

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service

Fire and Rescue Plan

(Integrated Risk Management Plan)

2017 - 2021

YEAR 3 UPDATE 2019/20



Fire and Rescue Service

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Our people

The heart of Northumberland



Our Vision: “One Council that works for everyone”

Fire and Rescue Service Mission: “Making Northumberland Safer”



Residents
First



Excellence
and Quality



Respect



Keeping our
communities
safe and well

FOREWORD

Welcome to Northumberland County Council's (NCC) Fire and Rescue Service's Fire and Rescue Plan (FRP), Year 3 Update (2019/20).

The Year 3 Update reflects back on the first two years of the 2017-21 Fire and Rescue Plan to provide details on our performance, risks, progress and achievements since 2017/18. The Year 3 Update is also an opportunity to demonstrate what we hope to deliver in 2019/20. The plan builds on our previous work to improve our preparedness, prevention and response to emergencies, and our prevention initiatives to reduce the harm, and increase the protection, to vulnerable members of our communities.

We are excited by the new opportunities we are exploring with partners to deliver improved outcomes for our residents, and as a key part of Northumberland County Council (NCC) we can assist to deliver the strategic aims of the council by working closely with other NCC Directorates to provide integrated services which maximise outcomes for communities. The work we are doing with NCC colleagues supports NCC's vision, values and priorities contained in the Corporate Plan 2018-21, especially the priority of "Living" - *we want you to feel safe, healthy and cared for*.

From 29th October – 2nd November 2018, the Service underwent its first independent assessment under Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) - our first service-wide inspection since our Peer Review in November 2013. We are looking forward to the final published report in June 2019, which will detail the outcome of our inspection, and which will be fundamental to assisting our aspiration and ambition to continually improve the way we deliver our services.

In June 2018 the Home Office released the revised National Framework Document (NFD) which provides the overall strategic direction and expectations of Government / Home Office to fire and rescue services. The NFD seeks to ensure delivery of the Home Office reform programme to support the continuous improvement of fire and rescue services, enabling them to be more accountable, effective and professional than ever before and building on the great strides in prevention and collaboration that they have already made.

We remain in challenging times financially, but know that we must ensure that we continue to deliver a high quality protection and prevention services to those most at risk, whilst at the same time maintaining a resilient, well equipped and highly trained operational workforce able to respond effectively to incidents when they occur.

We also know we must aim to maintain our focus on regularly reviewing our risk profile to utilise our personnel and resources where they can have the maximum impact, preparing the service to effectively meet those risks and being as proactive as possible to prevent fires and other emergencies occurring in the first place.

The 2017-2021 Fire and Rescue Plan is available [here](#)
The 2018-2021 Service Statement is available [here](#)



Cllr John Riddle
NCC Cabinet Member
Planning, Housing & Resilience
& NCC Fire Authority Chair



Paul Hedley
Chief Fire Officer and
NCC Head of Service

STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES

Fire and rescue authorities have a number of duties as set out in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. Under the Act, fire and rescue authorities must:

- **Promote fire safety, including the provision of information and publicity on how to prevent fires, and on the means of escape from buildings in case of fire**
- **Extinguish fires and protect life and property in the event of fires**
- **Rescue people and protect people from serious harm in the event of road traffic collisions**
- **When necessary, deal with emergencies other than fires and road traffic collisions**

Fire and rescue authorities in England have further responsibilities under the Fire and rescue national framework for England 2018 to ‘**assess all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect their communities**’.

The framework identifies five priorities for fire and rescue authorities:

- **To make appropriate provision for fire prevention and protection activities and response to fire and rescue related incidents;**
- **To identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their areas face;**
- **To collaborate with emergency services and other local and national partners to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the service they provide;**
- **To be accountable to communities for the service they provide; and**
- **To develop and maintain a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse.**

Fire and rescue authorities are required to produce an ‘*Integrated Risk Management Plan*’ (IRMP) which will inform communities how it will deliver those priorities. In Northumberland, we call this our Fire and Rescue Plan. Our current plan covers the four year period 2017-2021. We will refresh our plan annually, at which time we will review our community risk profile to ensure it remains accurate.



STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Service also supports the Council in its responsibilities under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, providing businesses, and other responsible persons, with education, advice and guidance. Prosecutions will be pursued when it is in the public's best interests to do so.

In addition, fire and rescue authorities have a duty under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to work with partners in their Local Resilience Forum (LRF) to plan and train for hazards identified in a joint Community Risk Register (CRR). A CRR identifies potential risks to the community from, for example, flooding. This assists in risk management planning, including the allocation of resources, training and preparation for the response to emergency incidents. Risks identified in the CRR are reflected in our plan.

More recently, the Policing and Crime Act 2017 further reforms policing and enables important changes to the governance of fire and rescue services. The Act places a duty on police, fire and ambulance services to work together and enables police and crime commissioners to take on responsibility for fire and rescue services where a local case is made.

Prior to the enactment of the Policing and Crime Act 2017, Northumbria Police, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service established a Strategic Delivery Board with the following aims:-

- **Better value for money** - the collaboration produces quantifiable efficiencies, either on implementation or in the longer term
- **Improved outcomes** - the collaboration maintains or improves the service it provides to local people and local communities
- **Reduced demand** - the collaboration should contribute towards the longer term strategic objective of decreasing risk in communities and reducing demand on services

In 2018 the role of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary was extended to incorporate the inspection of fire and rescue services. Rebranded as Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS); the team are inspecting all 45 fire and rescue services in England during 2018/19. NFRS were inspected during autumn of 2018 with the final report due to be published in June 2019. The inspection programme included assessment of:

- **Effectiveness** – including prevention, protection, resilience and response
- **Efficiency** – how well we provide value for money, allocates resources to match risk and collaborates with other emergency services; and
- How well we look after our **People** – promoting values and culture, training staff to ensure everyone has the necessary skills to perform their role, ensuring fairness and diversity and developing leadership and service compatibility.

The inspections are designed to enable the public to see how well fire and rescue services are performing and assess how we perform in relation to other fire and rescue services.

To deliver its mission statement of '**Making Northumberland Safer**', NFRS has developed the following aims:

- **Reduce the number of fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies occurring in Northumberland**
- **Reduce the number of deaths and injuries and mitigate the commercial, economic and social cost of emergency incidents**
- **Safeguard the environment and heritage sites (both built and natural)**
- **Support communities to protect themselves from harm**
- **Provide value for money through the provision of a lean, efficient and resilient service**

YOUR FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

Background to your Fire & Rescue Service

Northumberland County Council's (The Fire Authority) area:

Area: 5026 Sq Km (1941 Sq Miles)

Population: 316,002

Dwellings: 153,007

Non Domestic Premises: 12,337

Fire Stations: 15:

2 Wholetime (full time), 2 Day staffed (part time at night),
11 Retained (part time), 1 Garaged appliance on Holy Island

Fire Engines/Specialist Vehicles: 37

Support Vehicles: 34

Incidents: On average, we attend over 3,300 emergency incidents a year



The people who deliver your service

<i>Fire and Rescue Establishment (as of 1 April 2019):</i>	<i>Wholetime (including Officers):</i>	141
<i>Emergency Response:</i>	<i>Retained*:</i>	155
<i>Fire Control:</i>		16
<i>Corporate**</i>		32
Total Establishment:		348

* Note the number of retained / on-call firefighters fluctuates due to the nature of their role.

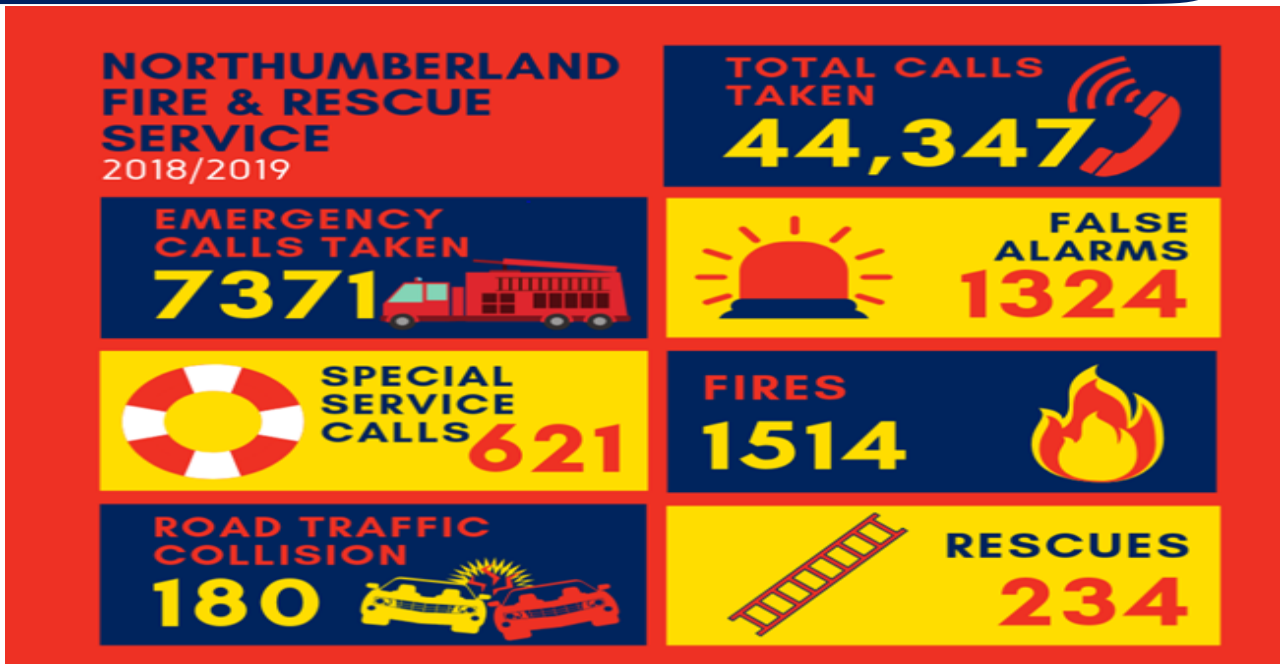
** includes Civil Contingencies, Community Safety, Fire Safety, Fire Support Services and Learning & Development.

Fire Engine Availability

Northumberland FRS always strives to maximize the availability of its 21 operational fire engines from our 15 fire stations across the county. Whilst the expectation of the public may be that their local fire engine(s) are always available to respond, the reality may be different. **In 2018/19 we averaged a total fire engine availability rate of 86% across Northumberland** - this is influenced by a large number of factors; with recruitment to fill current vacancies of On-Call firefighters a primary challenge across Northumberland. We are working hard to improve that figure. NFRS believes that a more useful indicator for the public would be how often their local fire station was available to respond to an emergency incident rather than focus on the availability of all of the fire engines. **In 2018/19 we had an available resource response rate from our 15 fire stations of just over 92%.**

70% of Northumberland FRS area (1348mls² / 3492km²) is initially covered by an operational emergency response from one of 11 On-Call fire stations. Those stations are staffed by firefighters who in most cases are self-employed or have other primary employment. There are a number of factors which mean that they may not be available to respond to fire calls, especially during 08.00 - 18.00 Monday to Friday - this potentially impacts upon the availability of an operational response from their local station. Because NFRS operates a "global" fire cover model, we often use on duty whole-time personnel to supplement staffing at On-Call stations to maximise the fire cover across Northumberland and to ensure that we can have as many fire engines as possible 'on the run'.

IDENTIFYING RISKS

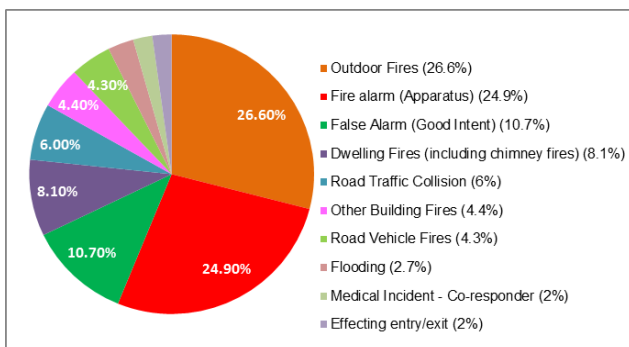


The 2017-21 Fire and Rescue Plan outlines how we identify, assess and mitigate fire and rescue related risks to the communities of Northumberland. Whilst we have a requirement to identify **all** fire and rescue related risks, it is risk to **life** that is given the highest priority.

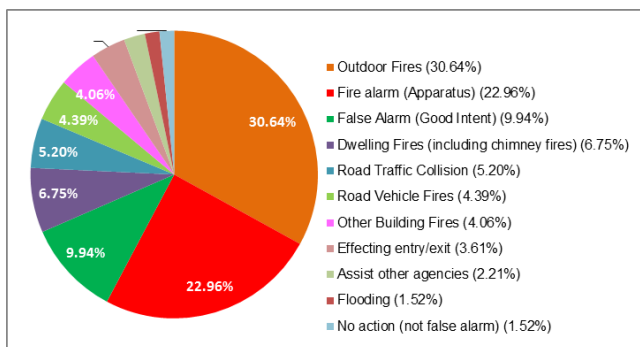
We have continued to identify and assess the level of risk to communities within Northumberland. This work includes consideration of risk modelling, historical data and professional judgement. The assessment of risk requires both quantitative and qualitative analysis that examines both the likelihood and impact of identified risk.

In the last 10 years, the total number of incidents in Northumberland has reduced by nearly 30%. Over the past 5 years (2013/14 - 2017/18) the 10 most frequently attended incident types account for 92% of all incidents, 87% of casualties and 65% of fatalities. A comparison between the most frequently attended incident types over the last 5 years and those attended in 2017/18 are detailed in the pie charts below.

Pie Chart 1: to show the 10 most frequently attended incident types across Northumberland in the last five years



Pie Chart 2: to show the 10 most frequently attended incident types across Northumberland in 2017/18 *



NB Two incident types both have same amount and so are joint tenth

IDENTIFYING RISKS

Substantive efforts have been made by the service to reduce the high level of demand placed on fire crews by fire alarm (apparatus) and outdoor type incidents. In combination, these two incident types account for over 50% of the total incidents attended. Initiatives to reduce the number of such incidents include:

- Working with partners to identify and, where appropriate, remove outdoor fire risks e.g. accumulations of flammable materials
- Securing premises awaiting demolition
- Working with schools to educate students about the risks of outdoor fires
- Supporting farmers and landowners to encourage safe burning practices
- Provision of advice and guidance for organisers of bonfires
- Provision of advice and guidance to owners/occupiers of premises where fire alarms activate when there is no fire
- Reducing the number of fire appliances mobilised to automatic fire alarms
- Charging the occupiers/owners of premises who repeatedly call in the fire service to false alarms

The review of community risk will continue throughout 18/19 to inform the Y3 update of the plan.

NFRS response standards

There are a number of response standard (times) methodologies in use by English FRS. Many consider a combination of life and area risk, as well as reflecting the geographical size of the area to be covered. Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service have undertaken a review of similar fire and rescue service's response times to act as a benchmark for revising our current attendance times.

It is important to ensure that we are able to operate to a single standard across Northumberland which challenges us to provide a high quality emergency response but also reflects the unique challenges of providing an effective operational response across a large predominantly rural area with an average station area of 334km², and where 70% of the county is covered by On-Call personnel,

Our revised response standards which we will pilot and evaluate during 2019/20 are;

Standard 1 - The Service will endeavour to ensure that the first mobilised fire engine attends all property fires within 10 minutes of alerting on 80% of occasions.

Standard 2 - The Service will endeavour to attend all property fires within 13 minutes from alerting the second fire appliance attending the same incident on 80% of occasions.
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Standard 3 - The Service will endeavour to ensure that the first mobilised fire engine attends all road traffic collisions within 15 minutes of alerting on 80% of occasions.
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Standard 4 - The Service will endeavour to ensure that the second mobilised fire engine attends all road traffic collisions within 20 minutes of alerting on 80% of occasions.

Standards 1 and 3, relating to the attendance of the first responding fire engine, have been increased from the previous performance measure of 75%.

PERFORMANCE

How well are we performing?

A robust process for measuring and reporting against performance ensures the authority regularly monitors outcomes for our communities. Detailed information about our performance can be found at www.northumberland.gov.uk. We have summarised our performance for you below:

In 2018/19 the Service:

- Attended a total of **3349** incidents
- Attended **167** dwelling fires
- Attended **174** Road Traffic Collisions
- Fitted **5251** smoke detectors
- Completed **7821** safe and wellbeing visits
- Engaged **12051** young people
- Completed **256** school visits
- Conducted **339** fire safety audit inspections
- Conducted **93** fire investigations
- Conducted **25** fire investigations in conjunction with Northumbria Police
- Contributed to the successful prosecution of **four** cases of arson
- Delivered **214** training days to **420** personnel

2017/18 to 2018/19

- Reduced deliberate primary fires by **8%**
- Reduced all primary fires by **1%**
- Reduced accidental dwelling fires by **7%**
- Reduced malicious false alarms attended by **5%**
- Deliberate secondary fires increased by **37% ***
- Fires in non-domestic premises increased by **4% ***
- False alarms caused by fire detection system increased by **1% ***

Since we started to produce our Fire and Rescue Plan 2003/04 – 2018/19

- Reduced deliberate primary fires by **76%**
- Reduced deliberate secondary fires by **54%**
- Reduced all primary fires by **59%**
- Reduced injuries from primary fires by **59%**
- Reduced accidental dwelling fires by **39%**
- Reduced fires in non-domestic premises by **69%**
- Reduced malicious false alarms attended by **81%**
- Reduced false alarms caused by fire detection system by **60%**

* The reduction of deliberate secondary fires, the majority of which are outdoor fires, together with working to reduce false alarms caused by fire detection systems will be a priority for the service during 2018/19. 39% of the fires in non-domestic premises occurred at HMP Northumberland. The service is working closely with HMP Northumberland staff to reduce the number of such incidents.

Our progress against priorities for 2018/19

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service priorities for 2018/19 were as follows:-

1. Review risks to our communities, recommending, implementing and evaluating any identified changes in how we deliver our service.

We have continued to review community risk levels, making changes to how we deliver our service where appropriate. In particular we have; designed and ordered new fire appliances, developed plans to expand safe and wellbeing visits to include; slips trips and falls, smoking, alcohol and dementia, reviewed and updated *Extinguish* Programme for children and young people who set fires, trained operational personnel to increase our capacity to conduct fire safety inspections and reviewed our response standards.

2. Continue to embed the organisational strategy for evaluation and quality assurance.

Work has commenced with NFCC to develop a model for evaluation, whilst the evaluation of the removal of operational resources during 2016/17 has continued. A review of the effective command active incident monitoring model has been completed and work is now underway to assess whether or not this is the most appropriate model for NFRS to use. The operational debriefing process has also been reviewed and has been expanded to include virtual debriefs.

3. Actively seek opportunities to work in partnership and collaboration, both internally and externally, to deliver added value to our communities.

Existing partnership arrangements have been monitored and enhanced with neighbouring fire and rescue services, Northumbria Police, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Northumberland Healthcare Foundation Trust and North East Ambulance Service. New partnership arrangements have been established with West Yorkshire Fire Authority for administration of pensions and with Northumberland National Park Mountain Rescue Team for the provision of swift water technician training. In addition partnerships with NCC Public Health and Adult Health and Wellbeing have been established to enhance our safe and well programme.

4. Deliver the continued modernisation of the Emergency Control Centre, including the Emergency Services Mobile Communication Project.

Further improvements have been planned for the Emergency Control Centre which will increase levels of resilience and ensure that NFRS is prepared for the forthcoming replacement of the Airwave network by the Emergency Services Network (ESN). NFRS has continued to support the ESMCP project and is implementing the planned technical refresh of the mobilising system, which is now five years old. The development of new mobilising software, which was applied in March 2019 provides additional functionality to the fire control operators.

5. Creating a healthy and positive working environment

The service has instigated a range of engagement work streams in order to establish how to develop and implement staff improvements and suggestions. This has included an 'On-call' review and changes to how we operate our 'on-call' systems. NFRS is involved in a range of staff engagement groups and has established an independently chaired equality, diversity and inclusion staff network. The service is part of the County Council and as such maintains a range of support and welfare arrangements for all personnel, this includes, occupational health, physiotherapy and mental health support mechanisms, MIND Blue Light Support structures and FF Charity assistance. This is continually reviewed to improve provision across the service.

6. To prepare for and participate in an independent inspection delivered by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

During 2018/19 the organisation has been inspected by HMICFRS, culminating in a Discovery week, held 24 - 28 September 2018 and a Fieldwork week, held 29 October - 2 November 2018. The final report is due for publication in June 2019. An action plan has been developed based on initial feedback, with progress monitored monthly by Service Leadership Team.

7. Implement a collaborative approach to Homes in Multiple Occupation in light of the changes to the licensing regime.

During 2018/19 NFRS Fire Safety Department have worked with NCC Environment Health Department, to carry out joint inspections all premises that fall into the new Homes in Multiple Occupation licensing regime.

8. Ensure all 2018/19 Departmental Service Plans objectives are enacted on a regular basis.

Department plans are updated monthly by department heads and a report collated by Fire Support Services is presented each month, at the Service Leadership Team meetings.

PRIORITIES 2019/20

1. Review risks to our communities to ensure the effective delivery of our services
2. Continue to deliver the modernisation of the Emergency Control Centre, including the Emergency Mobile Communications Project.
3. Create a healthy and positive working environment
4. Respond to the independent inspection of NFRS by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) through a service-wide Improvement Action Plan

ACHIEVEMENTS

During 2018/19 Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service has achieved the following:

- **Completion of phase 1 of new breathing apparatus training facility at Pegswood**
- **Completion of phased response pilot study at Wooler and Seahouses**
- **Agreement of specification for replacement fire appliances**
- **Completed a pilot of Emergency Medical Response (EMR) in the Hexham area**
- **Implemented a gaining entry protocol with North East Ambulance Service**
- **Completed a review of the circumstances surrounding the death of a firefighter at work**
- **Conducted a full review of the retained duty system (RDS)**
- **Conducted an audit of all personal data held by the service in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)**
- **Completed the move to a new community fire station at Alnwick**
- **Plans developed and contract awarded for additional car parking at service headquarters at West Hartford**
- **Ground source heating installed at Prudhoe, Amble and Seahouses Community Fire Stations**
- **Replaced appliance bay doors at; Bellingham, Wooler, Belford, Allendale and Haltwhistle Community Fire Stations**
- **Completion of Stage 2 of the Breathing Apparatus Hot | Fire training facility at Pegswood CFS.**
- **Completion of the 'Phased Response' trial and introduction at identified stations within Northumberland**
- **Agreed specification for upgrade of the Emergency Fire Control mobilising system to provide additional functionality, increased resilience and capability to connect to the Emergency Services Network**
- **Developed a methodology for quality assuring emergency response performance**
- **Conducted a full review of all commercial premises known to be fitted with external cladding**
- **Delivered three Prince's Trust programmes for 16-25 year olds**
- **Continued the delivery of seven branches of Young Firefighters Association for 13 – 17 year olds courses across Northumberland**
- **Continued to work with juvenile fire setters and develop our new "Extinguish" programme**
- **Completed an independent review of our fire and rescue service, carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS)**

LOOK FORWARD

During 2019/20 we will strive to:

Civil Contingencies Team

1. Develop robust emergency plans to ensure NCC and the NFRS able to respond to the range of incidents arising from Hazards and Threats identified in the Community Risk Register
2. Organise and participate in a range of exercises to validate those emergency plans
3. Develop and implement relevant policies and procedures for Risk Management and Protective Security within NFRS
4. Ensure NCC and NFRS are able to contribute to and be fully considered in arrangements made by the Northumbria Local Resilience Forum
5. Ensure a Civil Contingencies support provision is available 24/7 with relevant resources to coordinate the response of NCC and the NFRS to emergency incidents

Community Safety Department

1. Continue to coordinate HMICFRS inspection process and support the development and delivery of a post inspection action plan.
2. Develop a prevention strategy to reflect Northumberland's fire and rescue related risk profile
3. Undertake a comprehensive review of safeguarding adults and children, in line with current legislation.
4. Review and further develop quality assurance processes for all Community Safety programme delivery.
5. Embed the revised safe and well-being programme

Emergency Response

1. To reduce the number of Fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies in Northumberland.
2. Undertake evaluation and quality assurance of Emergency Response activities and resources across the department.
3. Build upon our relationships with existing partners e.g. Mountain Rescue and wherever possible actively seek out new and mutually beneficial partnerships.
4. Ensure by promotion and reinforcement of existing systems where possible the safety of all personnel including Firefighters.
5. Support the recruitment and retention of new personnel across the department, be that RDS, WDS or corporate staff.

Fire Control

1. Development of a Performance Management Framework for Fire Control;
2. Feasibility of a Fire Control Collaboration Project;
3. Continue to develop Ways of Working with Tyne and Wear;
4. Continue to develop Redkite and Staff Development Strategy for Fire Control
5. Continue to develop the Fire Control System to accommodate system upgrades to the CAD and ICCS for both the Technical Refresh and ESMCP

Fire Safety Department

1. Inspect all non-domestic high risk premises.
2. Respond to HMICFRS inspection and report, to develop an action plan to address identified areas for improvement.
3. Establish operational crew manager fire safety inspection team.
4. Increase NFRS business engagement to raise awareness of fire safety responsibilities in non-domestic premises.
5. Work with Regional Fire Services to collaborate on Business Fire Safety.

Fire Support Services

1. Implement the National Operational Guidance Programme (NOGP) doctrine into NFRS.
2. Roll out an asset management system, with consequent review of stores arrangements.
3. Facilitate the build of and decant to the new fire station at Ponteland.
4. Review health and safety arrangements within the service.
5. Complete a technical refresh upgrade of the mobilising system and Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs).

Learning and Development

1. Deliver operational risk critical training to develop and maintain a safe and competent workforce;
2. Respond to HMICFRS inspection and report, to develop an action plan to address identified areas for improvement;
3. Establish a quality assurance process and work towards appropriate accreditation;
4. Facilitate the continued development and extension of NFRS BA Facility at Pegswood;
5. Develop options for the delivery of initial training for recruit Firefighters.



Northumberland
County Council