



## **SCRUTINY COMMISSION: 6 NOVEMBER 2019**

### **LEICESTERSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN 2020 - 2024**

#### **REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

##### **Purpose of report**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the views of the Scrutiny Commission on Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service's Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) for 2020 – 2024 during the public consultation period. Comments from the Scrutiny Commission will be incorporated into a response from the County Council which will be submitted to the Cabinet for approval on 22 November 2019.

##### **Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

2. The Scrutiny Commission was consulted on the Integrated Risk Management Plan 2016-20 and considered the matter at meetings on the 4 and 9 November 2015. Comments were submitted to the Cabinet and, due to the controversial nature of the proposals at that time, a debate was held at the full Council meeting in December 2015.
3. The Combined Fire Authority approved the proposals in the IRMP 2020-24 for consultation at its meeting on 19 June 2019.

##### **Background**

4. An IRMP must assess all foreseeable fire and rescue-related risks to local communities and put in place arrangements to respond to and deal with them. It must cover at least a three-year time period, be regularly reviewed, reflect local risk, be developed through consultation and be accessible and cost-effective. The planning process should also have regard for cross border, multi-agency risks and national incidents.
5. When the Fire and Rescue Service develops an IRMP it engages with multiple partners and uses a variety of sources to review existing risks and identify new ones. These sources include: historical incident data, demographic data, performance data, high risk location information and local development strategies. The impact of wider changes in society, including government policy, economic growth and technological progress, is also considered.
6. For emergency response capability, the key areas considered are: availability of resources, response times to incidents and the individual station demand profiles. The Fire and Rescue Service also considers its prevention and protection activities in

its future planning, reviewing the use and allocation of available resources to mitigate the impact of identified risks.

7. All this data and information helps the Fire and Rescue Service to understand the needs of its communities, identify locations of potential peak demand, and assess its capacity to respond. It is also used to anticipate trends that may result in an increase in demand as well as opportunities to reduce the current levels.
8. The current IRMP was consulted on in 2016 and is valid until 2020. Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service has completed all of the agreed changes, including: implementing the Day Crewing Plus (DCP) duty system in Wigston, the Day Crewing (DC) duty system at Market Harborough and Lutterworth and introducing the five Tactical Response Vehicles (TRVs) at various locations within the service.
9. Appendix A to this report provides the detail on how the 2020-2024 IRMP has been constructed and some of the high level data used to identify and support the proposals.

### **Proposals**

10. The proposals within the IRMP are as follows:
  - i. To use fire engines flexibly, aiming to attend life threatening incidents in an average of 10 minutes;
  - ii. To use fire fighters efficiently and flexibly to maximise our appliance availability;
  - iii. To purchase a second high reach appliance to replace the older one of the two vehicles;
  - iv. To continue to undertake education and enforcement activities, targeting those most at risk;
  - v. To continue to collaborate with other blue light services and partner agencies to support the purpose of safer people, safer places;
  - vi. To enable staff to do the right thing to help communities;
  - vii. To implement alternative crewing arrangements in the event of the Service moving away from the current Day Crewing Plus duty system.
11. More detail on the proposals is contained in Appendix A to this report.

### **Draft Response**

12. County Council Departments have been asked to provide feedback on the proposals within the IRMP. This feedback, which is set out in the paragraphs below, along with the views of the Scrutiny Commission, will form the County Council's draft response to the consultation which will be submitted to the Cabinet for approval.

#### **Proposal 1: use of fire engines flexibly**

13. The County Council recognises the logic of this idea which would allow the Fire and Rescue Service to meet its goal response times whilst also potentially giving greater coverage to the area. However, the reason that the Fire and Rescue Service is unable at present to meet the '10 minute goal' is due to assets being committed at other incidents, availability of crew and vehicle maintenance. It is not clear how the proposal of flexibly using operational assets would enable this goal to be achieved.

The County Council would welcome greater clarity on how this proposal would work in practice.

Proposal 2: use of firefighters efficiently and flexibly

14. The County Council wishes to see a continued good distribution of fire services stations and resources etc. across Leicestershire.
15. The County Council notes the principle of relocating firefighters when demand/risk indicates this is necessary, although it is of the view that, if firefighters are relocated from their 'home' station to respond to demand, this could decrease the availability and coverage of the service overall as efforts would be concentrated on areas of demand.
16. The County Council welcomes the proposal to evaluate on-call staff and recognises that the proposal to extend their response time to support/deploy might be the way coverage is still provided if full-time firefighters are concentrated in areas of demand. However, it would be useful if this was made clear in the proposals. Greater clarity is also needed around how the approach to on-call firefighters would help with recruitment and retention from the community.

Proposal 3: Purchasing a second high reach appliance

17. With one high reach appliance being decommissioned, it makes sense for the Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service to replenish its resource.

Proposal 4: To continue to undertake education and enforcement activities, targeting those most at risk

18. The County Council welcomes the concept of providing education in homes, schools and other venues, using shared data and working with other organisations. It is similar to current arrangements, for example after a flood, but there is a lack of clarity regarding how it will happen. Continuing with existing education and enforcement activities is also unlikely to target effectively those most at risk.
19. There is a need for the Fire and Rescue Service to be aware of vulnerable people when engaging in fire safety (and other risk prevention) activities. This is in terms of dealing with them sensitively - being aware of and knowing how to deal with potential resilience and comprehension issues, and knowing how to identify vulnerable and at risk people, how to deal with them and refer them on (e.g. to First Contact Plus and Local Area Co-ordinators).
20. With this in mind there may be a case for the Fire and Rescue Service to actually be social prescribers (alongside GPs, pharmacists and social workers – as envisaged in the Government's social prescription and tackling loneliness strategies) identifying and referring on to people experiencing or at risk of loneliness or isolation to link in to support in particular from voluntary and community sector organisations and groups.
21. The County Council would welcome the inclusion in education activities of other (non-fire related) messages that would support the County Council's objectives around prevention and emergency support within the home (e.g. around trips and falls or how to access preventative and community services). This would support the

County Council's work to help people become more resilient and independent (making every contact count). In a similar fashion, if the Fire and Rescue Service shared its key education messages with the County Council, then officers such as those in First Contact Plus would be able to communicate them to vulnerable residents.

**Proposal 5: To continue to collaborate with other blue light services and partner agencies to support the purpose of safer people, safer places**

22. The County Council welcomes this, believing that through collaboration there are opportunities to realise significant financial and non-financial benefits. The County Council looks forward to seeing plans and proposals for collaboration.
23. The County Council would highlight the need for the Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service to either know about vulnerable people who are present when they are attending a fire (or other emergency/incident) or to be aware of and be able to identify vulnerable people in these incidents. It will be important for the Fire and Rescue Services to be able to deal with vulnerable people appropriately and to help others responding (e.g. ambulance, other NHS or police) or who will be dealing with them down the line (us, NHS, districts etc.) through effective communication and not making a difficult, upsetting experience worse – undermining people's resilience and the prospects of a speedy recovery and return to independence.

**Consultation**

24. Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service is undertaking a public consultation on the IRMP between September and December 2019. Consultation feedback will be presented to the Combined Fire Authority at its meeting on 22 January and a formal consultation summary report will be presented to its meeting on 5 February, where it will be asked to agree which proposals should be progressed.

**Resource Implications**

25. Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service has a robust medium term financial plan in place to meet the needs of the service in 2019/20. The proposals will be delivered within the current plan and as part of any future medium term financial plan.

**Timetable for Decisions**

26. The views of the Scrutiny Commission will inform the County Council's response to the consultation, which the Cabinet will be asked to agree at its meeting on 22 November 2019.

**Background papers**

Report to the Combined Fire Authority 19 June 2019 – Integrated Risk Management Plan 2020-2024 – Proposals

<https://leics-fire.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/irmp-2020-2024-proposals-final.pdf>

<https://leics-fire.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/appendix-a-irmp-2020-2024-proposals-document-final.pdf>

**Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure**

27. None.

**Equality and Human Rights Implications**

28. Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service will undertake an Equality Impact Assessment on all approved proposals.

**Appendices**

29. Appendix A – Integrated Risk Management Plan 2020 – 2024 Consultation Proposals

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