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## **Report to Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee**

**13 January 2022**

### **Community Risk Management Plan Consultation Briefing**

**Report by Deputy Chief Fire Officer**

**Electoral division(s): All**

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#### **Summary**

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (2018) requires all Fire and Rescue Authorities to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) that covers at least a 3-year period. The plan must identify and assess all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks to communities and ensure arrangements that have been put in place to prevent or respond to them.

The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) has commissioned a Community Risk Management (CRM) project that aims to develop robust, and evidence-based digital guidance that supports a consistent approach to the CRM planning process. The project has seen a change in terminology from IRMP to CRMP.

We are now in the fourth and final year of our existing 2018-2022 IRMP and have developed a new Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) covering 2022-2026.

Like all fire and rescue services we are accountable to the communities we serve, and consultation is one of the ways we provide the public, our partners and stakeholders with an opportunity to shape our priorities and ensure we are clear in outlining our priorities and the way in which we deliver our services.

This briefing paper introduces the 2022-2026 CRMP consultation document and outlines the decision-making timeline.

#### **Focus for Scrutiny**

Review the CRMP Consultation Document and the six key proposals. The Public Consultation commenced on 15 November 2021 and will close on 21 January 2022. The committee is asked to review the proposals as part of the consultation and note the decision-making timeline for the final published CRMP.

## Proposal

### 1 Background and context

- 1.1 The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (2018) explains the government's priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in England. The framework identifies high level expectations but does not prescribe how individual fire and rescue services should conduct its day-to-day business; that is a role for the fire and rescue authority, in consultation with the communities and residents that it serves.
- 1.2 The framework details the following 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;
  - Identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their areas face;
  - Collaborate with emergency services and other local and national partners to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the service they provide;
  - Be accountable to communities for the service they provide; and
  - Develop and maintain a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse.
- 1.3 The framework states that our plan 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.
- 1.4 In accordance with the framework document and the newly published CRMP Fire Standard officers have undertaken a robust and detailed assessment of

foreseeable operational risk. This process has considered our community risks, using a range of sophisticated analytical tools to identify where incidents might happen, when they might occur and how serious they could be. Using this data alongside historical information about demand allows us to identify options to better target our resources, including firefighters and appliances, more effectively, resulting in a better balance of prevention, protection and response.

- 1.5 A programme of pre-consultation and engagement activities has also been conducted over the past 12 months in order to help shape the strategic direction of the CRMP proposals outlined within the draft plan.

## **2 Proposal details**

- 2.1 In accordance with the requirements above and the recently published Community Risk Management Fire Standard, West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (WSFRS) has developed a range of proposals based on our assessment of existing and future risks to the local community. A comprehensive 'Technical' Risk document underpins the risk methodology and draws from wide ranging risk data, National and Community risk assessments and detailed risk modelling. This can be found on the County Council's 'Your Voice Engagement Hub' at <https://yourvoice.westsussex.gov.uk/crmp>
- 2.2 The overarching principles of our new CRMP are that we are seeking to make West Sussex safer, stronger and more resilient by improving our Prevention, Protection and Response arrangements.
- 2.3 Our updated risk analysis demonstrates that there is no significant change to daytime risk or demand during both weekday and weekend periods, in fact Saturdays represent our busiest period. We also know that fire engines crewed by retained firefighters at the four day crewing stations are typically the least available type of resource. When balanced with a consistent level of risk and demand this CRMP represents a chance to improve and enhance emergency response performance, resilience, firefighter safety, and to optimise Prevention and Protection delivery, particularly in our day crewed locations and within our more rural communities.
- 2.4 The six consultation proposals are listed below, a more detailed 'What', 'Why' and 'How' rationale, along with supporting analysis can be found in the CRMP consultation document in Appendix A.
  1. Enhance our retained operating model
  2. Weekend protection, prevention and response improvements
  3. Improving protection, prevention and response performance in rural areas
  4. Unwanted False Alarms - changes to our response
  5. Review of Emergency Response Standards (ERS)
  6. Enhanced specialist capability and assets
- 2.5 £1.3m of funding, along with a £1.150m on-going commitment has been included within the current Medium Term Financial Strategy, and as such there are enough planned financial resources to deliver on the proposals included within the CRMP consultation.

- 2.6 The majority of the funding requested is to enable the improvements to our Prevention, Protection and Operational Response delivery model in order to address the community risks identified within West Sussex which is likely to require additional firefighters within our full time equivalent (FTE).
- 2.7 In addition to the likely increase in FTE within the Response team we will also need to support and enable projects to ensure delivery of the proposals and an additional £170k has been included to increase capacity across the service.
- 2.8 A breakdown is shown in the table below.

Function	2022/23	2023/24
	£	£
Response	1,130,000	980,000
Prevention	30,000	30,000
Protection	45,000	45,000
POD/People	55,000	55,000
Strategic Risk	40,000	40,000
	1,300,000	1,150,000

### **3 Consultation, engagement and advice**

- 3.1 The CRMP forms the basis of the contract between West Sussex Fire and Rescue Authority and the communities and individuals we serve. As such it is vital that we consult and engage with the public, partners, stakeholders and our staff to ensure that our proposals meet expectations and provide confidence in our planned approach.
- 3.2 A wide-ranging internal engagement process has already been undertaken via a number of staff briefings, newsletter updates and over 25 separate team visits which were led by Heads of Service and members of the Operational Assurance team.
- 3.3 Business analysts have also undertaken a detailed review of existing IRMPs across all services in England, refining the full list down, firstly to a top 10 and then to a final 5, in line with Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) judgement. From these sample groups, best practice has been determined for length, structure, content and presentation. This information has then been used to build a recommended framework around which to construct West Sussex's forthcoming CRMP.
- 3.4 WSFRS has developed a consultation document that outlines the key changes and areas of improvement that we will plan to deliver during the lifetime of our new CRMP 2022-2026 (See Appendix A).
- 3.5 Feedback from the consultation will be considered in the final development of the full CRMP which will be completed in readiness for Service Executive

Board (SEB) approval on 7 February 2022, alongside a summary of the consultation findings and ready for the start of the final approval cycle. A high level CRMP decision timeline is included in Appendix B.

- 3.6 As part of this CRMP process officers have also taken an opportunity to review our strategic priorities in order to ensure our plan is relevant and consistent with both the County Council and NFCC's direction.
- 3.7 Officers have been embedded within the NFCC community risk programme which has included a project to develop CRMP consultation best practice and guidance. This working group has included The Consultation Institution and whilst the final guidance has not yet been approved or published, officers within this programme have been able to anticipate many of the proposals that will underpin the final guidance document to ensure they are captured as part of the WSFRS CRMP consultation process.
- 3.8 Consultation is an activity which should add value to the CRMP and assist to create a better understanding of the needs of local communities and stakeholders which FRS are seeking to support, and through a genuine exchange of views should help to create a CRMP that is more closely aligned to these needs.
- 3.9 Therefore, we must consult widely in line with governance and statutory legislation arrangements to ensure that our plans draw on the widest possible range of data and views and represent the best possible response to local needs and wishes.
- 3.10 Underlining good practice for consultation are the 'Gunning Principles' which govern stakeholder and public consultation where case law has defined that a consultation is only legitimate when the following four principles are met:
  1. Proposals are still at a formative stage. A final decision has not yet been made, or predetermined, by the decision makers.
  2. There is sufficient information to give 'intelligent consideration'. The information provided must relate to the consultation and must be available, accessible, and easily interpretable for consultees to provide an informed response.
  3. There is adequate time for consideration and response. There must be sufficient opportunity for consultees to participate in the consultation. There is no set timeframe for consultation, despite the widely accepted twelve-week consultation period, as the length of time given for consultee to respond can vary depending on the subject and extent of impact of the consultation.
  4. Conscientious consideration must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made, decision-makers should be able to provide evidence that they took consultation responses into account.
- 3.11 WSFRS have developed a CRMP consultation approach based on these principles, we have worked closely with the County Council Senior Consultation and Engagement Officer and will continue to do so throughout our consultation to ensure compliance and best practice.

## 4 Finance

### 4.1 Revenue consequences

	Current Year 2020/21 £m	Year 2 2021/22 £m	Year 3 2022/23 £m	Year 4 2023/24 £m
Change from Proposal – Additional funding required to deliver proposals			1,300,000	1,150,000

## 5 Risk implications and mitigations

Risk	Mitigating Action (in place or planned)
Lack of public responses	A clear communications strategy in place to increase the public responses and a clear plan of engagement sessions both virtual and across the county.

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### Appendices

Appendix A – West Sussex Community Risk Management Plan 2022–2026  
Consultation

Appendix B – CRMP Consultation Survey

Appendix C - CRMP Decision Timeline

**Background papers** – None