



Committee report

Committee	CABINET
Date	8 MARCH 2018
Title	ISLE OF WIGHT FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE - SERVICE REVIEW
Report to	CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY AND PUBLIC PROTECTION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report presents the outcomes of the service review of the Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service (IWFRS), agreed by Cabinet in July 2017. The review is intended to support the delivery of the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) (2014 to 2020) and improve the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the service.
2. On the basis of detailed analysis of the potential risks and demands facing the Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service, the paper proposes an amendment to the operation of the service which:-
 - increases the availability of whole time firefighters' cover at "peak demand";
 - increases the coverage of whole time firefighters' cover from two to three localities;
 - improves emergency response times overall;
 - increases the availability of on call firefighters thereby improving overall resilience;
 - is achievable within current budgets, taking account of the current vacancies in the whole time establishment.

BACKGROUND

3. The purpose of the fire and rescue service is to reduce risk and make life safer. Its primary role is to prevent and respond to fires and road traffic incidents through the Fire and Rescue Service Act (2004). The fire and rescue service also has the capability and opportunity to become involved in a wide variety of other civil protection activities and has statutory responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act (2004).

4. In 2014 the Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service's Operational Assessment and Peer Review recognised that capacity, resilience and sustainability within the service were issues. In response to this the IWFRS and Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service (HFRS) formed a strategic partnership to provide increased support and resilience in 2015.
5. In May 2014 the council approved the current Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) for the IWFRS. This plan detailed the vision for the IWFRS and the framework for future development and improvement from 2014 to 2020.
6. As part of the IRMP 2014 to 2020, the council approved that by 2020 the IWFRS would:
 - (i) revise and achieve our risk based response standards
 - (ii) match our resources to level of risk
 - (iii) create capacity through flexible working arrangements to further improve firefighter and community safety
 - (iv) increase the use of volunteers to support our work with communities
 - (v) develop resilient response arrangements
 - (vi) improve the provision and use of our assets including property with other partners
 - (vii) further develop our working arrangements with other key partners.
7. In July 2017 the Cabinet approved the guiding principles for the service review, which detailed how the IWFRS would continue its journey of improvement and implementing the actions within the 2014 to 2020 IRMP.
8. Appendix A gives an overview of the process that the IWFRS has undertaken to complete the service review. It identifies the four options that have been developed and considered to ensure that the IWFRS is as effective and efficient as possible, and its resources are sufficient to accommodate the risks and demands faced. All the IWFRS staff and trade unions have been engaged throughout the process.

RISK METHODOLOGY

9. To understand the risks and demands of the Island, the service review team used a number of sources of data and intelligence to inform its judgement. These included the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and other data from the council, IWFRS and partners, computer modelling and professional judgement to understand past incident data and the different response plans to incidents.
10. This data was then mapped to provide a risk and demand picture that included the vulnerability of our residents, points of high risk on our roads and other factors that require prevention activities and an emergency response.
11. This analysis led to a number of options for consideration for how we deploy our teams to both prevent incidents and reduce risk, as well as responding to emergencies when they occur.

12. Planning assumptions were developed, based on the analysis of the data of past incidents, and the future likelihood of the occurrence of the worst foreseeable scenario; a situation with two simultaneous incidents as described below:
- Incident 1 - a fire incident which would require a minimum attendance of 26 personnel for four hours.
 - Incident 2 - a road traffic collision with persons trapped, involving more than one vehicle or with more than one person to be rescued, requiring a minimum attendance of 11 personnel for two hours.
13. Further information on the risk methodology is contained within appendix A.

LOCALITY MODEL AND RESPONSE STANDARDS

14. The IWFRS sends the most appropriate resources so that an incident can be resolved as quickly as possible. The response standard determines where our resources should be located. The response standard target for critical incidents (a house fire or road traffic collision) is to get our first resources in attendance within ten minutes on 80 per cent of occasions. Performance for 2016/17 was 77.8 per cent.
15. The IRMP 2014 to 2020 recognised the significant difference in the number of incidents the IWFRS attends during a 24-hour period, and that this difference was not reflected in how the IWFRS allocates its emergency response resources. The risk methodology identified that the majority of incidents the IWFRS attend are between the hours of 10am and 10pm (73 per cent), but currently resources are not matched to these timescales.
16. The IWFRS have, at all times, immediately available firefighters (whole time) and on call firefighters. Whole time firefighters work shifts on fire stations and respond to calls within 90 seconds. On call firefighters usually work or live within five minutes of a fire station and respond to the station when a personal alert notifies them of an incident. The availability of on call firefighters is very good during the night time (90 per cent) when there are less incidents and low during the daytime (60 per cent) when there are more incidents.
17. At present the IWFRS operates in two locality areas, and provides the following guaranteed minimum level of immediately available firefighters that crew a fire appliance:
- Newport Fire Station - 24 hours a day, seven days a week – five firefighters;
 - Ryde Fire Station - Eight hours (9am to 5pm) on Monday to Friday – five firefighters.
18. Additionally, to this guaranteed minimum level of firefighters crewing fire appliances there are currently four whole time firefighters on duty (two at Ryde and two at Newport) and allocated to crewing specialist vehicles, such as aerial ladder appliances. The crewing of these vehicles has been considered as part of this Service Review. The numbers of firefighters are a guaranteed minimum and are sometimes exceeded due to the current shift patterns.

19. Restructuring the way the IWFRS uses immediately available staff to support on call appliances at key times, and across three localities, means it is able to provide a quicker service on average.
20. Changes to working patterns for firefighters will increase their availability when they are most needed. Improved, and more flexible shift systems enable this to be achieved with fewer staff overall. The new minimum level of immediately available fire fighters would be:
 - Newport locality area - 24 hours a day, seven days a week – four firefighters;
 - Ryde locality area - during the 12 busiest hours, seven days a week – four firefighters;
 - Sandown locality area - during the 12 busiest hours, seven days a week – four firefighters.
21. This new model will provide 12 immediately available firefighters crewing fire appliances, across three rather, than two localities, and for 12 hours a day. A minimum of four immediately available firefighters will be available during times of less demand based in Newport. This matches resources to when most incidents occur and allows for a seven days a week provision for 12 hours a day, compared to the current five days a week for eight hours. Analysis has shown that this change to the deployment of firefighters will not have any negative impact on response times. Modelling has shown allocating resources across the three localities can improve response standards by 1.7 per cent.
22. The number of immediately available firefighters will reduce from five to four during periods of less demand (details are contained within Appendix A). This is when most on call firefighters are available and the availability of appliances is at its highest.
23. This new way of resourcing immediately available firefighters matches crewing patterns to the demand, and to the community safety activity on the Island, and requires 50 rather than the current establishment of 58 firefighters, whilst increasing the number of immediately available firefighters when the number of incidents is highest. Careful planning and leaver profiling means that the whole time establishment of firefighters can be achieved without the need for compulsory redundancy.
24. The IWFRS, like many other fire and rescue services use on call firefighters alongside immediately available firefighters to respond to emergencies. On the Island, on call firefighters are usually available at night time, but during the day there are fewer available, which is when most of our incidents occur.
25. In the next 12 months, IWFRS will implement changes to our on-call firefighters to ensure that we are making the best use of our resources. Currently all on call firefighters must be within five minutes of a fire station to be available. To help with maintaining IWFRS resilience an additional level of availability will be added, that allows on call firefighters that are within 20 minutes of a station to be available for resilience purposes.

OPTIONS

26. There are four options to be considered.

Option one: Maintain the service in its current form, based on a two localities model

If this option was chosen, the IWFRS would not make the improvements to the service that the evidence in the service review has provided. The provision of resources would not match to the risk and demand on the Island. An increase in the current budget would be required to sustain this option.

Option two: Improve the effectiveness of the service by changing to a three locality model based on the current establishment of whole time fire fighters.

Under this option there would be a minimum of 13 immediately available firefighters for 12 hours during the daytime and five at night. The IWFRS would be able to provide resources based on risk and demand and increase the amount of community safety activity and partnership working undertaken. Response standards would improve by 1.7 per cent, however, an increase in budget would be required to sustain this option. This option was developed by the work force and trade unions.

Option three: Improves effectiveness and efficiency of the service by changing to a three locality model based on the current establishment of whole time firefighters and proposes the closure of Yarmouth Fire Station.

Maintains the current establishment of immediately available firefighters and moves to a three locality model. Makes changes to the working pattern for immediate available firefighters to increase availability during the day. Makes changes in the resourcing in the West Wight, which would reduce the number of on call firefighters. There would be increased capacity to deliver community safety initiatives. There would be a minimum of 12 immediately available firefighters for 12 hours during the daytime and four at night seven days a week. There would be an additional four immediately available firefighters Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm.

The IWFRS would be able to provide resources based on risk and demand and increase the amount of community safety activity and partnership working undertaken. There would be an overall improvement in response standards, but there would be a small decrease in performance in West Wight. A public consultation would be required due to changes to the fire cover in West Wight.

Option four

Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the service by changing to a three locality model based on a reduction of eight whole time firefighter posts and maintaining all ten fire stations.

This option restructures the way we use immediately available firefighters and through more effective working patterns allows for the removal of eight firefighter posts, through vacancy management, without the need for compulsory redundancies. Moves to a three locality model rather than two.

IWFRS would be providing resources based on risk and demand in the most efficient and effective way, which would support community safety activities and partnership working. There would be an improvement in response times by 1.7 per cent.

27. Changing the resourcing to have immediately available firefighters and local resources in three localities rather than two will help improve response times, reduce community risk and further support the IWC 'One Public Service' vision. This collaborative approach to risk reduction will improve effectiveness and continue the IWFRS's statutory requirements to collaborate under the Policing and Crime Act 2017. Locating our resources in the three localities, Newport, Ryde and Sandown, will allow IWFRS to align to the Island's three localities and mirror partner organisations and services; NHS, Public Health, Adult Social Services, Hampshire Constabulary and Isle of Wight Ambulance Service. IWFRS will continue to actively participate in the One Public Estate programme on the Island and seek opportunities for co-location with partners.
28. There are some areas of the Island that IWFRS cannot reach within 10 minutes, these are areas that we focus our prevention and community safety activities. The new locality model will allow the IWFRS to use resources more effectively to work with partners to identify and target those who are most vulnerable. By helping communities to make positive changes in their lifestyles the IWFRS will help to prevent ill health, improve health and help reduce the future demand on health and social care.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT AND CONSULTATION

29. The council's Corporate Plan 2017 to 2020 has the following actions in the community safety and public protection portfolio, which directly link to the delivery of the service review.
 - Develop options to improve the overall effectiveness of the Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service, ensuring an effective, resilient and safe service for the Island at all times.
 - Work with strategic partners and key stakeholders to ensure the Island has effective and robust arrangements to ensure the safety of the community at all times.
30. Public consultation is not required to implement the outcomes of the service review. The IWFRS has engaged all staff and trade unions through the service review and will continue to engage with all staff throughout the implementation of the proposals in the paper.

FINANCIAL / BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

31. Since 2014 the IWFRS has supported the IWC Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) by reducing its budget by 16.67 per cent from £7.44 million (2013/14) to £6.2 million (2017/18). This reduction has been achieved through 'back office' reductions and sharing services with HFRS. To continue on the improvement journey the IWFRS has undertaken a service review which has looked at how it resources its core functions and seeks the most efficient and effective use of its firefighters.

32. For the first two years of the current MTFS the IWFRS has contributed to the IWC savings target using 'one off' in year savings. The service review will enable these savings to be permanent and reduce the IWFRS budget to £6.135 million (includes inflationary rises and pay award), in a sustainable way.

33. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

34. S.21 Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 requires the Secretary of State to prepare a Fire and Rescue National Framework which sets priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in connection with the discharge of their functions. Fire and Rescue Authorities have a duty to have regard to the Fire and Rescue National Framework required by s.21 Fire and Rescue Services act 2004 and to produce an IRMP that identifies and assesses all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect its community.

35. As part of the IRMP 2014 to 2020, the council approved that by 2020 the IWFRS would carry out a review of its service. This report sets out the outcome of the review and ensures the implementation of the IRMP.

36. The Cabinet agreed in July 2017 that the service review would be reported back to Cabinet and then to Full Council by March 2018. However, if Option 4 is approved, this is an Executive decision and therefore is a decision for the Cabinet to take, not Full Council. On that basis the matter will not be the subject of a further report to Full Council.

37. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

38. There are no adverse effects which have been highlighted in the equality impact assessment. There is an improvement in delivery of community safety functions and in response times.

RECOMMENDATION

39. Following evaluation of the options it is considered that option four provides the most efficient and effective use of the IWFRS resources and best service and value to the public.

RECOMMENDATION

40. Option 4 - Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the service by changing to a three locality model based on a reduction of eight whole time firefighter posts and maintaining all ten fire stations.

APPENDICES ATTACHED

41. [APPENDIX A](#) - Service Review Report

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