

Police, Fire and Crime Panel – 13 February 2023

Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service

Safety Plan 2020 - 2024 Update Report

Report of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. This report is to update the Police, Fire and Crime Panel on the delivery of the Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service Safety Plan (SP - Integrated Risk Management Plan - IRMP). The publication of the Safety Plan fulfils the legislative obligations as defined within the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework for England 2018.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. That the Panel note the update on the delivery of the SP 2020 – 2024 and make comment as appropriate.

3. Background

- 3.1. The IRMP is a document that each Fire and Rescue Authority in England is required to produce. Whilst there is no specific template that the Authority is required to follow, there is guidance detailed within the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework for England 2018 on the content of the plan. Each 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.
- 3.2. Following the transfer of governance from the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority to the Staffordshire Commissioner, a new Safety Plan 2020-2024 was developed which was published in August 2020.
- 3.3. The four priorities outlined in the Commissioner's Fire and Rescue Plan are:
- A flexible and responsive Service
 - Protect people and places
 - Help people most at risk stay safe
 - A fire and rescue service for tomorrow

4. Urgent Matter to Report: Industrial action update (as of 4th January 2022)

- 4.1. Following the rejection of a national 5% pay offer for the year 2022 for its members, the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) has balloted its members for strike action and it is highly likely that they will receive a strong mandate for a national strike to commence in February 2023 at the earliest.
- 4.2. The ballot will conclude on 30 January 2023. With a minimum of two weeks' notice for employers, the earliest date that a strike can take place is 13 February 2023.
- 4.3. The Service has been working on its contingency arrangements regarding its' capability in the event of a national strike by the FBU.
- 4.4. Based upon the information and intelligence available at this time, it is anticipated that there will be approximately 35% of normal fire cover for a strike period of up to 24 hours and 25% of normal fire cover for a strike period up to 4 days.
- 4.5. The Service has fully considered both commercial arrangements to support fire cover and a request to the Military for aid but neither of these have been secured at this stage.
- 4.6. The Service's capability will be limited to providing the best possible response to incidents and normal prevention and protection work will be impacted.
- 4.7. In the event of any national fire strike, regardless of its duration, it is likely that attendance times will be slower and the capacity to resource normal incident demand will be limited. This includes the provision of over the border support to and from neighbouring Fire and rescue services through our statutory arrangements.
- 4.8. In addition, response to large scale incidents through the provision of national resilience capabilities for incident such as large-scale floods, wildfires, chemical incidents and terrorist attacks will also be limited.

- 4.9. In preparation for the event of strikes, the Service has completed the following tasks;
- Tested and exercised its business continuity plan for industrial action
 - Contingency training has been completed for officers
 - Contingency training for support staff and civilians is taking place in January 2023
 - A Strategic Assessment meeting is taking place on 5 January 2023 to brief partners on the ballot and the planning for IA
 - All Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent MP's have been written to and updated along with the Staffordshire Commissioner

5. A flexible and responsive service

- 5.1. Staffordshire key performance measures are reported to the **Public Performance Meeting** (PPM) on a six-monthly basis. Highlights from the most recent performance report for the period April to September 2022 include:
- The total number of incidents attended has increased by 6.7% compared to the same period in 2021, the most notable area of increased demand being attendance at Secondary Fires due to spate conditions during the summer.
 - The Service attended 195 accidental dwelling fires compared to 224 during the same period in 2021. The top causes of these fires remain the same as the previous years; cooking related incidents and faulty equipment which are relatively static in trend. 2 fatalities and 7 injuries were recorded as a result of accidental dwelling fires.
 - The Service attended 70 accidental business property fires. The top cause of this type of incident remains to be faulty equipment, and levels of such incidents have remained static over the past three years.
- 5.2. Through collaborative working with the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board (SSOTICB) our **Falls Response Team** was established on 14 November and the service went live on 7 December for a 6-month pilot period. The initiative will involve SFRS personnel attending and resolving falls calls in the Eastern Service Delivery Group area. The team are dispatched by the NHS-led Unscheduled Care Coordination Centre (UCCC), who draw calls from the West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS) 'Stack'. The UCCC will dispatch SFRS to what are termed 'Green' calls, i.e. where there are no known injuries to the patient and they just require assistance getting up, and SFRS are to attend within 2 hours of dispatch.
- 5.3. As a result of lower than anticipated demand the pilot area was extended and the team will now respond to Falls Calls anywhere in Staffordshire. As at 12 January 2023 the Team had responded to 61 calls, and the attendance time target has been met for all calls. The average number of calls is 1.7 calls per day with a range of 0 to 4 calls per day. On 82% of occasions the patient was picked up and had no injuries. On 13% of occasions the patient was picked up but required a further clinical response which was passed back to UCCC/WMAS. On the other 5% of occasions we were either returned en-route, the patient had been picked up prior to our arrival or we were unable to lift the patient due to an injury and had to summon

further assistance. On average we are finding that the patient has fallen 4.5 hours prior to our mobilisation. On 12 occasions the period has been between 5 and 15 hours. Work is underway with UCCC to increase the number of calls we are dispatched to and reduce the time between the initial call and dispatch, thereby improving outcomes for the patient.

- 5.4. Naturally the patients we are attending to have vulnerabilities associated with being at increased risk of fire such as elderly, mobility issues etc, therefore Safe and Well checks, including Falls Prevention advice are carried out.
- 5.5. The team consists of 6 staff (5 of which are also on-call personnel), based at Lichfield, working in shifts of 3 to cover 8am to 8pm, 7 days a week. When the team are not assigned to falls calls, they are carrying out prevention activity and delivery of antiviral medications. The running costs of the team for the pilot period are anticipated to be £132k excluding unplanned overtime. The SSOTICB have committed £150k of funding to cover the cost of the pilot.
- 5.6. The Service's annual **Statement of Assurance** was previously shared with the Panel on 24 October 2022. The report, which details the Service's performance against the priorities set out in our Community Risk Management Plan (which we call our Safety Plan) and the financial, governance and operational arrangements in place for the period to 31 March 2022 has now been published. The report also highlights prevention work carried out in the local community and how the Service supported local communities during the Covid-19 pandemic. The statement provides our communities with clear information on our performance against the priorities set out in our Safety Plan. To view the Statement of Assurance – click [here](#).
- 5.7. Three new **Fire Standards** have been launched recently:- Data Management, Leading the Service and Leading & Developing People, bringing the total number of standards now published to fourteen. The Data Management standard focuses on how fire and rescue services can improve their community risk planning and other key activities using good quality, reliable data. Leading the Service and Leading & Developing People have been developed to bring clarity around leadership roles and to establish expectations of fire and rescue leaders. Both standards will support our pledge to continue to strengthen our culture of openness, trust and inclusivity, ensure the makeup of our service reflects the communities we serve and improve the safety and wellbeing of the public, our employees and volunteers.
- 5.8. We are hosting a number of workshops across the Service to help us assess our levels of compliance against each standard and identify actions we may need to take to achieve compliance.
- 5.9. A number of other standards are proposed for this year:- Fire Control, Communications, Engagement & Consultation, Commercial & Procurement, Finance & Assurance and Asset Management. We have invited relevant managers across the Service (and our Shared Services) to contribute to the consultation process.

6. Protect people and places

- 6.1. In late 2020 SFRS entered into collaboration with Midland Heart to retrofit sprinklers in a number of their properties. What started as an idea for a single block of flats in Lichfield subsequently turned into a **Sprinkler Replacement Programme** in 8 buildings across the wider West Midlands area and the Staffordshire phase of this project is now drawing to a close.
- 6.2. Charnwood House, a 5-storey building with 11 duplex flats, was commissioned in the early part of the financial year and focus moved to a larger, more complex building in Andrews Court, an 8-storey building with 59 flats of sheltered accommodation in Lichfield. This has been a challenging project in a number of ways, some issues created by its ownership structure, where the building is managed by Midlands Heart but owned by the residents. In early 2021 a vote of the residents went in favour of installation but spiralling costs, since the initial quote, dissuaded some residents. However, SFRS were able to provide partial funding and the completed project is due to be commissioned and delivered in mid-January 2023.
- 6.3. In the north of the county Stoke-on-Trent City Council recently reviewed and consulted on the total redevelopment of the sites of 10 of their high-rise buildings, seven of which are without sprinklers and plans are set to be approved at a meeting w/c 16 January. Although this is a long-term, transformational development plan, spanning two decades, it is anticipated that there will be little appetite for investment in retro-fitting sprinklers for buildings already slated for possible demolition.
- 6.4. SOTCC also have a new build programme to build sprinklers in to new 3-storey developments such as Rialto, Beardsmore and Sutherland Courts, providing a level of fire safety over and above that provided by developments adhering to the minimum legal requirements. SFRS will be utilising our proven links within the Council to facilitate this forward-thinking approach being continued with the replacement developments for the high-rise buildings.
- 6.5. Looking forward it is important to recognise that the current domestic economic outlook is likely to have an impact on the project. The cost of living crisis is likely to be significant for the people that live in the buildings the project targets and this will have a knock-on effect for the building owners, housing societies, as they possibly struggle to collect and control rents, and the capital expenditure they are willing to commit to a major project. Although the budget for the project has been reduced in recent years, the spiralling costs, as seen in the Andrews House development, also limits the effective interventions the Project is able to make. The combination of these two factors, in the current climate, could make the next few years challenging.
- 6.6. Our **Business Support** officer continues to provide courses and qualifications to our local businesses. Recent initiatives include:
 - Working with the National Farmers Union to deliver an outreach business support programme for the rural community as well as representing SFRS at the Chamber of Commerce Rural Forum.

- Fire safety education delivered to the farming sector and students of Rodbaston College.
- Support to Apedale Heritage Centre to review policy, legislation and procedures at Apedale Coal Mine.
- Automatic External Defibrillators (AED) familiarisation sessions at Caverswall Village Hall.
- Enterprise Advisor Support provided to Endon High School and other schools and trusts in the county by our Business Support Lead to support pathways into industry and shape young people's futures.
- Supporting the Staffordshire Chambers Business Festival and the Let's Do Business initiative at Uttoxeter Race Course.
- Attendance at Staffordshire Patrons Event

6.7. Support is also provided to businesses affected by fire. There have been a number of incidents during the period, two of which have caused significant loss and disruption:

- A severe fire disrupted the facilities at Ford First in Tamworth. Although there was significant loss and disruption, the company had the benefit of professional employees who were specifically trained to manage such adverse events.
- A significant incident at the Black Lion public house in Consall disrupted all business activity and destroyed the living quarters of the landlord. Support was provided to assist the business in the early post-fire stages to initiate insurance claims and retrieve reports and documentation to demonstrate that the necessary procedures and policies were in place.

7. Help people most at risk stay safe

7.1. Due to the impact of Covid-19 there was a significant decrease in the number of physical **Safe and Well visits** completed throughout 2020 and 2021 due to the required social distancing measures. Safe and Well activity has now returned to expected levels, and the backlog of visits from the period affected by Covid-19 has been addressed.

7.2. **Safe+Sound**; Supporting communities to make informed and positive lifestyle choices, improving their health, safety and wellbeing.

7.2.1. Online delivery of Safe+Sound on the Learn Live Channel is still going very well with a weekly programme every Wednesday (term time only) and a number of 'Special' programmes aimed at other audiences within our community.

7.2.2. September to December 2022 (Autumn Term) saw a total of 62,503 devices tuning in – of which Staffs was 40,266 and Nationally 22,237, compared to 30,640 during the same period in 2021. Feedback from participants and partners remains positive. 21/22 highlights produced by Learn Live: <https://vimeo.com/733210590>

- 7.2.3. From September 2022 all weekly programme content is mapped into the PSHE curriculum; the Education team work closely with the two PSHE Leads for the County.
- 7.2.4. A special home safety programme was produced for adults. Technicians and other staff promote this through Home Fire Safety Visits. 1,498 devices have viewed this programme to date and therefore received safety messages.
- 7.2.5. A 'Be Safe Be Warm' special programme is due for release in January 2023. This aims to deliver safety messages designed specifically to cover areas of concern relating to the cost of living increases.
- 7.3. **Volunteering** opportunities are increasing, including examples of partnership working such as Pathfinder and Community Speedwatch support. There are currently 66 volunteers in the service. Examples of volunteer engagement between October and December 2022 include:
- Support with delivery of a 3-pump exercise - Operational Assurance providing casualties that were used to deliver a realistic scenario for operational crews.
 - Support for our warm spaces campaigns across the county.
 - Continued support for all operational and support staff by our Chaplains.
 - Educational visits to stations for local Beavers, Cubs and Brownies groups.
 - Supporting the Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership with the Pathfinder project.
 - Supporting CSO's at local events and delivering fire safety leaflets to businesses.
 - Attendance at a Macmillan coffee morning.
 - Supporting production of Safe+Sound programmes.
- 7.3.1. A total of **995.5** volunteer **hours** were given in the last quarter compared to 324.33 hours in the same period last year.
- 7.4. **Olive Branch** Training aims to raise awareness of Fire Safety issues in the home for those that visit vulnerable members of our community. The online session encourages and gives confidence to a wide range of home visitors such as Social Workers, Domiciliary Care Providers, Occupational Health Therapists, Police Officers etc. in identifying potential fire hazards and other risks. At the end of the session delegates will know how to make a referral for a Home Fire Safety Visit. Between July and December 2022, there have been **237** completed courses, with **108** completed evaluations received.
- 7.5. All **Prince's Trust** programmes have now returned to a pre-pandemic number. Although the pandemic is still influencing the number of participants on our programmes, all indications are now showing we are on a positive but slow return to pre-pandemic numbers. We continue to use some of the delivery styles developed during the pandemic as they have proved beneficial, encouraging our young people to remain engaged throughout delivery. Over the next 12 months we have a total of 18 scheduled programmes with a total of 102 weeks of delivery. It is anticipated that each course will continue to demonstrate positive interest and recruitment.

8. A fire and rescue service for tomorrow

- 8.1. As previously reported, despite the Service having being inspected in late summer/early autumn 2021, the final **HMICFRS report** – Effectiveness, efficiency and people 2021/22 – Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service was not published until 27 July 2022. To view the report in full please click [here](#).
- 8.2. As the panel are already aware, HMICFRS made some recommendations in the report and identified 20 ‘Areas for Improvement’ (AFIs) which the Service has now created an action plan to address. The progress of this action plan is monitored via our Action Tracker and scrutinised internally through Service governance boards, and the Staffordshire Commissioner.
- 8.3. The Service has already taken steps to address these AFIs and the most recent updates are below;

Overall Judgement for Service Effectiveness: GOOD		
Question Judgment	Areas for Improvement	Comments & progress
Understanding the risk of fire & other emergencies Good	1. The Service should make sure that firefighters are confident and suitably trained in gathering risk information	<i>All Prevention staff complete an internal training programme on Home Fire Safety with input on recognising and assessing fire risk. With the introduction of the NFCC Home Fire Safety framework, and the future implementation of the Prevention portion of the PPHMS system (in development), this training will be reviewed and aligned to provide assurance that all members of Prevent staff are suitably and effectively trained.</i> <i>An upgrade to our Operational Risk Management software is underway. Improvements have been added to the system to simplify the creation of new tasks, provide crews with the ability to manually enter scoring to improve the accuracy of risk profiles and the addition of an expanded choice of risk elements to align to national progression and revised legislation. Upcoming developments in 2023 include improvements in the functionality of cross-border risk management and the development of mapping and reporting functions to improve the understanding of cross-border risk. Full training packages will be rolled out once completed.</i>
	2. The Service needs to improve how it engages with seldom-heard people and groups in its local community to build a comprehensive profile of risk in its service area	<i>This work is currently on hold as the Service is recruiting to the position of Community Engagement Officer, with a projected start date of February 2023.</i>
Preventing fires & other risk Good	3. The Service should make sure it puts in place measures to catch up on the backlog of	<i>The Service has worked hard to deal with the backlog of safe and well visits following the removal of lockdown restrictions. During lockdown periods, Prevention staff were unable to complete all visits in person, but an alternative ‘socially distanced’ method was established using telephone to ensure the most vulnerable were still supported. In-person visits have been re-established and visits</i>

	<p>safe and well visits. – COMPLETE</p>	<p>are scheduled by crews and technicians according to priority. The total number of open referrals has been reduced from over 600 to 45.</p> <p>Safe and Well activity has returned to business as usual with the overall focus to increase engagement and to refine and improve assessment alongside the development of technology, data integration, and information sharing capabilities.</p>
<p>Protecting the public through fire regulation</p> <p>Requires improvement</p>	<p>4. The Service should assure itself that its Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP) prioritises the highest risks and includes proportionate activity to reduce risk.</p>	<p>The current Risk Based Inspection Programme still in place whilst the Service awaits further updates from the NFCC. A new draft RBIP was produced earlier in the year based upon 'Higher Risk Occupancies – Preliminary Guidance' produced by the NFCC. The full guidance was expected in the spring of 2022 however has been delayed.</p> <p>Communication with the NFCC has suggested that the full guidance will be issued to FRS's in early 2023 therefore project on hold until that guidance document is received to ensure national best practice is followed.</p>
	<p>5. The Service should make sure it has an effective quality assurance process, so that staff carry out audits to a consistent standard.</p>	<p>External consultation has taken place with Derbyshire FRS as well as internal consultation with fire safety managers to adopt and amend some elements of the assurance process to ensure a system that works for SFRS. A new process has also been devised and agreed, which is currently being written into the Protection policy document. Once this process has received suitable sign off, it will be shared via the Protection forum in the coming year, and will be subject to a regular monitoring and review process which will be completed annually.</p>
<p>Responding to fires & other emergencies</p> <p>Requires improvement</p>	<p>6. The Service should make sure that it has effective systems in place to reliably understand resource availability.</p>	<p>The Service has previously created the position of Resource Manager. This position is responsible for the monitoring of daily availability for the Whole-time part of the business.</p> <p>As an extension of this, the Retained Support Officer (RSO) watch managers now monitor daily availability for the on-call side of the business and use a predictive statistical tool to undertake resource planning.</p> <p>Firewatch / Vision integration and development is also planned to reduce the extent of manual Fire Control processes around obtaining and interpreting availability. These improvements will also allow the Service to complete an assessment of up to the minute availability, which can then be automatically shared with the Command and Control system to improve the timeliness and consistency of decision making around the mobilisation of resources.</p>
	<p>7. The Service should improve the availability of its fire engines to respond to incidents in line with its Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).</p>	<p>A new Response Performance Management group has now been set up, which will focus on feedback from Group Managers and Station Managers for each station's availability plan. The next steps are to review end to end recruitment process as a new transformation project and to continue the transformation work with the potential to mobilise by numbers (appliances available with 3 riders). Review work is currently ongoing to assess the possibilities of implementation and to conduct consultation into the new year. A transformation trial in South Staffs of pairing stations to increase appliance availability will commence in Q1/2 2023.</p> <p>The implementation of the new RSO structure has been completed and this is now in place and is subject to review monthly at the newly established Response Performance Meeting. This will include promote discussion and feedback from service delivery leads.</p>

	<p>8. The Service should make sure that it improves the way in which it captures and shares learning from operational incidents.</p>	<p>A new quarterly training and action plan meeting has been formed to discuss outstanding actions from incident debriefs and to direct improvement activity. These insights are then shared with the workforce and retained as organisational learning for areas such as; operational procedure, risk assessment and equipment use.</p> <p>The process of debriefing is under review; with the intention of increasing the number of multi-agency debrief sessions to improve shared learning opportunities. A central training planner for five appliance and Over the Border operations training has also been set up to further ensure organisational learning is captured and circulated.</p>
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Overall Judgement for Service Efficiency: REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT

Question Judgment	Areas for Improvement	Comments & progress
<p>Making best use of resources</p> <p>Requires improvement</p>	<p>9. The Service should have effective measures in place to assure itself that its workforce is productive and that their time is used as efficiently and effectively as possible to meet the priorities in the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).</p>	<p>FireWatch has been identified as a workable solution for productivity monitoring and development has begun in the testing environment. This is being trialled at Hanley Fire Station. Decision to roll out to the wider organisation will be taken to Transformation Board in the new year.</p> <p>The Daily Work Routine Policy has been created and taken to Response Board in December for approval.</p> <p>For reporting purposes, the project has decided on the use of PowerBI to provide a dashboard to enable visual reporting. A PowerBI gateway into the FireWatch system has been created for the purposes of reporting and the development of a dashboard will begin in the new year.</p>
<p>Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future</p> <p>Good</p>	<p>10. The Service should assure itself that its IT systems are resilient, reliable, accurate and accessible</p>	<p>During Q3 2022 we added a high availability firewall, updated VM environment, and have created a new back-up solution for MS365. These implementations have all improved resilience of the ICT services. In order to assess our capabilities and improve contingency planning we have run a series of exercises, both internally and with partners such as CCU. These have been designed to test the resilience and usability of our current systems. A number of these exercises have been around power outages based on the current position of heightened risk.</p>

Overall Judgement for People: REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT

Question Judgment	Areas for Improvement	Comments & progress
<p>Promoting the right values & culture</p> <p>Requires improvement</p>	<p>11. The Service should make sure all staff understand and demonstrate its values.</p>	<p>Agreement is sought on the code of ethics before further progression. Disciplinary and Voluntary redundancy will be focused upon initially. Some work has already been completed with groups and Group Managers and Unions have been consulted. The core code of ethics has also yet to be included in all recruitment and associated Policy. A regular meeting will be established to further allow consultation of these areas as we move forward. Consultations will be held with operational staff for feedback.</p>

		<p>A survey mechanism is currently being reviewed via Internal governance boards and this will be taken for decision and options. If approved HR will work with Comms to create a one-page brief to explain that we have moved to the NFCC Core code of ethics. This will be circulated to all staff via iNews (internal newsletter).</p> <p>A review of the appraisal process is due to begin in January 2023, and is looking to also include the promotion process for all staff. A consultation group has been arranged to explore current appraisal policy and any ideas for the future.</p>
	12. The Service should assure itself that senior managers are visible and demonstrate service values through their behaviors.	Consideration is being given towards management and leadership input for senior members of staff which is to be reviewed by Learning and Development.
	13. The Service should monitor secondary contracts and overtime to make sure working hours are not exceeded.	A review of the Outside Working Policy is to be conducted to consider national alignment with the working time directive and consider a mechanism to identify working practices across dual contracts and how we effectively monitor working hours to ensure the wellbeing of our employees. Once completed a communication plan will be adopted to ensure that all employees are aware of their responsibilities in relation to the outside working policy and the reasons why this is in place.
Getting the right people with the right skills Good	14. The Service should review its succession planning to make sure that it has effective arrangements in place to manage staff turnover while continuing to provide its core service to the public.	<p>The Workforce Planning Board has now been created, where discussions around succession planning and staff turnover are encouraged quarterly. This board is chaired by the Service ACFO. Data reporting around areas such retirement profiles and staff turnover are taken to this board for oversight. Performance monitoring will continue to be developed with 2-3-year forecasts.</p> <p>A working group has been arranged to consider the current appraisal system within the Service and feedback from stakeholders on how it might be developed.</p> <p>A Paper was taken to Service Management Board to adopt an alternative 'Direct Entry' route into the Service in September 2022, which was approved in principle.</p> <p>The Exit interview process is to be reviewed with the intention of improving the engagement of staff leaving the organisation to assist with gathering organisational learning.</p>
	15. The Service needs to review its reliance on overtime to consider whether there are more effective arrangements to provide its core service.	<p>Crewing arrangements have been reviewed and the introduction of minimum crewing of 4 has been shown to be effective in increasing resilience and the reliance on overtime.</p> <p>We now have clear quantities and locations of where drivers are needed, which has now been matched with interest from 40 serving Firefighters who will be approached individually to arrange training needs. Annual re-certification introduction in 2023 has now been arranged and will ensure that BA training is aligned to national guidance.</p>

<p>Ensuring fairness & promoting diversity</p> <p>Requires improvement</p>	<p>16. The Service should assure itself that staff are confident using its feedback mechanisms.</p>	<p><i>To ensure that all employees know of and understand feedback mechanisms such as grievance policy, whistle blowing policy, harassment and bullying policy, line manager involvement, HR support communications and training will be disseminated to all appropriate staff once consultation has been completed with senior stakeholders.</i></p> <p><i>The review of 'Say So' is complete and It has been agreed that we will continue with this service for a further 12 months, and then a further review in 2024 will assess whether this can be brought in-house through a new process. The Service is also considering a further employee survey to understand employee feedback incorporating a 'You said, we listened' aspect.</i></p>
	<p>17. To identify and tackle barriers to equality of opportunity, and make its workforce more representative, the Service should make sure diversity and inclusion are a priority and become important values of the Service.</p>	<p><i>Recruitment EDI data is now presented to the Workforce Planning board for oversight from the ACFO. Engagement and retention of staff from diverse groups is also discussed at this meeting. A yearly planner with themes to raise awareness across the organisation on diversity and inclusion has been created, and events have scheduled for 2023.</i></p> <p><i>To increase the skills and knowledge of staff involved in EDI ensure positive action activity is underway; the Service has successfully recruited a Positive Action Coordinator, and is in the process of recruiting a Community Engagement Officer to ensure diversity and inclusion are a priority within the service and identify and remove barriers to equal opportunity.</i></p>
	<p>18. The Service should review how effective its policy on bullying, harassment and discrimination is in reducing unacceptable behavior towards its staff</p>	<p><i>The Service will start progress against this AFI by reviewing the current Bullying and Harassment Policy in order to consider how the service interacts with staff to make it clear what the expected behaviours are. A Tracker has been created which will monitor employee relations cases, and case details will be shared with the ACFO through a monthly one-to-one meeting. Timescales for contact & resolution within the policy are also be reviewed. The Service will then review the training available for middle managers to ensure a consist approach.</i></p>
	<p>19. The Service should make sure HR policy is consistently applied in the management of employment cases.</p>	<p><i>To ensure regular reviews of employment case management are undertaken to provide assurance that a consistent approach is applied the Service has implemented a case tracker. This will ensure effective monitoring and consideration of feedback or recommendations from investigations. Regular reviews are completed with Senior Officers to ensure resulting actions are monitored and enacted.</i></p> <p><i>The Service will introduce a full debriefing process with the investigating officer / hearing officer to ensure that the process has been completed effectively and in line with processes and that learning is shared. We will ensure all managers actively participate in training in investigation, disciplinary issues, bullying and harassment to consistency and adherence to policy/procedure.</i></p>
<p>Managing performance & developing leaders</p> <p>Good</p>	<p>20. The Service should aim to diversify the pool of future and current leaders</p>	<p><i>The Promotion Process Guidance for the Service will be reviewed. The shared services recruitment lead has already assisted in the restructure of the senior management profile for the organisation. A Positive Action plan will also be created which will sit alongside the recruitment and promotion process and will be directed at engaging with diverse communities and encouraging people from diverse backgrounds to apply for positions and to progress within the Service. This is currently in the draft stage.</i></p>

- 8.4. Round 3 of HMICFRS Fire Inspection Programme commenced in January 2023. HMICFRS will inspect all 44 fire and rescue services in England over a two-year period. Round 3 will adopt a new grading system which will provide a greater degree of information on where improvements are required, better reflect individual service performance and provide a common grading approach throughout police and fire inspections.
- 8.5. A preliminary inspection timetable has been released with the first nine services being inspected from January to May/June 2023. Staffordshire is not in this first tranche and our inspection dates have not yet been confirmed. HMICFRS has acknowledged that if industrial action is taken, then it will need to consider the extent to which it is appropriate or feasible to continue with inspection activity as currently planned.
- 8.6. **Apprenticeships** - A full OFSTED inspection of took place in May 2022 which rated the Services' delivery of its programme as GOOD overall with the following category ratings:
- The quality of education (Good)
 - Behaviour and attitudes (Outstanding)
 - Personal Development (Outstanding)
 - Leadership and Management (Good)
 - Apprenticeships (Good)
- 8.7. The published report (OFSTED Inspection of Staffordshire Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/33/2526613>) contains information that favourably reflects on the learner experience and the way in which the programme is managed. The report also highlights the influence and commitment exhibited by the leadership team, through the Chief Fire Officer, that makes the programme so successful.
- 8.8. Colleagues across the County have been involved looking at the Fire Service offer for students participating in **Uniformed Public Services courses**. Some stations are already delivering successful talks in colleges and delivering station visits, the plan is to develop this into a consistent county-wide offer, including an event at HQ in spring/summer.
- 8.9. Following the release of the **Manchester Arena Inquiry** report Volume 2: Emergency response, the services Operational Assurance team have examined the recommendations outlined by Sir John Saunders (Inquiry Chairman).
- 8.10. The report recommends improvements to areas such as multi-agency working and JESIP (The Joint Emergency Interoperability programme). Staffordshire Fire and Rescue service are currently working with Police and Ambulance partners on a 3-year assurance plan for multi-agency training and sharing of learning between all blue light organisations; this work will also include partners from the business and leisure sectors.
- 8.11. Staffordshire FRS have taken 26 recommendations from the Public Inquiry report and issued the work streams to multiple leads within service to ensure that we are

working within or towards its recommendations. We will use Operational Assurance and Shared Learning Forums to provide knowledge and understanding to tactical commanders and ensure the Service's exercise training planner includes areas raised within the report. Our multi-agency large-scale exercises will provide opportunity to test our teams and procedures against the recommendation and assure the service and public of our response to large or major incidents.

9. Conclusion

- 9.1. The Police, Fire and Crime Panel will continue to receive updates in line with their proposed work plan for the coming year and as requested.

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