

Report to Cabinet

Item 7

Report title:	Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service – Draft Integrated Risk Management Plan 2020-23
Date of meeting:	7 October 2019
Responsible Cabinet Member:	Councillor Margaret Dewsbury (Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships)
Responsible Director:	Tom McCabe (Executive Director, Community and Environmental Services)
Is this a key decision?	Yes

Introduction from Cabinet Member

The Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) is the key strategy document for our Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service. The development of the new Plan for 2020 onwards is a fantastic opportunity to review, refresh and consider our approach to keeping Norfolk's communities safe.

As I have previously updated at Cabinet, we already have a significant programme of improvement activity planned for the service over the coming years. This programme of activity focusses on effectiveness, efficiency and how well we look after our people.

The IRMP has a slightly different focus. It assesses the key risks facing Norfolk Communities, sets out the community safety and operational response strategies that Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service will use to mitigate these community risks and to deliver further reductions in risk and demand.

Given the overall context of change locally and Nationally for fire and rescue services, I am sure that communities will be assured to hear that there are no current proposals to: -

- Close fire stations
- Reduce the vehicle fleet, including removing 2nd appliances from stations
- Reduce crewing levels on vehicles

There are five areas of development that have been identified, and it is proposed that a public consultation focussing on these areas will start in October so that communities can have their say before the plan is finalised.

Executive Summary

In accordance with the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018, all fire and rescue authorities are required to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) that sets out the authority's strategy, in collaboration with other agencies, for reducing the commercial, economic and social impact of fires and other emergency incidents.

Norfolk County Council, as the Fire and Rescue Authority for Norfolk, has a statutory duty to develop an IRMP covering at least 3 years. The current IRMP¹ sets out the service strategy for the period 2016-2020. Therefore, there is a need to develop a new plan for 2020 onwards.

The draft plan is set out at Appendix B

Recommendation

Agree to proceed to public consultation on the draft Integrated Risk Management Plan 2020-23, set out at Appendix B.

1. Background and Purpose

1.1. In accordance with the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018, all fire and rescue authorities are required to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) that sets out the authority's strategy, in collaboration with other agencies, for reducing the commercial, economic and social impact of fires and other emergency incidents.

1.2. An IRMP must:

- Reflect up to date risk analyses including an assessment of all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect the area of the authority;
- Demonstrate how prevention, protection and response activities will best be used to prevent fires and other incidents and mitigate the impact of identified risks on its communities, through authorities working either individually or collectively, in a way that makes best use of available resources;
- Outline required service delivery outcomes including the allocation of resources for the mitigation of risks;
- Set out its management strategy and risk-based programme for enforcing the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 in accordance with the principles of better regulation set out in the Statutory Code of Compliance for Regulators, and the Enforcement Concordat;
- Cover at least a three-year time span and be reviewed and revised as often as it is necessary to ensure that the authority is able to deliver the requirements set out in this Framework;
- Reflect effective consultation throughout its development and at all review stages with the community, its workforce and representative bodies and partners; and
- Be easily accessible and publicly available.

1.3. The current IRMP for Norfolk and Fire and Rescue Service sets out the service strategy for the period 2016-2020. Therefore, there is a need to develop a new plan for 2020 onwards.

2. Developing the draft IRMP

¹ [Integrated risk management plan - Norfolk County Council](#)

- 2.1. The IRMP was developed in line with national guidance produced by the Home Office.
- 2.2. Members previously agreed (at the Communities Committee meeting on 10 October 2018) a set of areas to be specifically considered as part of the IRMP development. These areas, set out in Appendix A, have formed a key part of considerations in developing the draft IRMP. The draft IRMP for the period 2020-23 is attached as Appendix B to this report.
- 2.3. The process to develop the draft IRMP has included a range of key partners and stakeholders, including:-
 - Staff groups
 - Cabinet Member
 - Cross-party Member Groups and engagement (including a cross-party Member Working Group and specific discussions with Group representatives)
 - Representative bodies
 - Owners/operators of non-domestic sleeping accommodation
- 2.4. Developing a comprehensive community risk profile is a key part of an IRMP. When the current IRMP was developed, the risk profile from the previous IRMP was used rather than refreshing or updating the data. This is something that the HMICFRS identified as an area for improvement during their recent inspection. For the development of the new IRMP, a wide range of up to date data sets and nine years of incident data has been reviewed and analysed.
- 2.5. In addition, a specialist company (ORH Ltd) were commissioned to provide support in analysing emergency response standards and modelling station locations in relation to major infrastructure development in the county.

3. **Key community risk profile factors**

- 3.1. Analysis of information and data has identified the following key factors that form the basis of the community risk profile:-
 - Climate change and flooding continues to be a major consideration for the fire and rescue service to focus on in the years ahead.
 - The number of accidental dwelling fires in Norfolk remains stable, but when viewed as a proportion of all housing it has reduced. Younger people in single occupancy homes make up the majority of people who experience a fire in the home.
 - Although the number of deaths from accidental dwelling fires remains relatively low (3.44 fire deaths per year on average over 9 years) in Norfolk, older vulnerable people in our communities constitute the majority of fire deaths. This finding is not unique to Norfolk and has also been identified in National studies.
 - Analysis has shown that cooking continues to be the main cause of accidental dwelling fires, with smoking the main cause of fires that result in a fire death.
 - Deliberate fire setting has declined in recent years but there was an increase during last year's heatwave.

- The number of serious fires (primary fires) has reduced over the years but has now plateaued.
- Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service have been successful in driving down false alarms from commercial premises, but this reduction has also now plateaued.
- Smoke detector ownership continues to be an issue; with 44% of dwelling fires last year not have a working smoke detector.
- Fires in non-domestic premises continue to reduce, especially in premises that provide sleeping accommodation, which is a focus for fire safety inspections.

4. IRMP proposed areas of development and change

4.1. In considering the refreshed community risk profile and the strategic context that Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service operates in, a number of areas of development and change have been identified, as follows (these are set out in more detail in the draft Plan at Appendix B).

Proposal 1 - Strengthen community fire protection service - create additional capacity within protection services

Proposal 2 - Develop a new concept of operations – carry out a review of technology, vehicles, equipment, data and systems of work.

Proposal 3 - Explore the potential to undertake co-responding - medical co-responding to cardiac arrests

Proposal 4 - Maintain Norfolk’s specialist water rescue capability

Proposal 5 - Change the way performance is measured for Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service’s emergency response standards – by adopting the new set of national standards, when they are introduced

4.2. There are no current proposals to:-

- Close fire stations
- Reduce the vehicle fleet, including removing 2nd appliances from stations
- Reduce crewing levels on vehicles

4.3. In addition, we are aware of the continuing national negotiations around the broadening of the role of firefighters. We will closely monitor this position.

5. Proposals

5.1. In accordance with the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018, all fire and rescue authorities are required to produce an IRMP.

5.2. It is proposed that the draft Integrated Risk Management Plan 2020-23 and the five proposed areas for development and change (summarised in section 4 above) proceeds to public consultation.

6. Impact of the Proposal

- 6.1
- In the interests of taking an efficient approach, the public consultation for the IRMP will be run concurrently with the County Council’s budget consultation for 2020/21. The broad timetable is:-
 - October to November 2019 – public consultation
 - December 2019 – review feedback from public consultation, and consider revisions/amendments to draft IRMP
 - January 2020 – Cabinet consider feedback from public consultation and final proposed IRMP
 - February 2020 – Full Council approve final IRMP
- 6.2 A summarised easy-read version of the IRMP will be produced to accompany the draft IRMP for public consultation.
- 6..3. As well as undertaking the statutory consultation on the IRMP, the Fire and Rescue Service will also be undertaking an engagement exercise to invite our communities to identify risks that are local to them.

7. **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

- 7.1 Norfolk County Council, as the Fire and Rescue Authority for Norfolk, has a statutory duty to develop an IRMP covering at least 3 years. The current IRMP sets out the service strategy for the period 2016-2020. Therefore, there is a need to develop a new plan for 2020 onwards.

8. **Alternative Options**

- 8.1 It is technically feasible to extend the period of the current IRMP, rather than develop a new one. However, HMICFRS identified that our previous approach to developing our IRMP was an area for improvement and given that there is a requirement to show due regard to HMICFRS findings (see section 11.1.) this is not considered a viable option.
- 8.2 Before commencing the public consultation, members may wish to make amendments to the proposed draft IRMP or ask officers to carry out further work or provide further information. However, this could impact on the ability to commence the consultation concurrently with the council’s budget consultation, which could lead to an increase in costs. The results of the consultation will be presented to Cabinet in January and there will be an opportunity to consider those and any potential amendments to the IRMP before the final document is produced.

9. **Financial Implications**

- 9.1 Although Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service is looking to redirect existing resources into community fire protection from their current budget, it is likely there will need to be additional funding of up to £230,000 per year to provide additional fire safety inspectors. In addition, £30,000 will be needed for two years to train the new inspectors.
- 9.2 In order to improve the service’s capacity to deliver community fire prevention services, the service has requested £100,000. This funding will be used to deliver fire prevention services for vulnerable people and the fitting of smoke detectors where required.
- 9.3. The workforce profile shows a need to continue a programme to recruit new wholetime (WDS) firefighters. This is primarily because of the age profile of the

workforce and the impact of changes to the firefighters pension scheme. The additional cost of this is £200,000 per year, primarily to cover the cost of training the new recruits.

9.4. Specialist water rescue capability was funded by a specific central Government grant in the past. This grant is no longer available. The additional cost of retaining this service without a specific grant is £60,000 per year.

9.5.

Additional cost	2020/21 £	2021/22 £	2022/23 £
Community Fire Protection (see para 9.1)	260,000	260,000	230,000
Community Fire Safety (see para 9.2)	100,000	100,000	100,000
WDS Recruitment and Training (see para 9.3)	200,000	200,000	200,000
Water Rescue (see para 9.4)	60,000	60,000	60,000
Resourcing requirements identified by the new IRMP	620,000	620,000	590,000
Income/ other offsets	-212,000	-212,000	-212,000
Net additional cost	408,000	408,000	378,000

10. Resource Implications

10.1. **Staff:** There are no staff implications associated with the development of, and public consultation, on the IRMP. One of the proposals in the IRMP is to increase capacity in fire protection. An organisational review is underway with a view to identifying changes that could release existing capacity. However, it is unlikely that all the resources required to meet expectations can be identified from this review and there will be a need to identify additional funding.

10.2. **Property:** No implications.

10.3. **IT:** No implications

11. Other Implications

11.1. **Legal Implications:** Fire and rescue authorities are required to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan (section 4.6 of the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018).

Fire and rescue authorities must give due regard to reports and recommendations made by HMICFRS (section 7.5 of the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018).

11.2 **Human rights implications. None**

11.3 **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA):** A full equality impact assessment is being developed. The final assessment will take account of feedback from the public consultation, and will be included with the report considered by Cabinet in January 2020.

12. Risk Implications/Assessment

- 12.1. The key risk is that the authority will not have a final IRMP in place for the 1st April 2020, should there be a delay to public consultation and the subsequent approval at Full Council.

13. Select Committee Comments

13.1 The Infrastructure and Development Select Committee considered a report titled Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service – Draft Integrated Risk Management Plan 2020-23 on 11 September. The Committee reviewed and commented on the draft Integrated Risk Management Plan, in particular the five areas for development and change that will form the basis of public consultation.

13.2 A number of points were raised during the discussion, as follows (note that this information is taken from the draft minutes of the meeting, which are subject to agreement by the Committee at the next meeting):-

- Officers confirmed that as per the graph on page 55 of the report, the majority of fires occurred in properties where people lived alone.
- Members were concerned that there was no mention of a push for legislation to make sprinklers mandatory. Officers explained that the National Fire Chiefs Council, which the Chief Fire Officer was a member of, continued to lobby Government on this matter.
- Members were reassured to see there were no proposals relating to reducing the number of fire stations, reducing vehicle fleet or reducing crewing levels on vehicles. The Chief Fire Officer explained that Norfolk undertook an evidence-based approach to the changes, if any, that were needed. This was the right response for the activity of Norfolk but that it was not to say that Norfolk Fire and Rescue Services were open nor closed to change.
- Members commented that since there had been cross party unanimous opposition to the Fire and Rescue takeover from the Police and Crime Commissioner, this could be referenced in the report. The Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships added that collaboration between Police and Fire had progressed significantly and the PCC had given no indication of an intention to submit his business case for change
- The Executive Director added that Cabinet had recently approved additional resources to implement requirements identified by the Integrated Risk and Management Plan, as per section 6 of the report on page 17. This was further investment to help address the risks within the community. The Service did not want a 'requires improvement' rating in the future so this would put it in as best place as possible to improve.
- The Chief Fire Officer explained that wildfires and such other events would continue to occur but the Service had evidence to put them in a good position to continue to provide the best possible service for the County. The introduction of 4x4 vehicles places the service in a better position to better tackle a wider variety of incidences.

14. Recommendation

- 14.1. **Agree to proceed to public consultation on the draft Integrated Risk Management Plan 2020-23, as set out in appendix B.**

15. Background Papers

- 15.1 None

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper, please get in touch with:

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