



Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service

preventing • protecting • responding

Response Strategy & Department Objectives 2024



www.staffordshirefire.gov.uk



Staffordshire
Fire and Rescue Service
preventing • protecting • responding

Welcome to the Response Strategy & Department Objectives 2024

The purpose of the Response Strategy & Department Objectives is to ensure that between April 2023 and December 2024, all departments recognise their strategic drivers and agree the key indicators of successful delivery for the 12-month period ahead. The Staffordshire Commissioner’s Fire & Rescue Plan runs for four years and identifies the direction that they wish the fire and rescue service to pursue. This direction is then transposed into strategic actions which can be found in the Community Risk Management Plan, and subsequently into deliverable actions in the Annual Department Delivery Plan. This plan sets out our agreed annual objectives for each of the areas of responsibility held in the Response directorate that our people will deliver against. This will aid in supporting the delivery of the Community Risk Management Plan and therefore allow our progress to be monitored, and to provide overall accountability by the public, Strategic Service Management and the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner.



For Response, 2024 is an important year as this is an integral time in the development of the Service’s future, with the creation of the 2025-2029 Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). This will underpin the strategic direction of the organisation for the next four years and will require extensive analysis and consultation with a wide range of stakeholders in order to ensure that Staffordshire Fire and Rescue continues to provide an exceptional service to its communities. Our aim is to improve all aspects of Response, to ensure we are available to respond to incidents in a timely manner, with improved appliances, equipment and training. We will also encourage innovation and have a problem-solving approach to any issues encountered.

STRATEGIC GOALS

Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service has four strategic priorities derived from its Community Risk Management Plan 2020-2024. These are the areas that the organisation looks to carry out its service delivery activities.

Prevention
& early
intervention

Protecting
Staffordshire &
its people

Public
confidence

Service
reforms

OUR KEY DRIVERS & CORE CODE OF ETHICS

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) evaluates the performance of Fire & Rescue Services regularly and produces an annual report known as 'The State of Fire'. The Service's own inspection outcomes and those identified on a national scale will be evaluated along with any actions to improve the Service being reviewed and prioritised as appropriate.

Incidents that have a national significance will have an impact on the activities for all Fire & Rescue Services. During 2023-24 our Annual Service Plan will be cognisant of ongoing outcomes from such incidents, including the Grenfell Tower and Manchester Arena inquiries, and we will seek to align ourselves to continually improving through learning from these tragedies.

The Core Code of Ethics for the Fire & Rescue sector has been developed by the Fire Standards Board and has been wholly accepted into Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service as its guiding behavioural values framework. This has an impact in all activities carried out by Response staff and we will ensure that our actions are in line with the Code at all times and in all aspects of our work.



PEOPLE

Our people are what allows us to deliver a quality service to those who live and work in Staffordshire. Our goals for 2024 are to maximise the potential for all of our people and to create an inclusive culture that mirrors and celebrates their achievements.

Throughout 2024 we will be investing in the professional development of our team members in order to enhance their skills and experiences for the future. We will maximise opportunities for training, mentoring, and development to help individuals grow and advance in their careers, across the wider fire and rescue service.

We will look to consult with our people to increase employee engagement and motivation, as well as improving overall team performance. We will develop our aspiring leaders through progressive responsibility and positive exposure to new and challenging areas of the organisation. Allowing them the opportunity to develop personally and professionally towards their long term goals.

We will ensure that we have resilience across the organisation by developing our leaders, and those with future leadership ambitions, in a range of skill sets allowing an improved distribution of resources to assist in short term activities and projects.

Clear and effective communication is crucial for creating a positive work environment. It is imperative that we continue to encourage open and

honest communication amongst our people, and ensure that everyone is informed about the team's goals and progress. This will continue to build trust and understanding among team members, and improve overall delivery of services. We will engage on both a team and departmental level with regular forums, sharing updates on progress and maintaining a platform where each individual has their own voice, and can shape the future of their areas of responsibility and the wider team.

Collaboration is another important aspect of maintaining our positive work environment. Teams that work well together are more productive and efficient. We shall encourage a culture of collaboration and teamwork among our team members and across fire and rescue service departments. To aid this we will provide opportunities for our team members to share ideas and knowledge, and work together to achieve their common goals. We will look to build a sense of shared ownership and responsibility amongst our people leading to more creative and effective problem-solving.

Recognition and appreciation are critical for building morale and motivation amongst team members. We will regularly recognise and appreciate the contributions of our people and teams to highlight the positive impacts they have made to communities and the organisation. Through regular appraisals both formal and informal, we will help our staff to maximise their professional and personal

PEOPLE

achievements and offer assistance in their career development.

We will maximise the use of technology for our staff, supporting an efficient use of their time and efforts, improving their skill base and offering an improved level of service delivery to the communities of Staffordshire.

A sound work-life relationship is important for the well-being of our team members. We will encourage a healthy balance between work and personal responsibilities amongst our people, and provide opportunities for flexible working arrangements or scheduling, and job sharing where appropriate. We will be open to flexibility to help reduce individual stressors and improve overall well-being amongst our team members. We will maximise opportunities and afford time to all of our people to help them maintain an appropriate balance between mental and physical health.

We will be proactive in using Occupational Health services when required, and ensure all of our personnel are able to access provision as they may see fit, without undue delay.

We will strive to understand how we can assist our people in staying healthy through well-being focused activities, bespoke or communal to support a reduction in absence.

We will empower our team members to make decisions and take ownership of their work to maximise engagement and motivation.

We will continue to encourage our people to take the initiative and to make

decisions about their work, providing them with the appropriate levels of autonomy and resources that they need to be successful within Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service. Our departments look to offer opportunities to apprentices and through internships, where we shall nurture the development of these individuals and welcome their ideas and thoughts into our Service.

We will all continue to foster and develop an inclusive environment that values and respects the diversity in backgrounds and perspectives that our department breeds. We will always encourage diversity of thought, and will create opportunities for people from different backgrounds and perspectives. We can then contribute to creating a more dynamic and innovative team environment.

In 2022, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue has aligned its values and behaviours framework to the National Fire Chiefs Council developed, Core Code of Ethics. All of our people will use this as the foundation for our activities, and we will hold each other accountable to them. We will incorporate them into our meetings, our appraisals, our working, to ensure that we understand the values and how they apply to us on an individual and a team level.

PRIORITIES

The overarching purpose of Response is to respond safely to incidents, with the professionally staff, appropriate equipment and suitable vehicles. It is important that our staff uphold the high levels of public trust in every intervention that they have in the workplace and with our communities.

1. Developing our teams & individuals

We will develop our teams and individuals in areas such as problem solving, decision making and supporting individuals to raise ideas to improve processes including innovation.

We will provide our staff with the tools and support to carry out their roles, including industrial relations training, having difficult conversations, managing poor behaviours and role-modelling positive behaviours in the workplace which encompasses the Core Code of Ethics.

Identifying talent and gathering ideas through the response hub will be a priority over the next several years, supported by a new performance development review (appraisal) process and establishing a clear promotion process framework.

2. Monitor and react to performance

There is now a clear set of response measures, which are reviewed on a monthly basis. We will ensure the individual measures are monitored and we react and implement actions to improve any unacceptable performance issues.

We will ensure that all measures are shared through the response hub for awareness and scrutiny.

We will also develop more intelligent measures for our response such as availability and attendance times. Work will start to review what our response model will look like in the future, working with partners and other fire and rescue services to establish options which if required, will be

consulted on with the public.

National Resilience assurance will continue along with sharing learning at all levels from debriefs, exercises and incidents. We will continue to work closely with the NFCC, National Resilience, regional colleagues and the Civil Contingencies Unit to improve our response to incidents.

3. Innovation

There has been many areas of good practice in problem solving and innovation from our departments in areas such as equipment and training. Developing our teams and individuals will allow us to implement good ideas which move the service forward in technology and new practices, which will support the environment, fire-fighter safety and resolve incidents more efficiently.

Change will be instigated on the basis of evidence and it should be clear to the reason why this is occurring. Clear communication, as well as full engagement and consultation, is required in order that everyone is aware of the change requirements. We need to encourage an approach which gathers people's views and explores the evidence and data to inform decision-making processes. There is much talk around productivity, We need to be clear on what the expectations are for our working shifts and what work can be achieved in this time which benefits the service, crews and members of the public. It is preferable that we drive this work and establish this ourselves rather than it being done to us.

4. Climate crisis: Implement the Environmental Strategy in relation to vehicles, equipment, property and during incidents.

If we view the recent Environmental Strategy as someone else's issue then it will fail. Everyone has a

part to play. For response, there are some crucial departments which can support a reduction in our carbon footprint and improve our environment;

- JETS with future vehicles and fuels
- Estates with energy and utilities
- ERT reviewing new techniques to keep fire-fighters safe and reduce the length of incidents when they occur, such as wildfires. This includes reviewing new types of equipment.

We also want to gather everyone's ideas which can influence change and we would encourage everyone to log their ideas on the intranet, these will get reviewed on a regular basis by an environmental working group. We have seen some reductions in our carbon footprint and we are really pleased with the measures we have now developed and it demonstrates that departments need to do more to support new ways of working

5. Collaboration: Wider collaboration and strengthening of local partnerships.

There will be more stations under review to move to a shared estates model, we need to be pragmatic and understand which stations fall under the wider estate's strategy. Early engagement is essential to make sure opportunities are not missed.

This priority is not only about estates, it also includes local partnerships to ensure we understand local issues and priorities. Building these relationships will help with our priorities and support our JESIP work operationally. Our stations should welcome in our communities in order to support the development of strong long-lasting community relationships.

6. Training: Improving our training implementation and recording processes.

We will continue to implement more flexibility with how we train, building upon the outreach work and challenge the

rationale for all our training to ensure it is fit for purpose.

It is important we close the loop on all learning. We will be including assurance visits on station to confirm we are working to the correct standards and identify any gaps for improvement.

Our recording of decision making is also crucial. We would still encourage everyone to review the recent public enquiries which fire services have been involved in.

Recording of competencies and development need to be simplified without lowering standards, specifically for our on-call colleagues.

7. Response Model: Resourcing to risk.

We will review our current response model to ensure it is fit for purpose. We will use an intelligent approach to measuring our response availability and how we mobilise our appliances.

This review will include enhancing our resources to respond to Staffordshire specific risks, which will be appropriate and affordable. We will ensure our response model is also sustainable for future demand and risk.

Resilience is a key element and will be included within this review, considering high demand periods such as seasonal and weather-related demand. Any ideas and recommendations will be consulted on internally and with the public through our CRMP consultation process.

Our Learning and Development department will focus on providing the best training possible to our staff, reflecting changes in our work practices and the use of new technologies. The aim is to provide local delivery groups with fully trained individuals, ready to develop in the workplace. The new fire-fighter courses will be strengthened to ensure the training is more interactive and live with the use of the 'villa' complex, ensuring knowledge and skills are passed on. On-call core training will be standardised to ensure we are consistent. Our existing measures and stronger processes will support local delivery with more drivers and more trained on-call fire-fighters, however quality is still the priority over quantity and this approach will be maintained. Simplified processes such as recording of competence and development will be reviewed and introduced with realistic expectations for our on-call workforce.

The department has been successful in structuring and increasing outreach training which supports specifically our on-call and benefiting staff at remote locations. The development of training packages and increased use of the 'villa' is improving the training experience. A positive OFSTED report through work force development for our apprentice program will help us to review this area of work. Increased interest in our RTC/ BA competitions is really positive and we encourage all of our staff to participate.

During 2024 Learning & Development (L&D) milestones will be to deliver:

1. Complete a review of our supervisory managers development process
2. Develop the whole-time recruits course for 2025. (Learning from 23/24)
3. Review and develop our leadership and development offer
4. Simplify our processes for competence recording
5. Transform the buildings to enhance the learning experience

ERT will be developing measures to fully understand the journey of all our equipment. To determine equipment location, review if the equipment is fit for purpose and the reasons behind why equipment is lost or damaged and encourage problem solving to see if issues can be designed out. The testing of hydrants will continue including support to stations to meet our legal obligations. Our stores department will support with the introduction of a slicker process for PPE maintenance. Breathing Apparatus (BA) maintenance will support with the introduction of the new BA sets and any new processes which ensure compliance. Auditing of our procedures will be enhanced as a key piece of work going forward.

There are many projects well under way including the introduction of the new Aerial Ladder Platforms (ALPs), Enhanced Rescue Pumps (ERPs), BA set introduction, clean concept and Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) introduction. ERT will focus on project timing plans which will be shared with all staff and will also be used for projects from other departments to prevent any project delay.

Successful areas of work include the cleaning of our Water Carriers to ensure we are compliant with new environmental law, along with saving over £70k with finding alternative solutions. The clean concept is fundamental with all pieces of work for response. The improved cleaning of equipment and PPE has started with a three-phase approach. The clean cab principles will be seen in new appliances as they arrive. This will be a change in how we don BA sets, however it will support our work to reduce the health risks to all our operational staff.

During 2024 Emergency Response Team (ERT) milestones will be to deliver:

1. Continue to introduce stated projects, in-line with the capital programme
2. Technical solution to measure hydrant testing
3. BA maintenance auditing process introduction - feedback to local delivery
4. Reduction in equipment repairs and losses
5. Smooth introduction of new Breathing Apparatus sets

Ops assurance will continue to ensure that clear and embedded processes are in place so that all notable practice and identified learning gathered from incidents, exercise and training exposures, locally or nationally, are captured and shared with all relevant personnel and departments, to lead and improve Service policy and procedure. Linking directly to the operational assurance and performance monitoring guidance and the National Operational Guidance good practice guide.

Alignment of Service policy and procedure to National Operational (NOG), is due for completion in the second half of 2024, at which point the teams focus will move to the following four key areas:

Embedding: Continue to look for opportunities to utilise NOG based information to lead, guide or inform. **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:** Ensure content meets the standards expected in reference to ED&I and provide the NOG suite of materials in styles and formats that meet the varying requirements of our workforce. **Assurance:** Establish systems and procedures to record usage and understanding of NOG based materials. **Review:** Commencement of periodic review, continuation of reactive review and completion of Strategic Gap Analysis (SGA) as required by NFCC. Our incident command team will also continue to develop the outreach work and ensure assessment scenarios are linked to our local risk sites and regional / national learning. Multi-agency learning and collaboration is crucial and will feed into our ops assurance days, ensuring the knowledge and education they have been taught in L&D is maintained.

Success so far in 2022/23 has been the introduction of new procedures such as debrief policy, risk assessment procedures, service exercise guidance, operational assurance and performance monitoring guidance and a new incident command product pack which includes the re-introduction of JESIP training. The SGA has also been implemented and full review process put in place. A more robust process including stakeholders to manage the internal and external action plans including debrief actions. A key element for 2024 is to ensure these procedures and policies are embedded and fully understood by all staff.

During 2024 Ops Assurance milestones will be to deliver:

1. Incident command policy embedding
2. NOG document completion and embedding (including new E learning packages)
3. ARA content review (NFCC)
4. Station assurance development programme introduction
5. Full set of measures to be introduced (included within the response performance meeting)
6. Utilise IT solutions to improve op assurance openness and transparency across the Service

Development of our four key measures will continue to be a priority; Health & Safety of our crews, availability of our appliances, more frequent quality training on station and attendance of our appliances. Training locally will need to adapt to new processes, technologies and equipment and encourage inclusiveness on all aspects of station life. Whilst a focus for L&D will be to deliver the best trained individuals to local delivery groups, it is the focus of stations to ensure all individuals are ready to return to L&D operationally ready for assessments, providing support for individuals.

Productivity for all staff will be a focus. The measuring of productivity has now commenced ensuring we make best use of our time on all shift patterns. We will support in firstly understanding and then removing any processes such as supervisors time completing administration, including making the recording of work is easier through technology development. The use of dynamic and analytical risk assessments needs to be embedded to reduce accidents and support a strong Health and Safety culture. Our special appliance and National Resilience (NR) assets will continue to be a focus creating stronger links with NR and improving training, exercising and auditing.

The encouragement of ideas and healthy challenge will be encouraged to help us problem solve issues and share all the positive aspects at local level.

Successes have been seen through station work on the development of special appliances. The support of individuals through the UKRO challenges and new BA set testing at the Fire Service College. The inclusion in local community events and working with partners has supported awareness of what we do. The support of crews with the introduction of crewing changes has been appreciated.

During 2024 Service Delivery Groups (SDG's) milestones will be to deliver:

1. Introduce more training based on local risk and the inclusion of Fire Control
2. Support the work around productivity and admin reduction
3. Ensure policies are read, shared and understood with all staff such as debrief
4. Performance meetings to include ops assurance measure returns
5. An increase in drivers, including maintenance of specialist skills such as National Resilience assets
6. Improvement of on-call availability through detailed plans and involvement with the improvement work

We will work with West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service to ensure we have a FC who feel fully integrated with both services. We will work to ensure we are visible at FC and staff feel part of Staffordshire. We will be involved with the training of new FC recruits and FC will be part of our recruits courses. The introduction of the new meeting structure is ensuring issues are being resolved at an operational level, performance is measured at a tactical level and partners are held account through the Strategic Assurance Board. Engagement with FC staff is important to us and will continue to improve. Our goal is to continue to work on simplifying processes and support a single process approach for both FRS's. The resolution of any technical issues is key, including the development of technology to support incidents. The SLA is currently being reviewed and developed by both services.

Successes includes the development of a new FC competency framework which includes standardised assessments that provide assurance of competence against risk critical areas of the role.

FC command training has been delivered and command assessments have been facilitated, ensuring those in command of the FC function are competent and confident in leading control room operations.

FC arranged and facilitated a no notice exercise which tested national FC arrangements for the management of multiple calls across the country. Learning identified was submitted through national operational learning and has been used to shape and influence future processes.

A new entrants training course was run at the start of 2023 with five individuals successfully joining their respective watches at the start of April 23. An additional eight trainee fire-fighters (Control) are currently going through their training course and are due to join their watches in September.

During 2024 Fire Control (FC) milestones will be to deliver:

1. Review of the new governance and support structures
2. Increase watch visits to improve relationships and understanding of procedures
3. Increased involvement in local exercises with clear FC objectives
4. Use of technology to support more efficient processes
5. Review of the Service Level Agreement (SLA)

We will work with JETS to ensure we have a modern fleet of vehicles meeting the needs of the service, including staff welfare and safety, incident needs and environment law. We will work with JETS to ensure we understand and share future issues through a new operational meeting to focus on problem solving day to day issues and build relationships. ERT will be a key partner in combining vehicle and equipment needs. A new fleet board will review performance and support with any areas which need improvement. The development of measures is key to ensure we understand current performance and areas we need to develop.

We will support JETS with researching new technologies and vehicles, linking in with NFCC and regional groups to share ideas and develop new ones. We will also support with improving the reserve fleet and change over vehicle processes.

Success has been through current ongoing projects such as the ALPs and ERPs. There has been an introduction of measures to understand current performance and a new single point of contact with ERT to resolve current issues and to establish a fit for purpose fleet for the future. The single point of contact to resolve issues, although new, is working well.

During 2024 Joint Emergency Transport Services (JETS) milestones will be to deliver:

1. Clearly defined measures, including customer value
2. Implement special appliance recommendations
3. Vehicle replacement plan introduction, including new appliances
4. Improvement in the relationship between JETS and fire staff
5. Reserve fleet improvements