

Sedgefield District (Newton Aycliffe, Spennymoor, Sedgefield Fire Stations)

The area is comprised of significant industrial risks, particularly in Newton Aycliffe and includes a number of concentrated areas of population. The industrial estate located in Newton Aycliffe area incorporates a number of large industrial, engineering and commercial sites. Communities are served by some of the County's busiest roads including the A1M and the East-Coast railway line runs through the District area.

Durham and Chester-le-Street District (Durham and Crook Fire Stations)

The significant risks managed within this District include the Cathedral heritage site, the University

of Durham as well as three hospitals. There are also three prisons within the area. New local industrial estates have been established consisting of modern retail and manufacturing facilities interspersed with more traditional industries. The River Wear runs through the District area and the busy Durham railway station is an important link on the east coast mainline. The city is also served by the main A1M motorway which runs by the outskirts of Durham.

Further details of the specific risks in local areas are available from our District plans which are available from our website.



Specific Risk Groups

Within our local communities there are specific groups of people that we know represent a higher than average risk. These higher risk groups are outlined in this part of the strategy.

Specific Fire Risks

We have analysed the people that are most at risk from fire in our local communities.

We work closely with our partners to identify the most vulnerable people and we take action together to reduce these risks.

Specific Road Traffic Collision Risks

We know that young drivers are more likely to be involved in a road traffic collision and suffer harm. People that ride motorbikes and the elderly are also more at risk from a road traffic collision. We work closely with partners on prevention and education activities to attempt to ensure that these drivers are made aware of the risks that they face when they are on the roads in County Durham and Darlington.

Emergency Response Standards

Our published response standards are set out below.

We will attend 70% of all domestic and non domestic building fires within 8 minutes, and 90% within 11 minutes.

We will attend 75% of all road traffic collisions within 11 minutes, and 90% within 15 minutes.

We review these standards on a regular basis to ensure that we take account of any changes to risk in local communities. Over the life of the strategy we will need to consider our response standards in light of changing risks and reduced resources. We will consult on any proposed changes to our response standards.



Working in Partnership to Understand Risks

The Fire and Rescue Service is a trusted partner. We work closely with other public services in County Durham and Darlington to understand the wider risks facing local communities.

We cannot protect our local communities on our own. We have increasing evidence to show that most people who are vulnerable are usually vulnerable across a range of different risks. With this in mind all local authorities have a duty to work with key partners to produce a Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) to show how they will work together to improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the area. The SCS sets out the shared long-term vision and ambitions for that area and contributes to the priorities that partners and communities believe are important. The strategy does not provide a comprehensive list of everything that is happening to improve the area, rather it sets out key priorities for change for

the long term and how partner agencies will work to deliver those priorities. This is an important document as it shapes the work of all partners in the area and influences how they will use their resources to make improvements for local people. The strategy also shows central government that partners have a clear shared vision for the future of the area and have set clear priorities for action. It encourages businesses to invest in the area and the government to provide additional targeted support.



The Combined Fire Authority's integrated planning process takes account of the SCS's for both Durham and Darlington local authority areas. Whilst each strategy is different in style, the key themes are broadly similar across both areas. The Fire and Rescue Service comes into contact with many people living in local communities on a day to day basis and has a unique ability and capacity to effect positive and sustainable change across all of the themes, which are: -

Economic prosperity

The focus is on creating a vibrant economy that puts regeneration, economic development and quality of life at the heart of sustainable communities.

Improved aspirations especially for the young

Enabling children and young people to develop and achieve their aspirations, and to maximise their potential in line with the governments Every Child Matters agenda.

Improved health

Improving health and wellbeing for everybody irrespective of social, economic and environmental constraints.

Safer society

Creating of a safer county and borough.

Environmental improvements

Ensuring an attractive and 'liveable' local environment, and contributing to tackling global environmental challenges.

These priority themes give a unifying structure as to what partners are seeking to deliver, making it simpler for the people charged with delivery to understand. As an example, we recognise that those people who are vulnerable and most at risk from being killed or seriously injured in a house fire are also those suffering from poor health, living alone or in sub-standard housing and/or are at risk from lifestyle issues such as smoking or alcohol misuse. These complex and often inter-related risk factors cannot be reduced or eliminated by one agency acting alone. The Service has in place a toolkit that has helped us to understand in a high level of detail where, how and when we can make the most meaningful contribution across this broad agenda and is constantly striving to understand and deliver against our broader societal role.

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



Part 3 - Challenges

Facing County Durham and Darlington Fire Authority



We have identified the operational risks that direct our protection and prevention work in part 2 of this strategy. The Fire Authority also faces a number of other challenges over the medium to longer term that can impact on how services are delivered. We need to ensure that we have plans in place to meet these challenges to ensure that we can continue to provide effective and efficient services to our local communities.

Reduced Funding

The Fire Authority has received one of the highest levels of grant reduction for financial years 2011/12 and 2012/13. No details of grant settlement have been received for the final two years of this strategy, however we are anticipating significant further reductions in central government grant funding. We have established an approach to reducing our costs through our Service Transformation project, which is focused on implementing savings options that do not impact on service provision at the point of delivery.

The Changing Public Sector Landscape

A number of changes are being made to public service provision across the Country. These changes will impact on the way we interact with our partner agencies. In particular, changes to the structure of the health service including the abolition of primary care trusts will require us to identify new ways of working with our partners.



Asset Management – Estate Improvement

Our assets are vital to ensuring that we can provide effective and efficient services to local communities. A number of our fire stations need to be modernised to ensure that they are fit for purpose, provide appropriate community facilities in accordance with our protection and prevention work and are places where people want to work from, in order to attract and retain the right staff. We also need to improve our training and development facilities to ensure that we continue to provide our staff with the very best opportunities to hone their skills and ensure they can respond competently.

The Environment

We are aware of our own impact on the environment and of the environmental impact of fire on local communities. During times of reduced funding, we recognise that we will need to be innovative to ensure that our own operations take account of the environment. We work closely with the Environment Agency to ensure the environmental impact from incidents is minimised. Furthermore, by continuing to improve our performance and reduce the number of fires we can positively impact on the environmental consequences of fires.

Organisational Development

The significant changes to public services and the reduction in available funding means that we need to be an organisation that is lean and efficient. To do this, we need to continually review how we do things and develop improved ways of working. Developing the organisation will be extremely challenging when resources are reducing and will require effective management if we are to ensure the performance improvements we have made in recent years are to be sustained.

People

Our people are our greatest asset. Over the life of this strategy we need to ensure that our people are appropriately trained, properly equipped and developed effectively to undertake their roles. We recognise that to deliver effective services to local communities we need to continue to invest in our staff and recognise their potential.



Part 4 - Aligning Resources to Risk

This section of the plan provides information on our resources, how they are allocated and how we make best use of our resources to ensure that we can effectively manage the risks to our communities.

Staff Numbers

	2011/12	2010/11
Whole-time Fire- fighters	375	390
Part-time Fire-fighters	168	168
Control Room Staff	26	26
Support Staff	77	100

People

Our frontline services are delivered via six District areas; Darlington, Derwentside, Durham, Easington, Sedgefield and Wear and Tees. Placing our operational, community and fire safety staff in local areas enables us to provide a more integrated, cohesive and focused approach to addressing local risks. In addition this improves access to services and advice for local residents and members of our business community. The Authority employs 646 people in total.

Revenue budgets

The Authority has a revenue budget for 2011/12 of £29.863M. This takes account of a government grant reduction of 9.5%. We have been informed that our grant will also be reduced by a further 2.26% in 2012/13. Beyond this there is no certainty of the grant we will receive, however we are planning for a 25% grant reduction over the four year period covered by this strategy.

The anticipated reduction in resources over the life of this strategy represents a real risk to the continuing provision of services to the standard that local people expect. In order to mitigate this the Authority put in place a Service Transformation project that has identified new ways of working to reduce costs whilst maintaining the same level of service at the point of delivery.

Medium Term Financial Plan Extract

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Budget before savings	31.021	31.525	32.120	32.922
Efficiency savings	-0.281	-0.281	-0.281	-0.281
Service Transformation Savings	-0.877	-1.552	-2.555	-2.555
Phase 2 Service Transformation Savings	0	0	-1.033	-2.011
Budget Requirement	29.863	29.692	28.251	28.075
Grant Income	13.149	12.852	11.243	10.897
Council Tax	16.714	16.840	17.008	17.178
Total Funding	29.863	29.692	28.251	28.075

County Durham and Darlington Fire Authority Asset Distribution as at 1 April 2011

	Wear and Tees	Derwentside	Darlington	Sedgefield	Easington	Durham and Chester-le-Street	TOTAL
Fire Stations	3	2	2	3	3	2	15
Appliances	4	4	4	5	5	5	27
Aerial Ladder Platforms	-	-	1	-	-	1	2
Special Appliances	3		2	1	2	2	10
Targeted Response	-	-	1	-	-	1	2

Assets

The Authority's main operational assets are its fire stations, appliances and associated equipment. Our assets are located across the Service area to mitigate the risks that our local communities face.

Fire Stations

We have invested in many of our stations to ensure that community facilities are available to the public and our estate improvement programme includes provision to further modernise a number of our stations to include community facilities that can be used to expand our prevention work.

Appliances and Specialist Equipment

We have a number of specialist vehicles and equipment including two Aerial Ladder Platforms that are used to respond where we need specialist high level rescue capability. We also have a number of special appliances that we use for specific elements of our work including a swift water rescue team located at Bishop Auckland. Tactical response vehicles are located at Durham and Darlington to respond more effectively and efficiently to smaller incidents. These specialist appliances are targeted at helping us to reduce risk and provide us with the capability to provide our response services efficiently and effectively.

We also have a number of national resilience assets including an Incident Response Unit and Mass Decontamination Unit which are an integral part of the Service's operational response to major chemical incidents. We have a High Volume Pump which is used to respond to incidents of severe flooding locally and nationally and which is also

used to provide large volumes of water to assist with fire fighting at major incidents. These national resources enhance the Service's ability to respond and protect local communities in the event of major incidents.

Capital budgets

The Authority has a capital budget of £3.402M for 2011/12. The Authority's capital budgets are set to invest in the ongoing replacement of assets such as vehicles and equipment, and, where required, investment in new premises and facilities. The Authority is currently progressing significant estate improvements including new community fire stations, new learning and development facilities and a proposed headquarters facility.

Capital Budgets

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Estates	1.266	8.841	2.709	1.114
Vehicles	1.195	0.473	0.438	0.469
Equipment	0.145	0.185	0.093	0.230
Information Technology	0.796	0.281	0.105	0.106
TOTAL CAPITAL	3.402	9.780	3.345	1.919

Further information on our assets is available at

www.ddfire.gov.uk

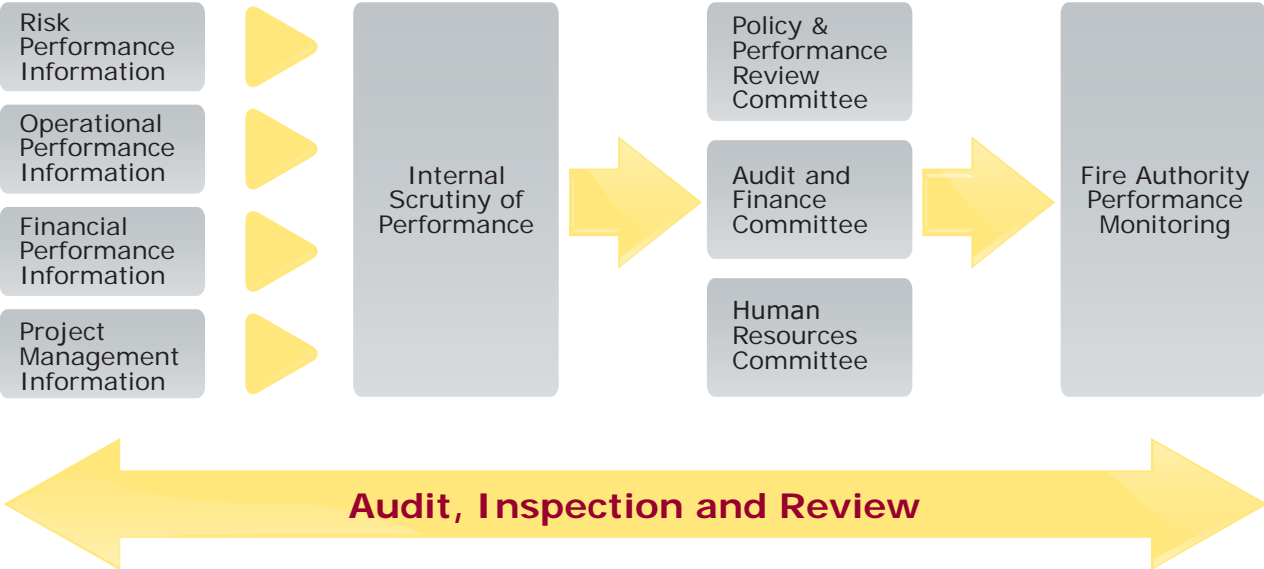


Measuring our Success

We measure our success through a range of performance information. Our performance is monitored internally through our own processes and we use risk management to divert resources to any areas that we feel are under performing.

We review our performance to ensure that we can fully understand what is working well and where we need to make improvements. Further details of our performance are available from the website at www.ddfire.gov.uk

Performance Management and Measurement



Part 5 - our Four Year Plans

This section of the strategy sets out how we will work towards our aims and objectives to achieve our vision of safest people, safest places. For each individual year of the four year strategy we will publish an annual improvement plan for consultation that includes our IRMP and corporate proposals.



Protection and Prevention

Our IRMP protection and prevention plans will focus on ensuring that we keep our communities safe. Our plans will identify and reduce the risks in local communities, ensure that we continue to respond to incidents effectively and competently and work with local people to ensure our contribution to local communities makes a real difference.



Developing Motivated People To Deliver Effectively

Our people are our greatest asset and our improvement plans will focus on ensuring that we invest in the skills and potential of all our people. We will consider new ways of helping our people to contribute to the success of our Fire and Rescue Service.



Value Through Sustainable Improvement

We face a significant financial challenge over the life of this strategy and our improvement plans will focus on ensuring the Service continues to develop and is fit for purpose. To do this we will identify improvement plans that ensure we provide value for money services to local taxpayers.

