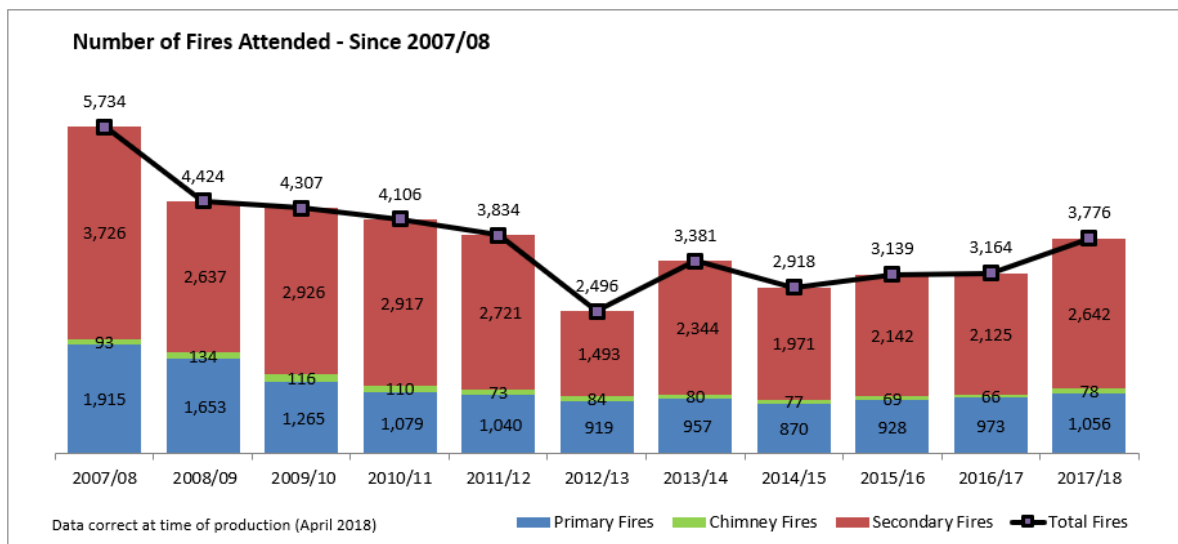
**Figure 2**



## Total fires attended

10. Nationally the total number of fires attended by FRSs has decreased, falling 44.9% from 293,920 in 2007/08 to 154,445 in 2012/13. Since then the total number of fires has been broadly stable ranging from 171,329 in 2013/14, 155,042 in 2014/15, 162,273 in 2015/16, 161,997 in 2016/17 to 167,150 in 2017/18.
11. In CDDFRS there is a similar picture with the number of fires attended reducing by 34.1% since 2007/08, falling to a low in 2012/13, then broadly following the same pattern as the national figures.

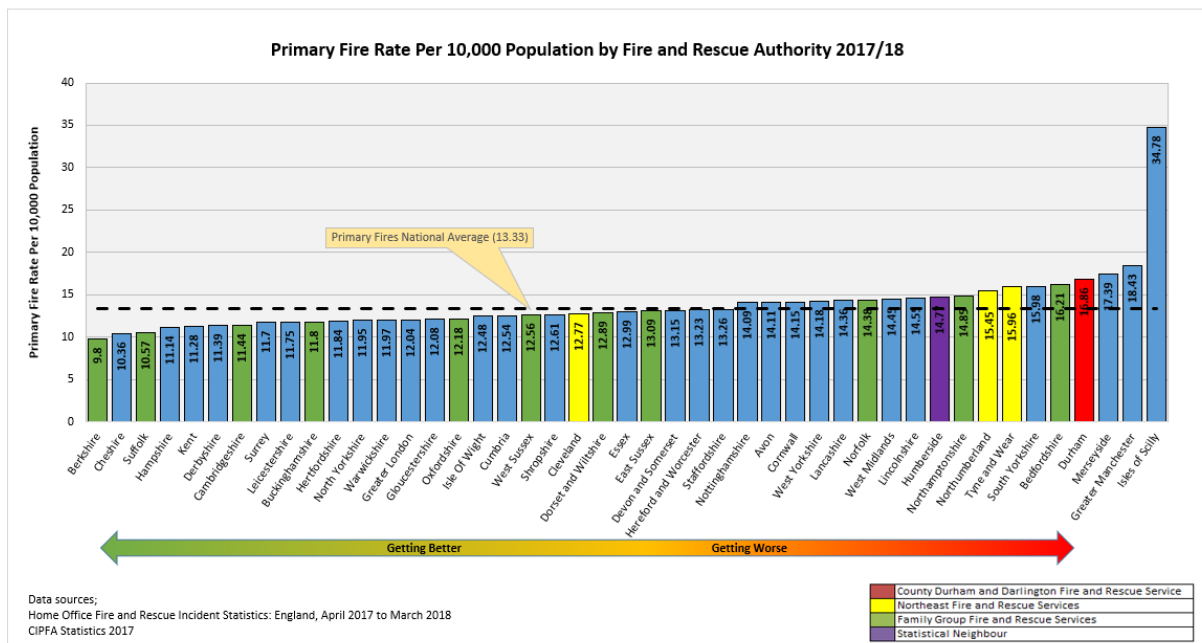
**Figure 3**



## Primary fires

12. Primary fires are fires with one or more of the following characteristics:
  - all fires in buildings and vehicles that are not derelict or in some outdoor structures;
  - any fire involving casualties or rescues;
  - any fire attended by five or more appliances.
13. Nationally, primary fires have been on a long-term downward trend, decreasing 36% over the last 10 years. Despite the size of this decrease over 10 years, the latest annual decrease has only been 1%, with 74,118 in 2017/18 compared to 74,913 the year before.
14. Although the latest annual decrease was 1%, there was some variation across primary fire types, namely: an increase in other outdoor fires (4%) and dwelling fires (1%) and a decrease in other building fires (2%) and road vehicle fires (5%).
15. The decrease in primary fires in CDDFRS over the last 10 years has been greater than the national decrease. The CDDFRS reduction was 45% compared to the 36% national reduction. The latest annual variance saw an 8.6% rise in primary fire in CDDFRS compared to the 1% reduction nationally.
16. In 2017/18 the number of primary fires that occurred within CDDFRS was higher than the national average and ranked CDDFRS with the 4<sup>th</sup> highest rate nationally. This was compared with 10<sup>th</sup> the previous year. Figure 4 shows the CDDFRS performance relative to other FRS.

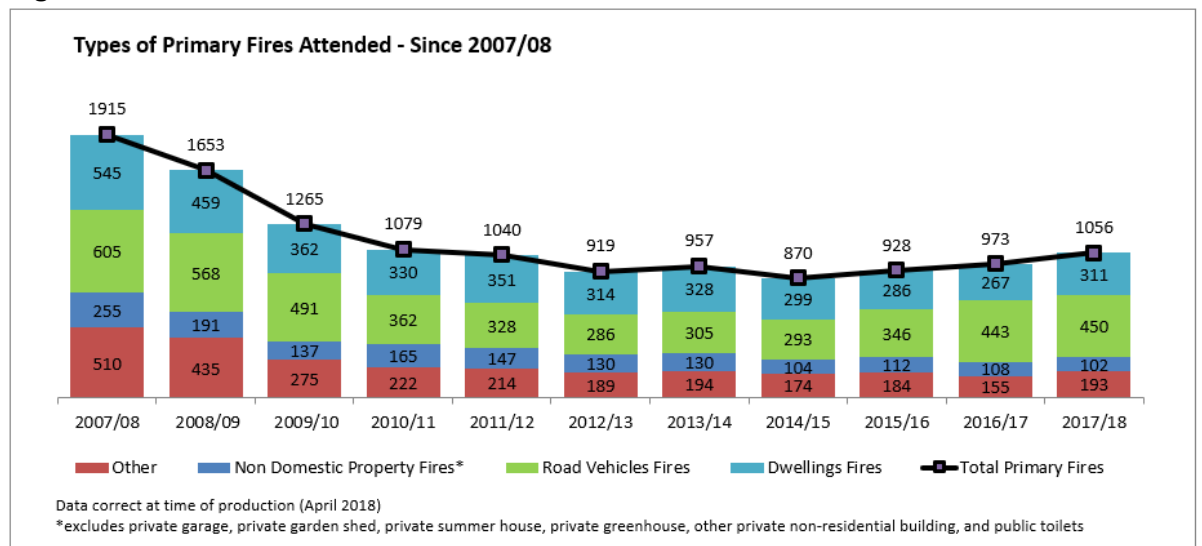
**Figure 4**



**Primary fires types**

17. In CDDFRS, despite the longer-term trend of fire reduction, fires have risen steadily over the past 4 years as figure 5 shows. The increase is mainly due to a rise in road vehicle fires which accounted for 42.6% of all primary fires in 2017/18. 66.6% of all road vehicle fires were deliberate.

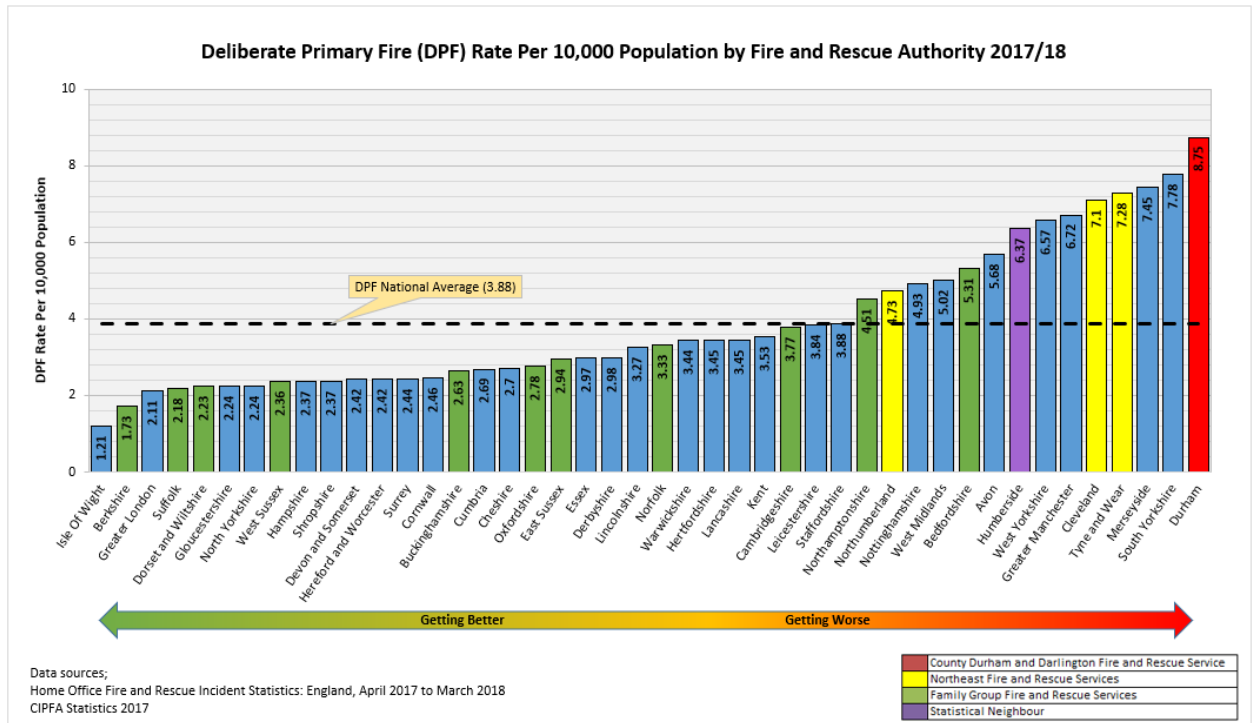
**Figure 5**



## Deliberate primary fires

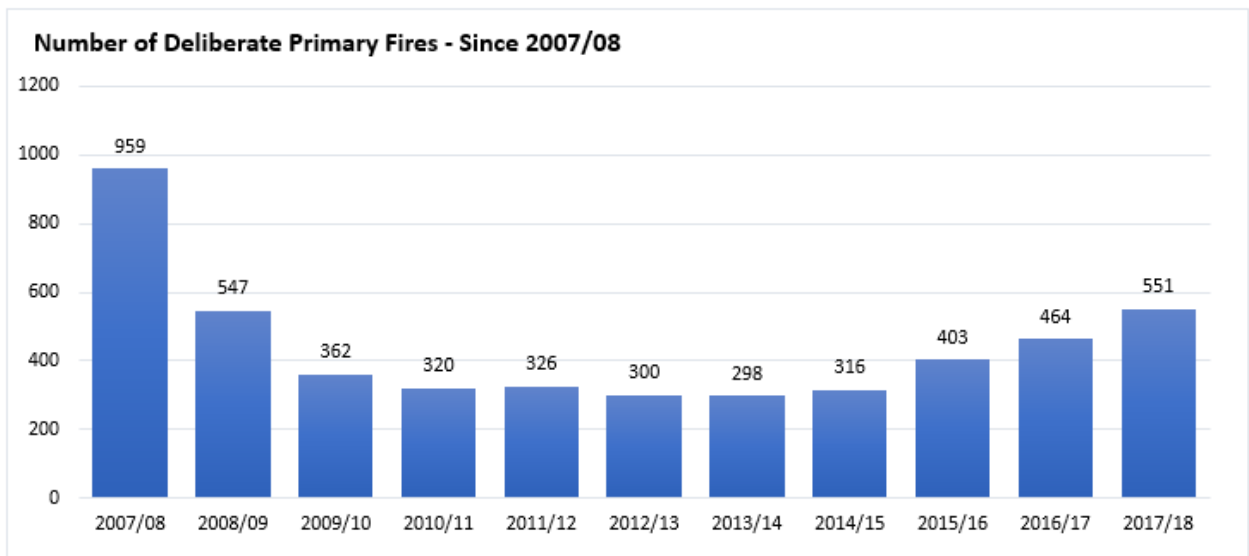
18. There were 19% more deliberate primary fires in CDDFRS during 2017/18 than the previous year. Nationally there was a 3% reduction. In CDDFRS the number recorded per head of population was 126% higher than the national average as shown in figure 6. This also shows that CDDFRS has the highest rate of deliberate primary fires nationally. In the previous year CDDFRS had the 4<sup>th</sup> highest rate. 55% of deliberate primary fires during 2017/18 in CDDFRS occurred in road vehicles.

**Figure 6**



19. Since 2007/08 deliberate primary fires in CDDFRS have fallen by 43% compared to a 57% decrease seen across England.

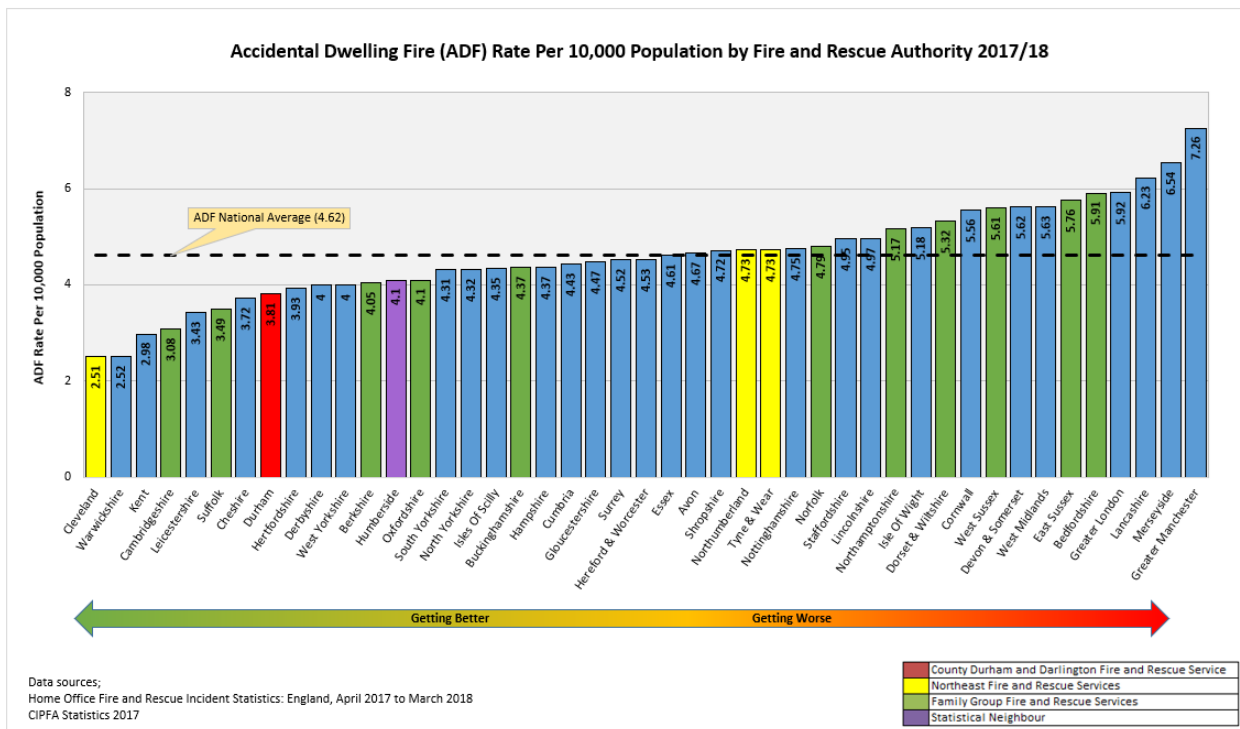
**Figure 7**



## Accidental dwelling fires, injuries and fatalities

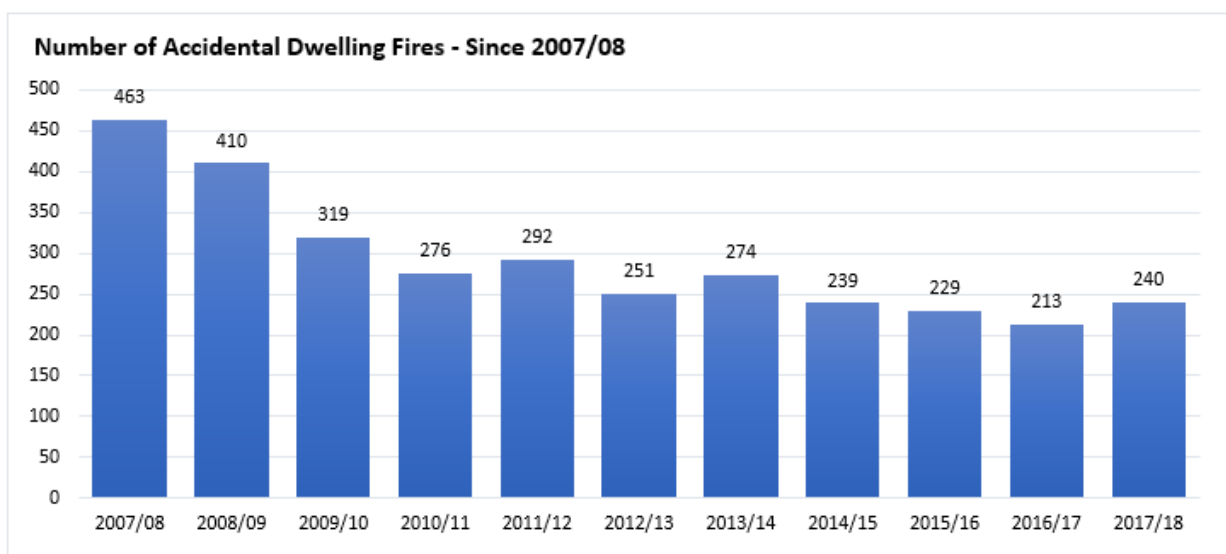
20. Accidental dwelling fires (ADF) in England increased by 1% between 2016/17 and 2017/18 with CCDFRS showing a 13% increase, with CDDFRS being the 8<sup>th</sup> best performing service in England, shown in figure 8. This compares to 5<sup>th</sup> best performing for the previous year.

**Figure 8**



21. The longer-term trend nationally shows since 2007/08 there has been a 20% decrease in ADFs, with a 48% reduction in CDDFRS as shown in figure 9.

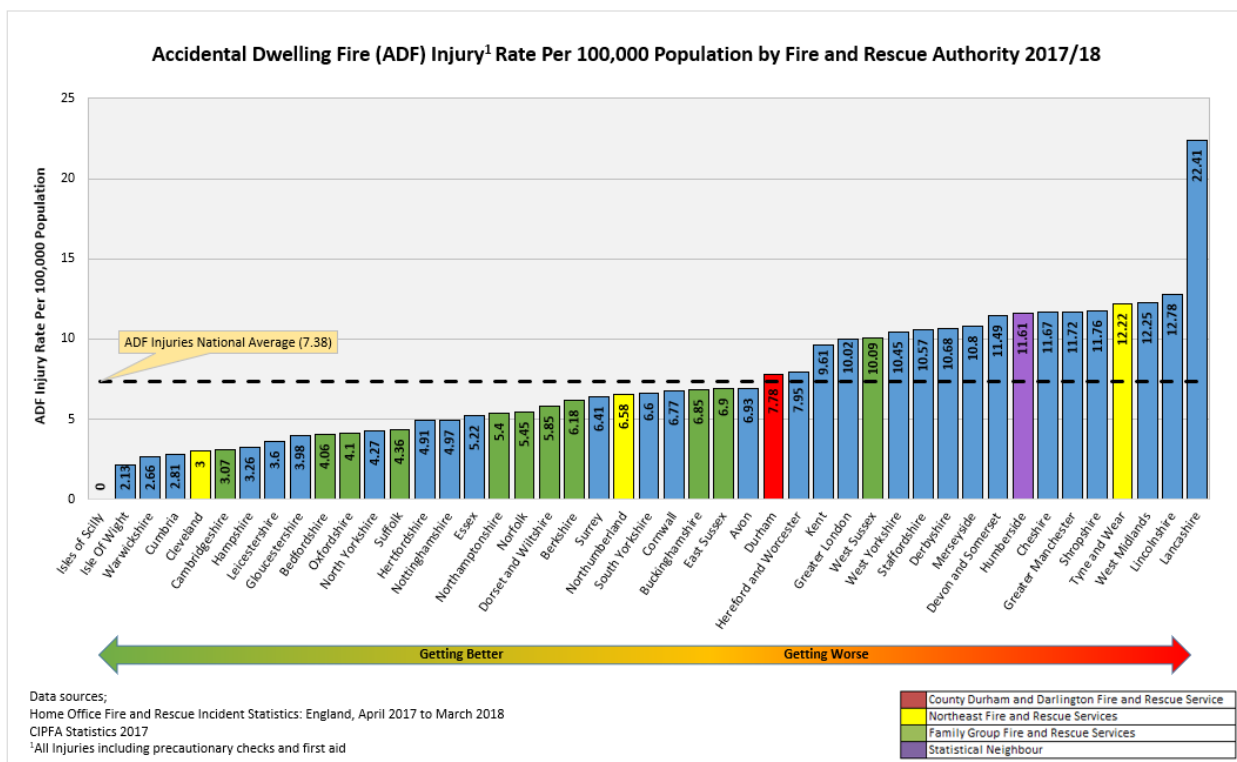
**Figure 9**



22. In CDDFRS, the number of all accidental dwelling fire injuries increased by 6.5% between 2016/17 and 2017/18 compared to a 1.1% increase nationally. However, those requiring hospital treatment within CDDFRS reduced from 24 in 2016/17 to 20 in 2017/18. Figure 10

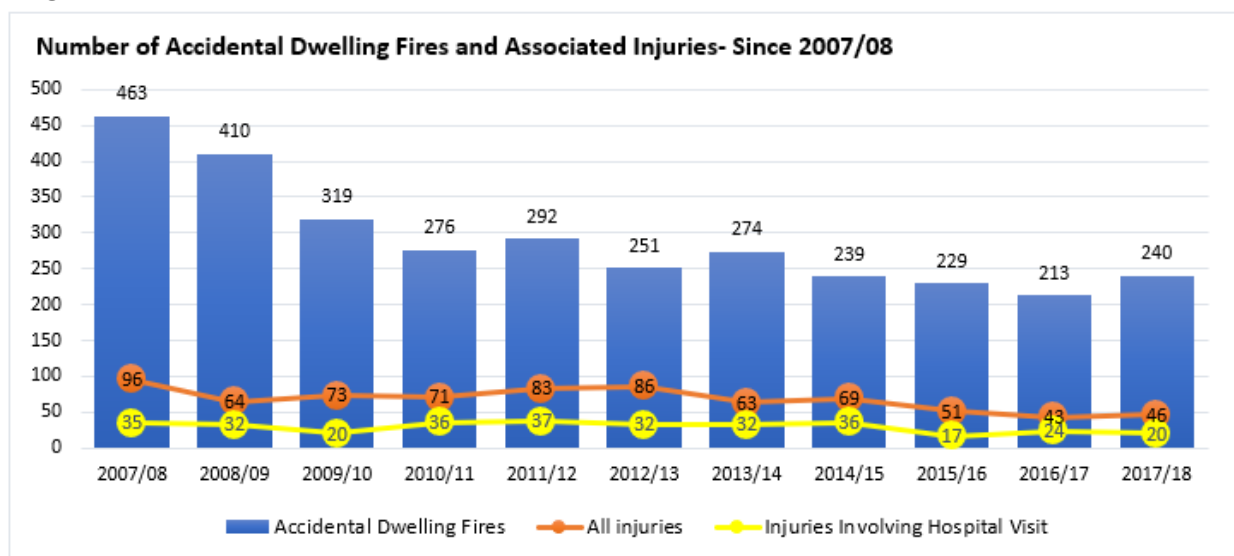
shows the injury rate per head of population for every FRS. CDDFRS is just above the national average.

**Figure 10**



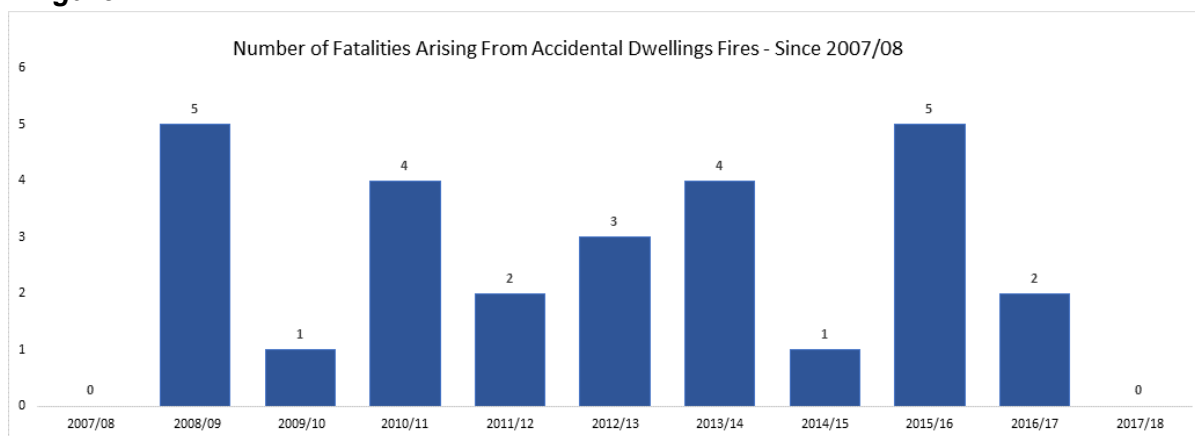
23. Since 2007/08 there has been a 35% national reduction in injuries arising from accidental dwelling fires. This compares to a 52% reduction in CDDFRS with serious injuries comprising of hospital visits falling by 43%. Figure 11 shows the number of accidental dwelling fires and associated injuries.

**Figure 11**



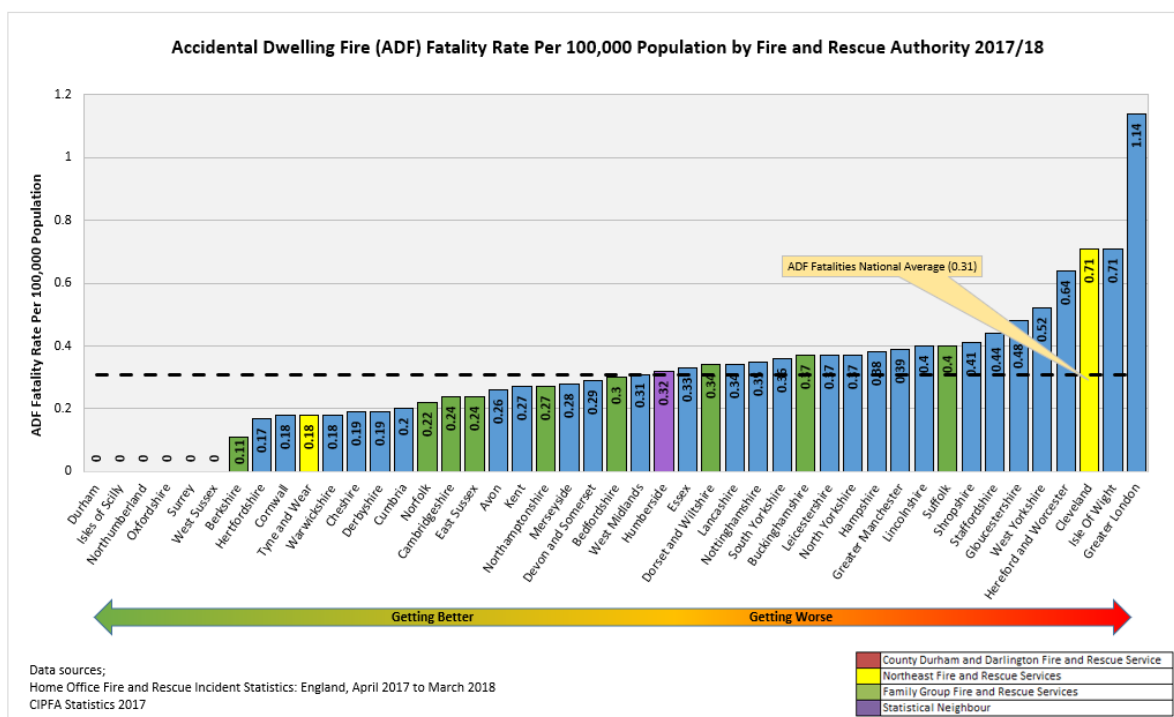
24. The number of accidental dwelling fire fatalities in England increased by 33% to 243 during 2017/18. This was mainly attributed to the Grenfell Fire in which 71 people died. CDDFRS had zero accidental dwelling fire fatalities during 2017/18.

**Figure 12**



25. In 2017/18, the fatality rate in accidental dwelling fires for CDDFRS, per head of population, is zero with the national average at 0.31 as figure 13 shows.

**Figure 13**

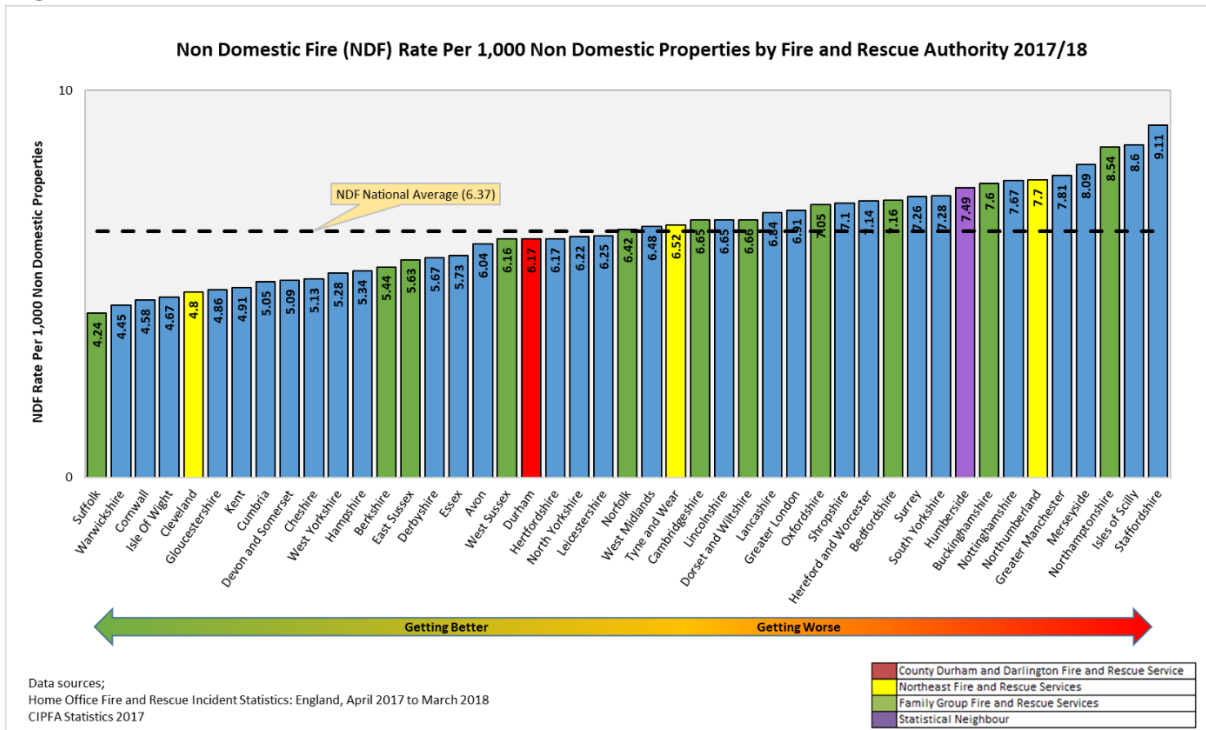


### Primary fires in non-domestic properties

26. The number of fires in non-domestic premises nationally has fallen 33% since 2007/08 with CDDFRS seeing a 53% reduction in over the same period. The latest annual change in CDDFRS was a 3% rise compared to a 2% reduction nationally. The fire rate per head of population for 2017/18 is below the national average ranking CDDFRS 19<sup>th</sup> nationally, as shown in figure 14. The rank in 2016/17 was 20<sup>th</sup>.



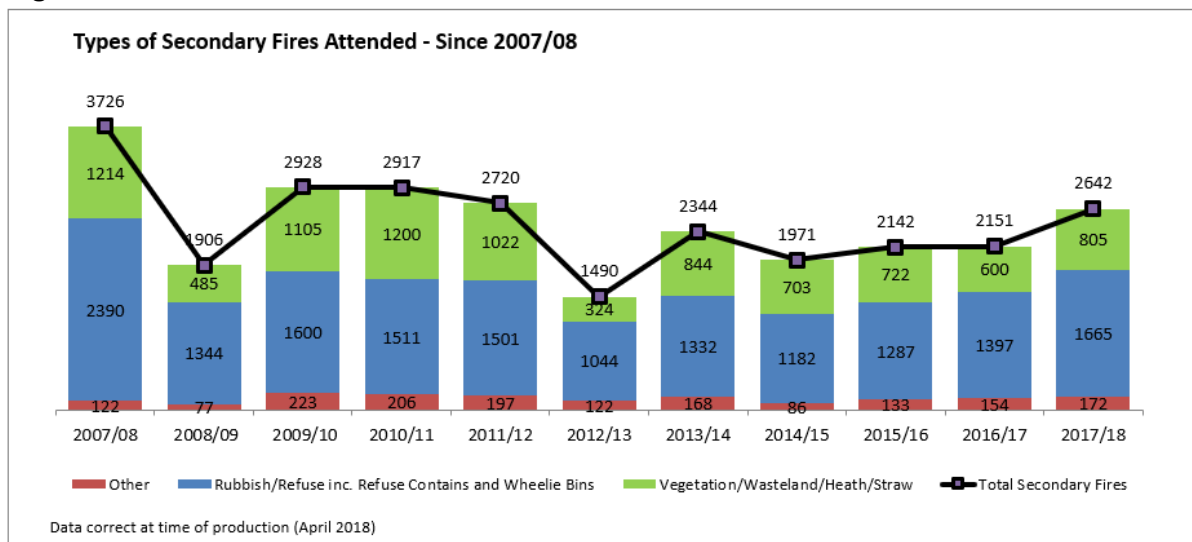
**Figure 14**



**Secondary fires**

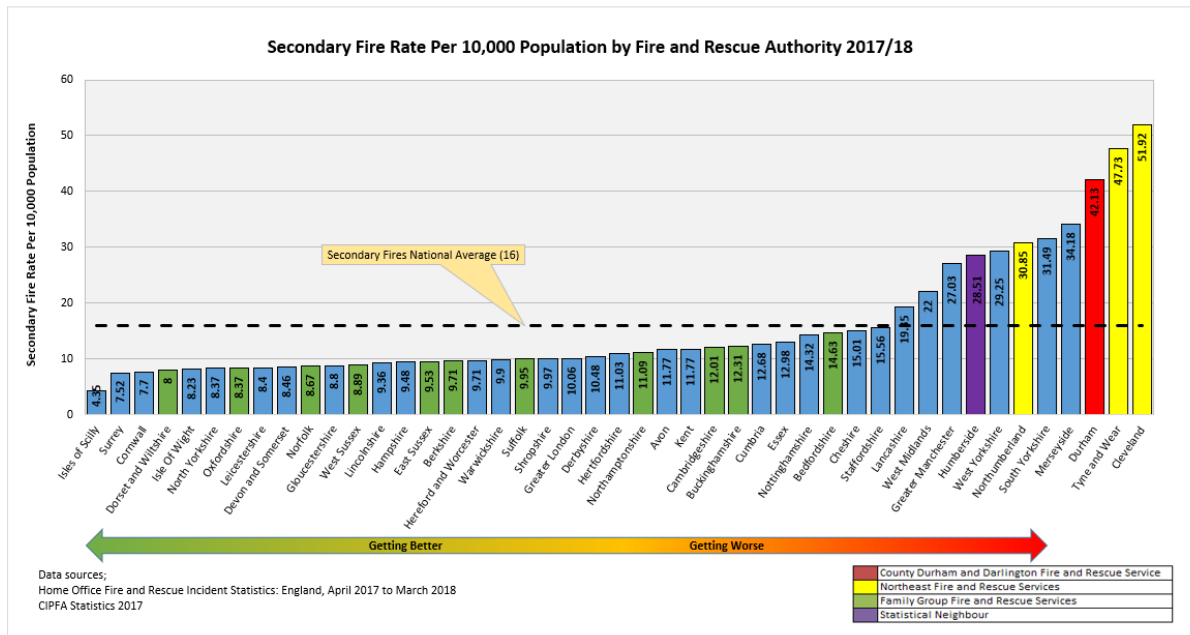
27. Secondary fires can broadly be thought of as smaller outdoor fires, not involving people or property. Of the 167,257 fires attended nationally in 2017/18, 89,038 were secondary fires. For England, this was a 7% increase on last year compared to a 23% increase for CDDFRS. Nationally, secondary fires have reduced by 48% since 2007/08. In CDDFRS, secondary fires reduced by 29% over the same time period. However, since 2014/15 secondary fires in CDDFRS have increased annually as shown in figure 15.

**Figure 15**



28. Secondary fires are an issue for all FRS in the north east, with CDDFRS 3rd worst performing in England, but performing better than Tyne & Wear and Cleveland, as shown in figure 16.

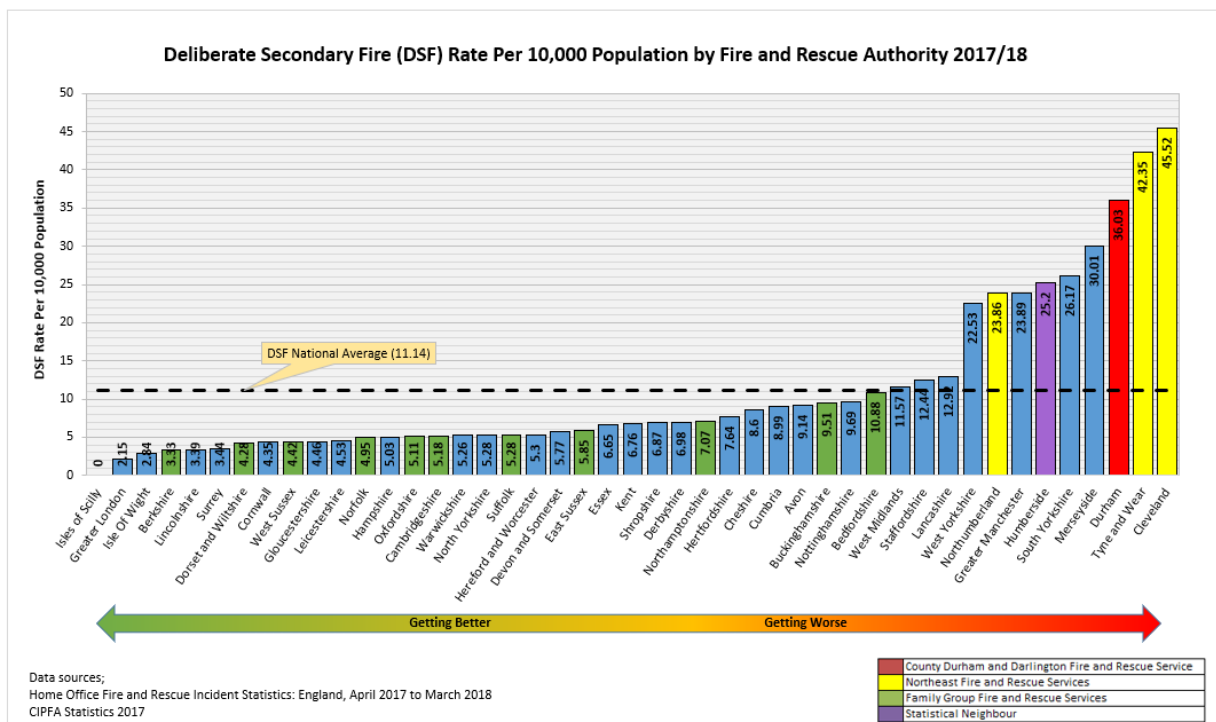
**Figure 16**



**Deliberate secondary fires**

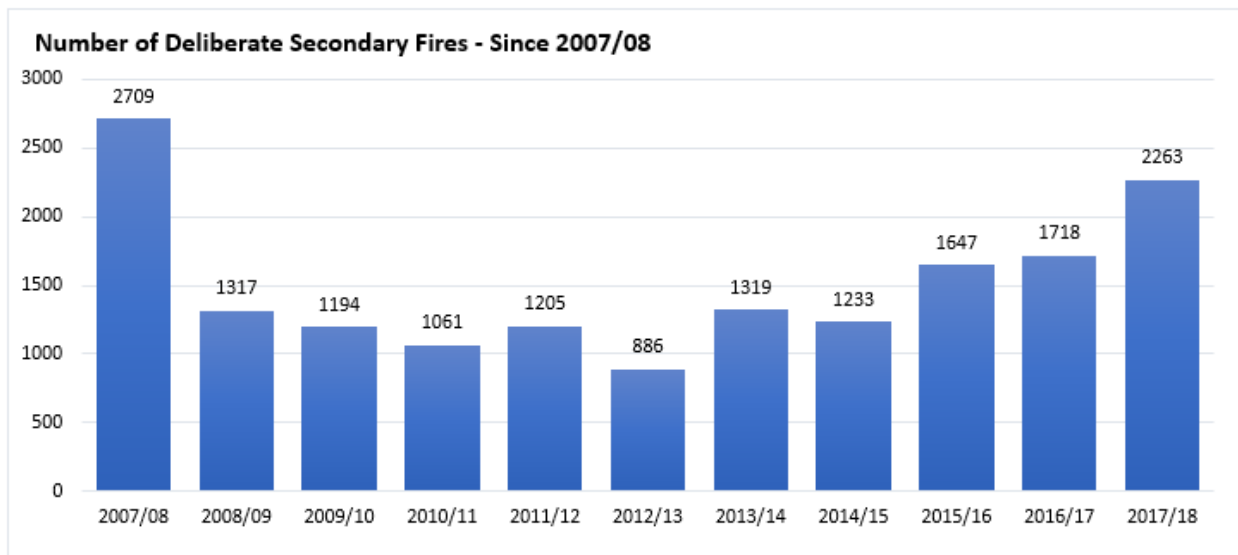
29. There were 32% more deliberate secondary fires in CDDFRS during 2017/18 than the previous year, compared to an annual increase of 10% nationally. The number recorded per head of population was 224% higher than the national average ranking CDDFRS 3rd worst performing nationally. Figure 17 shows the national performance for deliberate secondary fires.

**Figure 17**



30. Nationally, since 2011/12 there has been a 33.3% reduction in deliberate secondary fires, however in our area these have risen by 87.8% as figure 18 below shows.

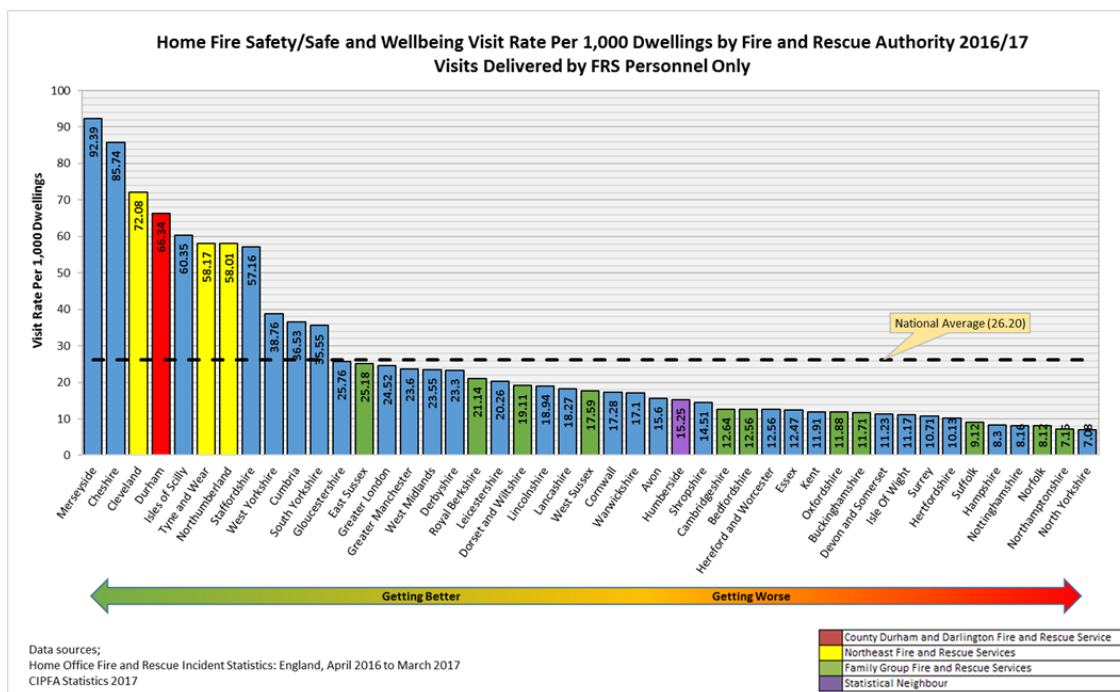
**Figure 18**



### Home fire safety checks/safe & wellbeing visits

31. FRSs completed 576,040 Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSC) and/or Safe & Wellbeing Visits (SWV) in 2017/18, 2.39% less than last year.
32. In contrast, CDDFRS completed 19,545 HFSC/SWV in 2017/18, a 3.33% increase on 2016/17. In 2016/17, to reflect the move from HFSCs to the broader, more comprehensive safe and wellbeing visits which take longer to undertake, the annual target was reduced from 20,000 to 18,000. This target was also repeated for 2017/18 and despite this lower target, this still placed us 4<sup>th</sup> best performing FRS in the country, in terms of HFSC/SWV per 1,000 dwellings as figure 19 shows.

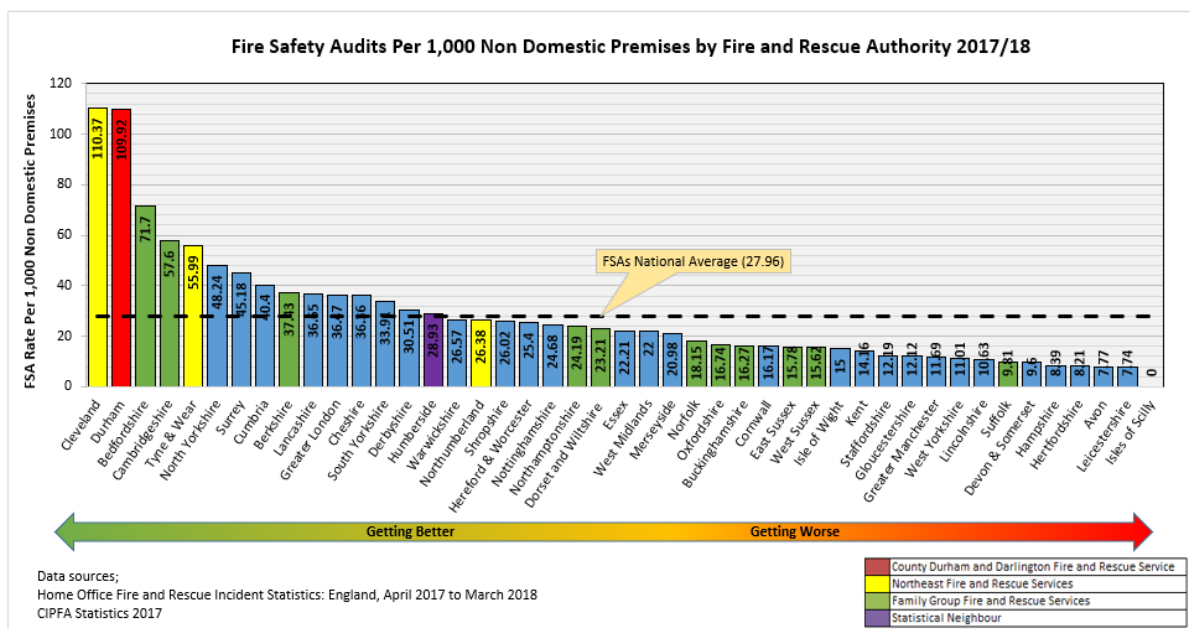
Figure 19



### Fire safety audits

33. Fire and Rescue Authorities deliver their enforcement duties under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (the FSO) through locally determined, risk-based programmes of audit/inspection visits to non-domestic premises.
34. Nationally, FRSs carried out 49,423 Fire Safety Audits (FSA) in 2017/18, 8.9% less than the previous year and 39.7% lower than 2011/12. CDDFRS staff undertook 2,136 FSAs in 2017/18, slightly higher (3.4%) than the previous year but 152.4% more than 2011/12 (846 FSAs). 2011/12 has been used for comparative purposes due to the unavailability of data nationally going back any further as this is no longer published by the Home Office.
35. This rise is because in previous years, the volume of fire safety audits undertaken in CDDFRS was limited by the capacity of staff working in the Fire Safety Team. The strategy to utilise operational crews to undertake fire safety audits has proved successful contributing to CDDFRS becoming the second-best performing service in the country with regard to the number of FSAs carried out on non-domestic properties, as shown in figure 20. In 2016/17 CDDFRS had the highest delivery rate.

Figure 20



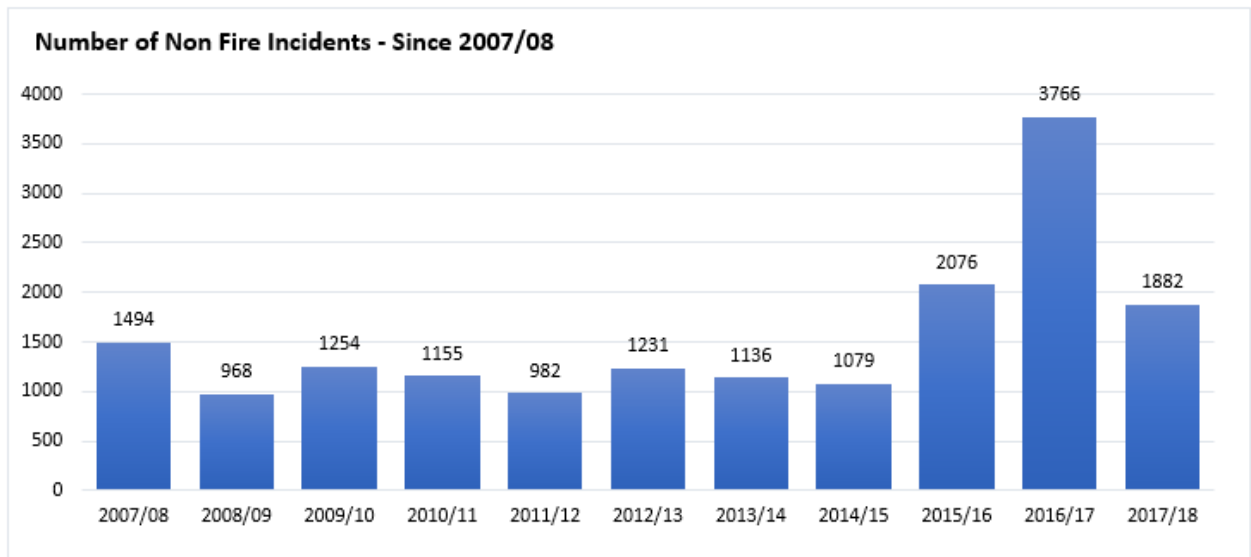
36. This achievement reflects the Service's extensive work with businesses and organisations to help keep people safe at work or when visiting a workplace such as a hotel or shop. CDDFRS does this by offering fire safety advice to businesses and conducting an audit programme on workplace fire safety risk assessments.

### Non-fire incidents

37. FRSs attend many types of incidents that are not fires, for example flooding incidents, road traffic collisions, rescuing animals and effecting entry/exit. For the first time, in 2016/17 FRSs attended more non-fire incidents than fires. There has been a 1% decrease in the number of non-fire (also known as Special Service) incidents attended by FRSs from 174,560 in 2016/17 to 172,052 in 2017/18.

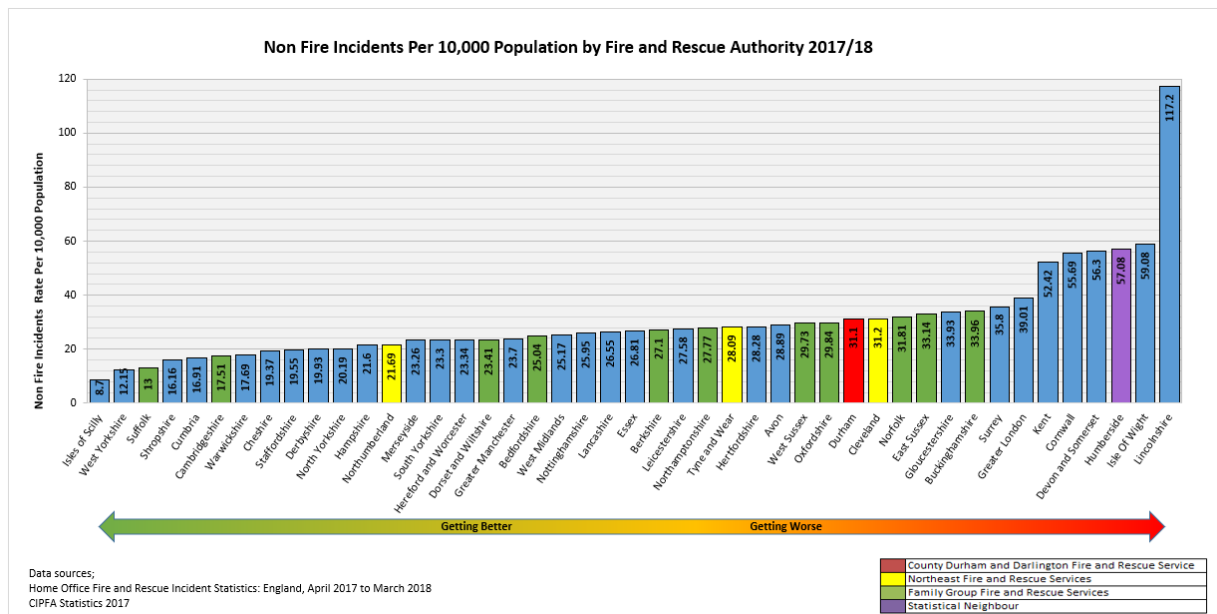
38. The decrease in non-fire incidents nationally was driven to a large extent by decreases in medical co-responding or emergency medical response (EMR) incidents. Between 2016/17 and 2017/18 however, there was a 28% decrease in the number of medical incidents attended falling from around 46,000 to around 33,000. In CDDFRS, non-fire incidents have decreased by 50.1% from 2016/17 to 2017/18 as in figure 21.

**Figure 21**



39. In terms of non-fire incidents per 10,000 population, CDDFRS was 14<sup>th</sup> busiest as shown in figure 22.

**Figure 22**



## Summary

40. The comparative analysis presented in this report highlights the advantages of considering performance compared to other FRS as well as against our own targets or against previous years.
41. The analysis has reinforced where we know we are performing strongly, such as being the second-best performing FRS for delivering fire safety audits (figure 20) which has resulted in a 53% reduction in non-domestic property fires since 2007/08 and current performance being better than the national average (figure 14). We are also the 4<sup>th</sup> best performing in terms of delivering HFSC/SWV (figure 19), an investment which has resulted in a 48% reduction in ADFs since 2007/08 (figure 9), a 52% reduction in all ADF injuries (figure 11) and CDDFRS being well below the national average for ADFs making us the 8<sup>th</sup> best performing FRS in England (figure 8).
42. However, it also highlights the challenges we face in terms of deliberate primary and secondary fires, where we sit 3<sup>rd</sup> from the bottom nationally for deliberate secondary fires (figure 16) and bottom nationally for deliberate primary fires (figure 6). The increase in deliberate fires in our area is something the Service has been aware of, with the Performance and Programme Board scrutinising it in depth after 'calling-in' deliberate fires early in the year. Deliberate fires are a concern across the whole of the North East, Yorkshire and Humberside as can be seen in figures 6 and 17. We are working hard to better understand the root causes and working with partners to invest resources where they will have the biggest impact on performance.
43. Consequently, the outcomes from this analysis are helping us to better understand the risks in our communities, how we are performing and informing us where best to invest our limited resources to improve performance going forward, it also supports our efforts to measure and improve staff productivity.

## Recommendations

44. CFA members are requested to:
  - a. **Note** and comment on the content of the report.

Keith Wanley, Area Manager, 0191 3755630

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## COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

22 FEBRUARY 2019

### FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE INSPECTIONS 2018/2019

## REPORT OF AREA MANAGER TRAINING, ASSETS AND ASSURANCE

### PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To provide members with a summary of the findings from Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) tranche one inspections and an update on the next steps in the inspection process.

### BACKGROUND

2. In December 2018, HMICFRS published the individual outcome reports for the fourteen fire and rescue services (FRS) inspected within tranche one and a consolidated summary of findings report.
3. Each inspection assesses how effective and efficient the service is, how it protects the public against fires and other emergencies and how it responds to the same. HMICFRS also assesses how well each service looks after its people.
4. In carrying out the inspections, evidence is sought to answer three main questions:
  - a. How effective is the fire and rescue service at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?
  - b. How efficient is the fire and rescue service at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?
  - c. How well does the fire and rescue service look after its people?

### TRANCHE ONE RESULTS

5. Effectiveness pillar judgement for each FRS:

Grade	Number of FRS
Outstanding	0
<b>Good</b>	<b>10</b>
Requires improvement	4
Inadequate	0

6. Efficiency pillar judgement for each FRS:

Grade	Number of FRS
Outstanding	0
<b>Good</b>	<b>8</b>
Requires improvement	5
Inadequate	1

7. People pillar judgement for each FRS:

Grade	Number of FRS
Outstanding	0
Good	3
<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>10</b>
Inadequate	1

## Summary of the Effectiveness Pillar Judgements

### Understanding risk to keep the public and firefighters safe

8. Most services are considered to have a good understanding of local risk through identifying where vulnerable people live and where high-risk premises are located.
9. From the FRS inspected there were significant variations in the quality, quantity and timelines associated with information published in IRMPs. Some services were advised to improve the way they model and predict risk, and how they explain these risks to the public.
10. Some services were advised to manage the provision of risk information more effectively. This was in response to finding delays in making risk information available to crews and some Mobile Data Terminals (MDT) that didn't always work.

### Preventing fires and other emergencies

11. Although there has been a national reduction in the number of home fire safety checks (Safe and Wellbeing Visits in CDDFRS) delivered from April 2017 to March 2018 (590,198 to 576,040), HMICFRS highlighted evidence to indicate that prevention work is targeted towards the people who need it most.
12. Some FRS evaluate the benefit of their prevention work, but this doesn't occur across the whole sector. All services are advised to evaluate prevention activities to establish the effect they are having.
13. Dedicated staff are more confident and competent at delivering prevention activities for the most vulnerable than operational crews.

### Protection through the regulation of fire safety

14. HMICFRS note that some protection teams describe themselves as under resourced and are not given a sufficiently large share of the service's resource to do their work. Some services plan their risk-based activity programme on staff availability rather than the actual level of risk posed to the public.

15. HMICFRS commended the engagement with businesses to promote fire safety but advised that services need to keep up the skills and competence required to use the full range of enforcement powers.

### **Responding to fires and other emergencies**

16. In general, the response to fires and other emergencies was commended by HMICFRS and received good gradings. The variation in response times was highlighted but acknowledged that this was dependant on the decisions of individual fire and rescue authorities based on geography, demography and risk.
17. Most services are in the process of adopting national operational guidance and HMICFRS commended on the provision of equipment, appliances and training to improve operational activity and maintain the safety of operational crews.
18. Most services were commended for their training of incident commanders who demonstrated a good level of knowledge about what to do when commanding an incident and explained an understanding of national operational guidance and the concept of 'operational discretion'.
19. Fire and rescue services don't collect consistent data about appliance availability and there are variations in availability between services. The limited availability of 'on-call' appliances was consistent across many services inspected in tranche one.
20. The effectiveness of learning varies considerably between services. Good services share learning across the whole organisation and those that require improvement limit the learning opportunities to only the personnel who were directly involved in incidents.

### **Responding to national risks**

21. All FRS were considered well practiced and prepared for responding to national risks such as flooding or terrorist attacks. Partner agencies (Police and Ambulance Services) were very positive about the role FRS play in testing and exercising contingency plans for large scale incidents.
22. HMICFRS noted that almost all services described the difficulties of working through austerity. This was evident in the reduction in some protection activities, and to a lesser degree, some prevention activities. HMICFRS identified some disproportionate funding between response and protection teams.
23. HMICFRS are currently working with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy and the fire sector to create more accurate reporting on financial data. The hope is to complete this work by September 2019.

### **Summary of the Efficiency Pillar Judgements**

#### **Allocation of resources towards risk**

24. HMICFRS noted that good performing FRS make sound use of all their people and allocate work so that staff can work across response, prevention and protection activities.

## **Securing an affordable future**

25. All services were advised to use financial reserves to invest in the things that will help them be more efficient in the future and they should ensure that reserves are being used appropriately to help modernise the way people work to help protect the public.
26. Many services described the barriers to workforce modernisation being the complex negotiating machinery and the strength of the Fire Brigades' Union to protect its members' terms and conditions.
27. Services should make more use of available technology to improve the efficiency of workstreams and improve the safety of their community.
28. The delivery of statutory duties should take priority over activities to generate extra income through external funding and income generation opportunities.

## **Summary of the People Pillar Judgements**

### **Values and culture**

29. Very few services were identified as having a positive culture. In services that were identified as being good in this area, staff described that leaders were visible role models of the values and behaviours expected of the service. Some staff described that they lacked confidence in grievance procedures and raising concerns about how they are treated.

### **Training and skills**

30. Most staff were considered to be appropriately trained in risk critical safety skills and use a combination of practical training and e-learning to help their workforces learn.
31. Many services were advised to improve their workforce planning arrangements to address their retirement profiles, lack of recruitment and their aging workforces.

### **Fairness and diversity**

32. Too few FRS are good at promoting fairness and diversity with fewer than half of the services inspected having set up staff networks.
33. Services were advised to tackle fundamental cultural problems to ensure that newly recruited individuals from under represented groups thrive within services.

### **Leadership and capability**

34. Most services need to improve on how they identify and support talent to become future leaders and many staff described that they feel that performance management systems have little or no value. Most FRS should improve the way they explain their promotion process to staff.

### **Identifying and developing talent**

35. Only a small number of services have processes in place for identifying and developing staff with high potential to become future leaders. A small number of services have looked outside the fire and rescue sector to bring in talented people at senior management level who will bring diversity of thought and experience.

## Requirements to respond to cause for concern and areas for improvement

36. Fire and rescue authorities must give due regard to reports and recommendations made by the HMICFRS. If a cause for concern is raised, an action plan should be produced and sent to the HMICFRS within 56 days of the report publication date. This plan should be regularly updated.
37. If an area for improvement is identified an action plan does not need to be sent to HMICFRS but it is encouraged as good practice.

## NEXT STEPS

38. Tranche two results will be shared with respective services late April 2019 and are scheduled for wider publication June 2019.
39. The next data request has been received by all FRS with additional requests for information on availability of appliances, the totality of protection work undertaken and the use of temporary promotions and overtime.
40. The schedule for tranche three FRS, which includes our Service is outlined below.

Activity	Scheduled Month
Data Request	Jan 2019
Self-assessment submission deadline	1 April 2019
Discovery week	TBC (April – June 2019)
Strategic briefing	2-weeks prior to inspection
Fieldwork (inspection week)	pTBC (May-July 2019)
Hot debrief	1-week after fieldwork
Pre-publication checks – draft reports	October 2019
Publication	December 2019

41. A detailed gap analysis of the findings from tranche one and our current position has taken place by members of the Assurance Team and this will be used to mitigate any weaknesses identified from the tranche one results in preparation for our inspection.
42. Current work is underway to finalise our position statement and self-assessments in preparation for submission in April 2019.

## Recommendation

43. Members are requested to:
  - a. **note** the contents of the report.

Steve Wharton, Area Manager, 0191 375 5666

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Safest People, Safest Places

County Durham and Darlington  
Fire and Rescue Authority



## COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

22 FEBRUARY 2019

### SAFER FUTURES 'LIVE' (SCHOOL SAFETY CAROUSEL)

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#### REPORT OF THE MEMBER CHAMPION FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY

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##### Purpose of the report

1. To provide members with an update on Safer Futures 'Live', formerly known as the school safety carousel organised by the Service and to encourage members to continue to promote the benefits of the event.

##### Background

2. The Authority 'champions' various areas of service delivery through the Combined Fire Authority (CFA) Member Champion roles. These roles provide the opportunity for members and officers to work closely together to help develop the services provided by better engagement with local communities, staff and other stakeholders.
3. Cllr Brian Jones was appointed to the role of Community Safety Member Champion in 2017 and previously provided a report to the Fire Authority regarding the school safety carousel on 21 December 2017.
4. The Service has organised the school safety carousel for over 16 years and it is delivered annually to year 6 school children across County Durham and Darlington. The event is organised by the Service and delivered in partnership with several other agencies over 10 weeks each academic year; the aim being to educate children who are at a key developmental stage in their lives, in a broad range of key safety areas.
5. In 2018, 'Safer Futures' was introduced as a brand by the Service for all community safety education and campaign delivery and the school safety carousel being the main live event was rebranded to Safer Futures 'Live'. The new branding is now being used in communications and media material and feedback shows that it has been well received by the schools.

##### Safer Futures 'Live' 2018/19

6. The 'Live' event is delivered in two periods at The Work Place in Newton Aycliffe, each period lasting approximately five weeks, this academic year the dates being:
  - a. 29 October to 29 November 2018; and
  - b. 25 February to 28 March 2019.

7. Individual schools pay for and arrange their own transportation to bring children to the event, with the cost of the venue and other ancillary equipment being met by the Service. As the Service has hosted the 'Live' event at The Work Place for the previous four years, we receive a discount of 46% on the normal rate, resulting in the venue costs for 2018/19 being £21,950, plus an additional £500 on ancillary equipment. Each year the Service also applies for a grant from Northern Powergrid as the event supports them in their statutory duty to deliver electrical safety education. This year we received £2,600 in grant funding resulting in a net cost to the Service of £19,850.
8. Whilst this is a sizeable investment for the Service the benefits are significant. Some other fire and rescue services operate dedicated premises to deliver this kind of community safety engagement initiative at considerable costs. The approach taken by the Service is therefore extremely cost effective.
9. During October/November 2018, 107 schools attended with a total of 3249 pupils and 220 teachers. The February/March 2019 sessions are still being arranged with attendance figures not being finalised until just prior to the event to maximise the school intake, however we expect total attendance figures across the academic year to be similar to the previous year at around 7000 to 7500 pupils.
10. Children attending are split into six groups and rotate through six 30-minute sessions which are designed to be interactive, educational and fun. The six sessions of the 2018/19 'Live' event are:
  - a. Fire Safety (Fire and Rescue Service);
  - b. Road Safety (County Durham and Darlington Borough Councils' road safety teams);
  - c. Water Safety (RNLI);
  - d. Internet Safety (Durham Constabulary);
  - e. Electrical Safety (Northern Powergrid);
  - f. Unintentional injuries in the home (NHS).
11. During each event teachers are asked to evaluate the sessions while they are delivered which is then used to produce an end of year evaluation report. Each year the individual workshops and overall event are reviewed and any areas of potential improvement are discussed and used to improve future events.
12. The main changes for 2018/19 are the introduction of the new Safer Futures brand for the 'Live' event and the fire safety presentation has been updated with an improved video and more up to date and relevant content. The Police workshop on internet safety has been adjusted to ensure it does not duplicate topics already delivered in school on e-safety. The NHS workshop scored the lowest last year as this was the first time they had delivered it, changes have been made to this and the evaluation scores for October/November 2018 have significantly increased.

## **Conclusion**

13. The safety education delivered through the Safer Futures 'Live' event has significant benefits in improving the safety and welfare of children, not only now but also as they grow older. Cllr Jones would therefore encourage any members who have not observed the event, to attend during February / March 2019 to gain greater understanding of the benefits it delivers.
14. Many members have close associations with the local schools in their areas and Cllr Jones asks that members continue to promote the benefits of Safer Futures Live and encourage schools to continue to support it.



## **Recommendation**

15. Members are requested to:
  - a. **note** the contents of the report

Cllr Brian Jones, Member Champion for Community Safety.

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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