

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS)

Service Statement
2017 - 18

March 2017

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service

Purpose:

The primary purpose of Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service is to make Northumberland a safer place to live and work through Prevention, Protection and Response. The services provided are a risk critical provision of the council that are delivered to the highest standard with fully qualified professional teams. Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service now incorporate the Public Health Protection and Business Compliance & Public Safety Units, which were formerly part of Public Protection.

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) is comprised of several distinctive services working together with the common aim of 'Making Northumberland Safer' whilst supporting the broader Corporate Priorities of Northumberland County Council (NCC) to improve services.

The aim of the Public Health Protection Unit is to protect and improve the public health, safety and well-being of residents, businesses and communities. The aim of the Business Compliance & Public Safety Unit is to provide Building Control, Licensing, Pest Control and Trading Standards Services by responding to requests for advice, guidance and services from businesses and residents and taking proportionate action when breaches of legislation are uncovered

The statutory duties specific to the Fire and Rescue Service and Civil Contingencies Team arise from the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, Fire Safety Order 2006, Civil Contingencies Act 2004, COMAH Regs 1999, The Major Accident Hazard (MAH) Pipeline Regulations 1996, The Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information Regulations 2007 and the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. This legislation requires NFRS to deliver the following key services:

- Emergency Response
- Community Safety
- Legislative Fire Safety
- Civil Contingencies
- Reduce crime and disorder locally and improve people's quality of life as a result

In addition there are a number of key services required by legislation to be delivered by the Public Health Protection Unit and Business Compliance & Public Safety Unit.

Primary areas of service delivery:

- Fire & Rescue Plan
- Business Continuity
- Emergency Planning
- Community Support
- Fires (building & wildfires)
- Road Traffic Collisions
- Flooding Incidents
- Chemical, Biological, Radiation & Nuclear Incidents
- Major Incidents
- Emergency Call Handling (Control Room)
- Support NCC Groups in Adverse Weather
- Fire Safety on Building Regulations
- Residential Care Home Inspections on Fire Safety
- Inspection and Enforcement in Business and Commercial Premises (RRO)
- Home Risk Assessments
- Smoke Alarm Fitting
- Schools Education Programme
- Arson Prevention Work
- Smoke Detector Installation Partnerships
- Youth Engagement Activities
- Vulnerable Adults Initiatives
- Engineering Services
- Operational Debrief
- Animal Welfare
- Dog Control / Fouling
- Environmental Enforcement
- Housing Standards & HMO Licensing
- Noise / Smoke / Dust Control
- Private Water Supplies
- Anti-Social Behaviour / Community Safety
- Air Quality Monitoring
- Contaminated Land
- Environmental Impact / hazards
- Assessments / Planning Consultations
- Regulation of permitted industrial premises
- Animal Health and Welfare
- Fair Trading / Product Safety
- Weights and Measures
- Under Age Sales
- Civil Law Consumer and Business Advice
- Primary Food and Feed Producers Regulation
- Food Standards Inspections
- Food Hygiene and Safety
- Port Health
- Health and Safety
- Building Regulations
- Dangerous Buildings / Demolitions
- Land Charges Register & Searches

- Street Naming
- Licensing Enforcement / Committees
- Taxi Licensing
- Licensed Premises
- Pest Control

The Service has long recognised the benefits of co-locating with partners such as Sure Start, North East Ambulance Service, Northumbria Police and North of Tyne Mountain Rescue Teams.

Service Parameters

Key Service Facts and Figures

Fire and rescue authorities have a responsibility to **'deliver effective and proportionate prevention and protection activities and be ready to respond to incidents within their areas and across the county to keep communities safe'**.

We currently have 16 community fire stations in Northumberland, delivering services 365 days a year. The Service received around 6,200 emergency calls, attended over 3100 incidents in 2016/17 and utilises a number of duty systems based on risk.

Whole-time Duty System:
The Service has two whole-time community fire stations in the south east of the county which is largely urban. Operational firefighters work 10 hour day shifts, and 14 hour night shifts.

Day Staffing:
The Service has two Community Fire Stations with firefighters working during the day for a 12 hour shift period, and responding following pager alert during the 12 hour night shift.

Retained Duty System:
In rural areas, firefighters who live or work within five minutes of the station will respond to a pager alert if there is an incident in their area.



Holy Island:
Holy Island has a garaged fire engine. Firefighters from Berwick, Belford and Seahouses Community Fire Stations will respond to an incident using the fire engine and equipment stored on the island where appropriate.

Public Health Protection Unit

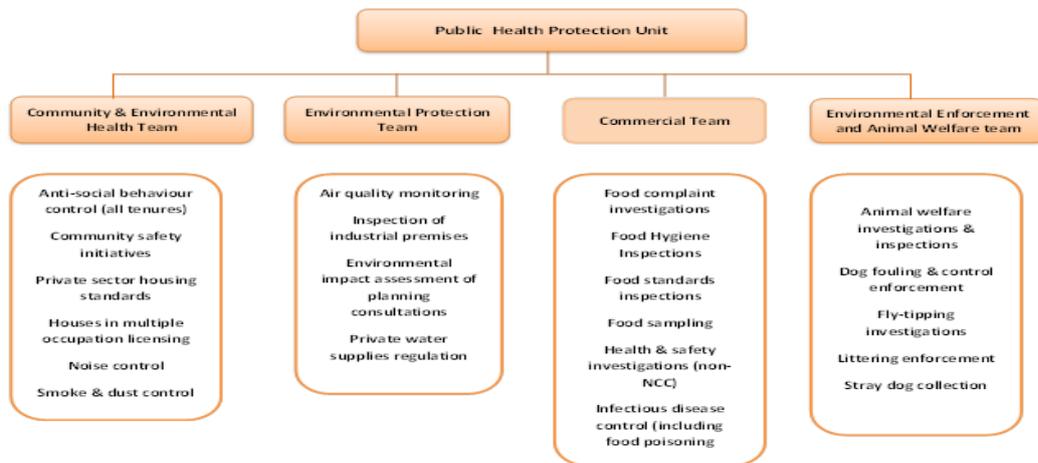
The Public Health Protection Unit responded to 13,297 service requests in 2016/17 from residents and businesses. It also carried out hundreds of proactive visits to protect & improve food hygiene, food standards, air quality, and water quality in private water supplies.

The Unit investigates many different types of public health & safety issues including anti-social behaviour, noise, air & land pollution, fly tipping, littering, poor housing standards, dog fouling and we take over a thousand stray dogs a year to a place of safety.

The Unit's activities are strongly linked to the following corporate priorities:

- Improve our places and our environment
- Enable communities and families to be strong
- Help people to be healthy and independent

The Unit comprises four teams that deliver a series of protective and/or preventative statutory functions for the Council across more than 100 pieces of legislation. The Unit seeks to protect and improve public health and safety through an approach that uses the three 'E's': education, engagement and where necessary enforcement.



The Unit works in partnership with a variety of other services including; Northumbria Police, Public Health England, Fire Safety, Adult & Children Safeguarding, Town/Parish Councils, and plays an active role in the Safer Northumberland Partnership.

The Unit comprises officers with a wide range of competencies including; environmental health officers, community safety officers, environmental enforcement officers, animal welfare officers, and technical officers with a wide range of specialisms.

Public Health Protection Unit 2016/17

The Public Health Protection Unit's activities in 2016/17 included:

- In 2016/17 the Commercial Team carried out 847 food safety and 92 high risk food standards inspections of premises across Northumberland. It completed 100% of high risk and 98% overall of programmed inspections. They also investigated 343 food complaints responding to 97% in 3 days.
- The Environmental Protection Team was consulted and provided expert advice on 1167 planning applications in 2016/17. For 78% of applications a consultee response was provided within 21 days.
- The Public Health Protection Unit investigated 1831 noise and environmental protection complaints in 2016/17. 96% were responded to within 3 working days.
- The Community & Environmental Health Team investigated 816 complaints concerning anti-social behaviour in 2016/17. 93% were responded to within 3 working days.
- In 2016/17 the Environmental Enforcement and Animal Welfare Team investigated 806 fly tips and 952 waste accumulations across Northumberland. Under new legal provisions 7 fixed penalty notices were issued and 7 offenders were prosecuted for waste offences.
- In 2016/17 the Environmental Enforcement and Animal Welfare Team led on littering enforcement that resulted in 176 fixed penalty fines being issued.
- In 2016/17 the Environmental Enforcement and Animal Welfare Team investigated 510 reported abandoned vehicles.
- 2016/17 the Community & Environmental Health Team investigated 486 housing standards complaints from tenants. 98% were responded to within 3 days and this ensured 195 serious housing health and safety hazards were removed.
- In 2016/17 Environmental Enforcement and Animal Welfare Team investigated 5,801 dog related and animal welfare service requests. We collected 468 stray dogs and took 100% of them to a place of safety within one working day. Officers issued 102 fixed penalty notices for dog fouling and other dog control offences.
- The Unit developed and delivered the Produced in Northumberland verification scheme that received extensive positive coverage in the media. By the end of 2016/17 over 60 businesses had signed up to the scheme.
- The Animal Welfare stray dog collection service once again received the RSPCA's Gold footprint Award.



Business Compliance & Public Safety Unit

The Business Compliance & Public Safety Unit (BC&PSU) brings together a diverse group of Teams with a range of specialist skills.

The Building Control Team oversees constructions in the County from plan checking to completion covering buildings from domestic extensions up to factories, leisure centres and cinemas. They also have responsibility when a dangerous structure is identified, working with colleagues in the Highways Team and the Police to make the area safe for residents pedestrians and road users.

The Licensing Team administer licences and permits for taxi drivers and vehicles, pubs, clubs and off-licences, scrap metal dealers, zoos, street traders, bookmakers, music festivals and tattooists amongst others. In many cases they have to ensure that licence holders are fit and proper people to hold licences and that they will be able to comply with the requirements of the relevant legislation. The Licensing Enforcement Team carries out checks to ensure that these requirements are being met. The Team work closely with the Police, Fire & Rescue Service, Public Health, Environmental Health and Trading Standards, amongst others to monitor performance by licence holders and to ensure compliance.

Pest Control provides a service to business and residents, eradicating pests and providing advice on protection against infestation. Their work is seasonal with insects being the main focus during the warmer seasons and rodents during the colder months. Larger organisations can contract with them for annual support. Clients include leisure centres, hospitals and social landlords, which helps to improve their offer to their tenants.

The Trading Standards & Animal Health Team focus on making sure that goods and services, including foods, and other products are safe and fairly described and traded. They make sure that all weights and measures equipment is giving the correct amount and that packages weigh what they say on their label. The Animal Health section focuses on preventing the spread of animal diseases such as foot and mouth. They also make sure that animal feed provided for animals is safe for them and the end consumer.

Our Technical Support Team support activity across all of Public Protection. Their services are integrated into front line activity so as to release more time for officers to work directly with clients. Without this support, front line activity would be severely reduced.

The BC & PS Unit covers a range of services. The following figures help to illustrate the diversity of activity undertaken. In the 2016-17 financial year:

- The Pest Control Team responded to 5576 requests for service with 2899 being initial requests and a further 2679 revisits to complete treatments dealing with rats, mice, fleas, wasps, ants and other pests. They also carried out 358 visits for complaints.
- The Trading Standards & Animal Health Team received 2011 consumer complaints and 705 requests for advice from businesses and dealt with issues such as counterfeit vodka, illicit tobacco, unsafe cars, rogue traders, scams, imported puppies and livestock of animals at markets.
- The Licensing Team administered 5029 permits and licences for taxi drivers and vehicles, pubs clubs and off-licences, zoos, street traders and scrap metal dealers, amongst others.
- Building Control supervised building schemes worth over £130m, carrying out 13,000 inspections to ensure that buildings in Northumberland are safe to live in, energy efficient and accessible for all our residents.
- The Technical Support Team dealt with 193 Freedom of Information requests, 1679 Health & Safety Accident Forms, 1166 Planning Applications and minuted 3 meetings.

Summary of Service Resources at 1 April 2017

Fire and Rescue Service	Number of FTE	Staffing Expenditure	Non Staffing Expenditure	Income	Capital Investment
Whole Time	146				
Retained Duty System	145				
Fire Control	15.25				
Support	26.05				
Civil Contingency	4.3	220,440	36,780		
Learning Centre & Externally Funded	4.6	139,690	1,060	-138,690	
NFRS Apprentices	5				
Volunteers	13				
Total	346.2	10,611,180	7,043,700	-2,469,530	1,523,291
Public Health Protection and Business Compliance & Public Safety Mgmt	2.00	159,340	123,500	-28,000	
Public Health Protection	45.67	1,769,860	518,660	-165,040	
Business Compliance & Public Safety	56.67	2,023,670	868,230	-2,344,060	
Total	104.34	3,952,870	1,510,390	-2,537,100	
Fire and Rescue Tota	450.54	14,564,050	8,554,090	-5,006,630	1,523,291

External Validation

Inspections

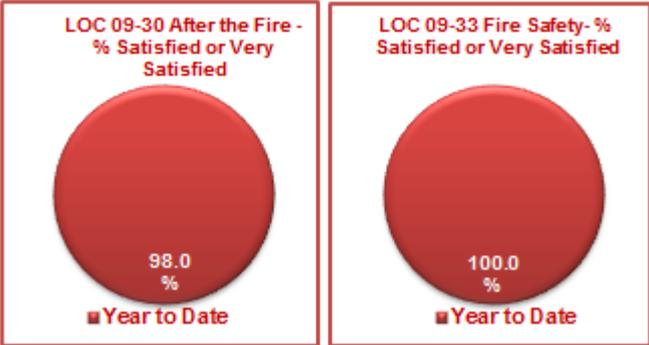
Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) can now commission an Operational Assessment or Fire Peer Challenge, to be undertaken at a time of their own choosing. Operational Assessment and Fire Peer Challenge were developed following the abolition of the audit and inspection regime and the national performance framework. They are central to the shift that has been made to sector-led improvement and greater local accountability.

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service's Fire Peer Challenge took place in November 2013 and consisted of a range of activities including interviews, focus groups and visits to four fire stations. The purpose of the peer challenge was to provide external challenge to help support improvement and to reflect how the Service is performing in key areas. During the Challenge, the peer team met with a broad cross-section of members, officers, front line firefighters and partner agencies.

[View the peer challenge report here](#)

The stray dog collection service provided by the Service's animal welfare officers once again received the RSPCA's Gold Footprint award in 2015.

Customer perception



The graphics above indicate customer response to Service activities and are taken from the NFRS performance dashboard at the end of March 2017. The Service reviews performance during individual department meetings and at the Senior Leadership Team meetings on a monthly basis, in addition to the scrutiny of performance carried out at the Performance Action Group on a bimonthly basis.

Complaints measured against compliments

In 2016/17 there were 47 compliments and 11 complaints received for Fire and Rescue and a 98% of people responding to the customer satisfaction surveys were either satisfied or very satisfied with the service they had received.

In addition to this there have been 26 compliments and also 26 complaints recorded at the end of 2016/17 for Public Health Protection and Business Compliance and Public Safety Units.

Public Protection current survey responses show overall satisfaction with the service with more than 93.5% being either satisfied or very satisfied with the overall service and the elements of the service, such as response times, ease of access and quality of advice provided. Customer comments are also very positive showing how individual members of staff have gone out of their way to help customers.

The survey is also providing the first statistical information about the users of the service. From the current responses, the majority of customers are white British, middle-aged and over and more than a third describe themselves as having a disability.

Benchmarking

When comparing the reduction in incidents in Northumberland with the England for the last five years and the previous year, Northumberland is similar to the national trend in many areas. Exceptions in the five year period are a smaller percentage reduction in deliberate primary fires and a larger reduction in accidental dwelling fires for Northumberland. The previous year comparison shows Northumberland achieving a greater reduction in accidental dwelling fires and false alarms from fires.

Northumberland and England

2010/11 to 2015/16*			2014/15 to 2015/16	
England		Northumberland	England	Northumberland
All Incidents	-18%	-14%	7%	9%
All Fires	-29%	-25%	5%	4%
Primary Fires	-20%	-19%	3%	-3%
Secondary Fires	-34%	-28%	7%	13%
Chimney Fires	-45%	-36%	-19%	-23%
Deliberate Primary Fires	-34%	-8%	11%	17%
Deliberate Secondary Fires	-38%	-10%	6%	14%
Accidental Dwelling Fires	-11%	-21%	0%	-8%
False Alarms from Fires	-21%	-21%	-1%	-12%

* Latest figures available from Home Office for England are for 2015/16.

Food Safety - the key performance statistics considered by the Food Standards Agency and published by the Which organisation place the Council in the top quartile nationally i.e. ranked 50th of 358 local authorities for 2015/16.

Priorities for 2017 – 2020

Priority Area	Key Milestones
<p>1. Review risks to our communities, recommending, implementing and evaluating any identified changes in how we deliver our service.</p>	<p>Develop and implement risk models for prevention, protection and emergency response. Implement identified changes in how we deliver our service delivery and evaluate impact</p>
<p>2. Continue to embed the organizational strategy for evaluation and quality assurance.</p>	<p>Policies, procedures and toolkits for evaluation and quality assurance will be applied in accordance with governance arrangements through Service Leadership Team (SLT) and Performance Review Action Team (PRAG).</p>
<p>3. Actively seek opportunities to work in partnership and collaboration, both internally and externally, to deliver added value to our communities.</p>	<p>NFRS will seek to develop new relationships, or where partnerships already exist continue to work collaboratively, with our colleagues within Northumberland County Council and our wider external partners to deliver an intelligence and evidence led service for the benefit of our communities.</p> <p>We will embed our areas of synergy and integrated working with NCC Public Protection and wherever possible we will look to enhance our strategic partnerships to provide better outcomes and added value.</p>
<p>4. Deliver business case outcomes for the continued modernization of the Emergency Control Centre, including the Emergency Services Mobile Communication Project</p>	<p>Business Case options have been considered and implemented for the future working of the emergency fire control centre. This has led to the introduction of a staffing model which has greatly reduced the need for overtime payments to be made. Further work is still required to establish more robust ways of working and the mutual provision of resilience with Tyne and Wear Fire Service. Additionally work is ongoing to develop proposals to ensure the mobilising system is capable of connecting to the emergency services mobile communications programme (ESMCP)</p>
<p>5. Delivery of the Public Health Protection Plan</p>	<p>Provide an effective response to issues of anti-social behaviour and environmental issues such as noise through evidence based investigation and risk based action.</p> <p>Regulate & support food businesses through the Food Safety and Standards Service Plan 2017-18. Also continue to deliver the new</p>

	<p>produced in Northumberland Verification Scheme to support Northumberland food businesses.</p> <p>Protect and improve public health by proactively ensuring air quality within Northumberland meets national standards through the regulation of permitted industrial premises and the investigation of air pollution incidents. Ensure that the NCC area complies with National Air Quality Objectives and provide progress report to DEFRA by September 2017.</p> <p>Protect and improve the natural and built environment through the provision of expert technical advice to the Council's planning committees.</p> <p>Improve environmental quality and protect public health through the investigation of all animal welfare complaints, the efficient collection of stray dogs, and a targeted dog fouling/control enforcement programme.</p> <p>Improve environmental quality and protect public health through targeted enforcement investigations of fly tipping, littering, waste accumulations, and abandoned vehicles.</p> <p>Reduce incidents of illness, accident or deaths in and around the home through effective inspection together with risk based enforcement action and advice.</p> <p>Ensure private water supplies in Northumberland are improved to ensure that potential dangers to human health are removed through the delivery of the risk assessment based private water supplies 2017/18 programme.</p>
<p>6. Delivery of the Business Compliance & Public Safety Unit Plan</p>	<p>To ensure non-compliant businesses are brought back into compliance commitment to business and customer satisfaction to identify high risk premises and develop a programme of visits.</p>

	<p>Respond to reports of dangerous structures within 1 working day of notification.</p> <p>Land charges, number of responses replied to within 10 working days.</p> <p>To coordinate regionally and complete the Feed Hygiene project</p> <p>To improve fee collection practices and reduce outstanding debt.</p> <p>To improve marketing of services and develop practices to increase income.</p> <p>Carry out pest control treatments at residential and business premises on the appointment day they requested.</p> <p>Carry out contracted pest control treatments for Businesses.</p> <p>To provide efficient, timely support services for all the Teams in Public Protection, meeting their quality and time standards.</p>
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Performance Framework

Measure	Outturn	Target	Outturn ****	Target
	2015/16	2016/17	2016/17	2017/18
1. Number of Deliberate Secondary Fires **	548	410	557	455
2. Primary Fires *	499	431	498	431
3. Deaths from Primary Fires	0	0	3	0
4. Injuries from Primary Fires	19	16	18	15
5. Accidental Fires in Dwellings	147	160	161	160
6. Deaths from Accidental Dwelling Fires	0	0	3	0
7. Injuries from Accidental Dwelling Fires	6	15	7	14
8. Malicious False Alarms Attended	37	25	41	25
9. Automatic False Alarms in Non-domestic premises	321	319	376	319
10. Deliberate Primary Fires Excluding Vehicles	94	50	89	70
11. Deliberate Primary Fires in Vehicles	54	37	76	70
12. Fires in Non-domestic premises	87	60	77	60
13. Percentage of Smoke Alarms Fitted in Dwelling Fires	69.28%	70%	89.20%	75%
14. Percentage of food plan visits achieved against % expected in plan.(cumulative)	99.20%	98%	97.31%	95%
15. % of service requests responded to within three days	92.30%	90%	89.88%	90%
16. % of planning consultations responded to within target time	85.70%	80%	N/A	75%
17. % of pest control treatments conducted on time	100%	100%	99.59%	100%
18. Number of serious private sector health and safety housing hazards removed	302	N/A	195	N/A
19. % of waste accumulations removed from private land, following environmental enforcement team action within 28 days ***	N/A	80%	86.48%	80%
20. % of land charges responses replied to within 10 working days	64.50%	95%	55.54%	65%
21. Reported dangerous structures	100%	100%	100%	100%

Measure	Outturn	Target	Outturn ****	Target
	2015/16	2016/17	2016/17	2017/18
inspected within 1 working day of notification				
22. % of food premises with a hygiene rating of 3-5 (comparison with national average for the month)	98.40%	N/A	98.44%	N/A
23. % of high priority food premises inspections completed in line with annual programme (cumulative)	100%	100%	100%	98%
24. % high risk animal health visits conducted in line with quarterly schedule	15.60% (Q1)	10% (Q1)	18.80%	10% (Q1)
	30% (Q2)	30% (Q2)	30.56%	30% (Q2)
	65% (Q3)	65% (Q3)	63.20%	65% (Q3)
	95% (Q4)	95% (Q4)	99.30%	95% (Q4)
25. % stray dogs collected within 1 working day	100%	100%	100%	98%
26. Number of dog control fixed penalty notices served	106	N/A	102	N/A
27. % of licence applications processed within the specified timescale ***	N/A	N/A	N/A	75%

* Primary Risk – Most important or significant risks

** Secondary Fire - Mostly outdoor fires and include grassland, scrubland, loose refuse, rubbish containers and derelict properties

*** New indicator for 2016/17, target not set until 2017/18 for % of license applications processed within the specified timescale as historical data was not available to base target upon.

**** Out turn figures provided as at 26th April 2017. Not all data has been finalised.

In 2014 Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service commissioned Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service to analyse the service performance against the key performance indicators and propose targets for 2014 – 2017. The data received from the analysis has been used by the Service Leadership Team to set a range of challenging targets for the Service. Following the end of the three years, new targets have been set for 2017/18.