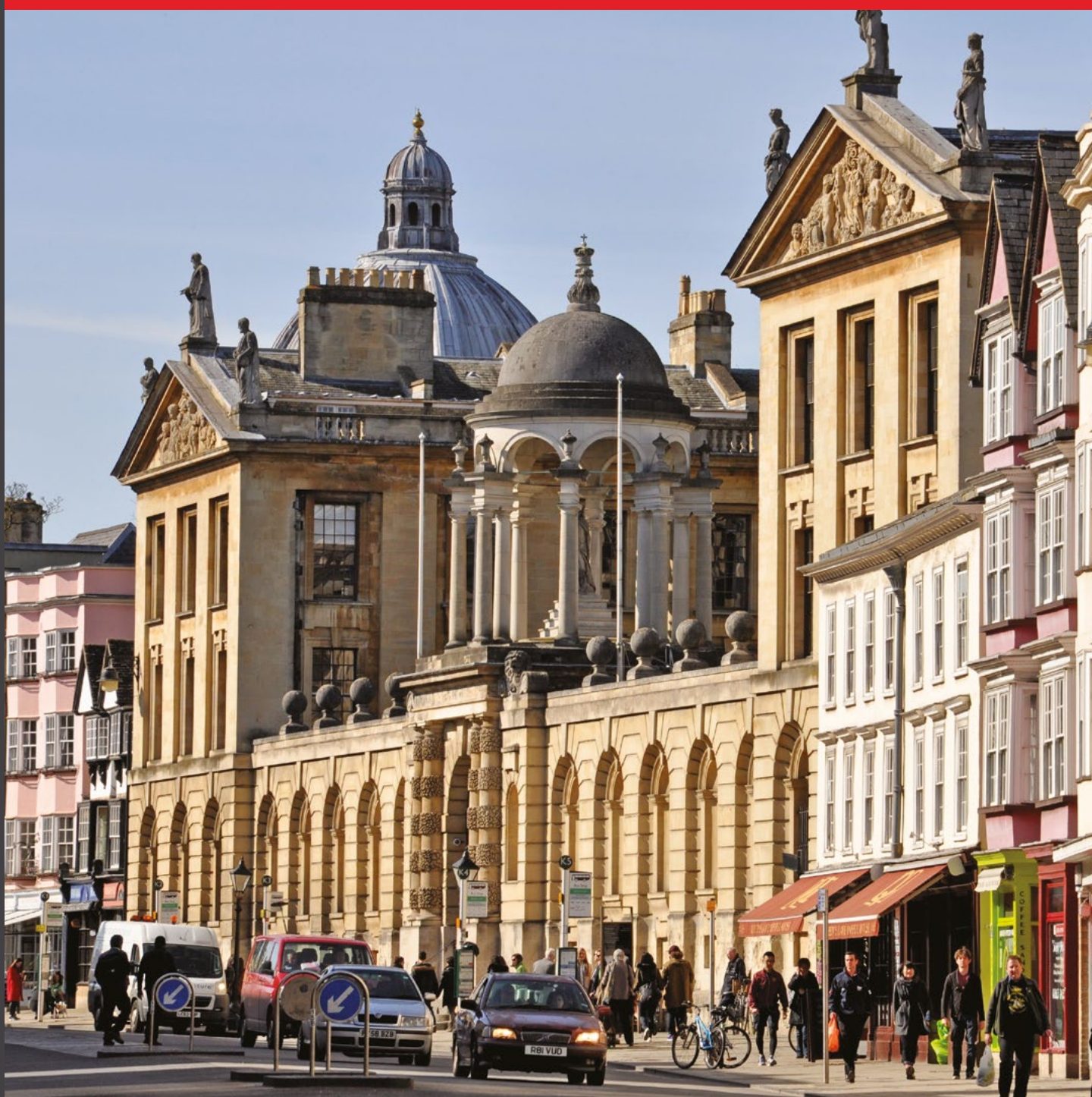


Oxfordshire County Council
Fire & Rescue Service

Statement of Assurance 2019-2020



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WELCOME AND FOREWORD



**Councillor
Judith Heathcoat**

*Cabinet Member for
Community Safety
Services*



**Chief Fire Officer
Rob MacDougall**

*Director of Community
Safety Services*

Welcome to Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service's Statement of Assurance for 2019 to 2020. As the Cabinet Member and Director of Community Safety Services for Oxfordshire we are pleased to present this statement for our local communities setting out how we meet the requirements of The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England.

The National Framework requires us to provide an annual statement of assurance on our financial governance, operational matters, and to show how we have due regard to the risks in the county by our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). In 2017 we published our 5-year CRMP to meet the challenges of our communities over the period and each year an additional action plan is produced to address the developments within the fire sector. We ensure a proactive approach, which is focussed on preventative activities, and leads to a safer and thriving Oxfordshire.

Our fire and rescue service was inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in 2018. The inspection looked in detail at our operational service delivery, efficiency and organisational effectiveness and was the first time in many years that fire and rescue services in England have been inspected to the same standards, allowing a comparative indicator of how we are doing.

The inspectorate reported their findings to the service in the summer of 2019 and we were graded as 'Good' in all three areas of inspection.

We are working on an action plan we created based on their findings, which will support improvements in our prevention, protection, and response areas of the services.

Our Teams have worked hard in 2019-20 and we are extremely proud of what our teams have achieved during the year. Our values are at the heart of everything we do and, we will continue to do our best for our residents by working together in a supportive and honest way; striving to find the best solutions; and yet being open to change and doing things differently.

OVERVIEW OF FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

Your fire and rescue authority

OCC is an upper tier local authority and as such is the fire authority for Oxfordshire represented by a full council with 63 members. All the key decisions are made by cabinet members with designated portfolios, meeting either jointly as the cabinet or as individual cabinet members, taking delegated decisions within their own area of responsibility.

Councillor Judith Heathcoat, Deputy Leader of the Council, is the portfolio holder for Community Safety and has responsibility for:

- Fire & Rescue
- Fire Control
- Trading Standards
- Emergency Planning
- Gypsy & Traveller
- Internal Management
- HR & Industrial Relations
- Policy Co-ordination
- Equalities
- Localities
- Community Cohesion

The performance of the fire and rescue service is overseen by the Council's Performance Scrutiny Committee and the Audit & Governance Committee. Cabinet meetings are held once a month and are attended by all cabinet members. The cabinet is also responsible for preparing the budget and policies to propose to the full council. The scrutiny committees provide advice to the cabinet on major policy issues and may review its decisions.

Details of how the community can attend meetings and access agendas and reports can be found at:

[Meetings and decisions web page](#)

OVERVIEW OF OUR STRUCTURE

OFRS is governed by the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) whose full members are listed below. Full SLT meetings are held fortnightly to discuss specific issues. The Chief Fire Officer reports to the County Council Chief Executive and cross cutting work is carried out at the County Council Extended Leadership Team.

Strategic Leadership Team

- Chief Fire Officer – Rob MacDougall (Director of Community Safety)
- Deputy Chief Fire Officer – Grahame Mitchell
- Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Jo Bowcock
- Area Manager Operations & Resilience – Mike Adcock
- Area Manager Strategic Policy – David Heycock
- Area Manager Prevention & Protection – Jason Crapper
- Human Resources Business Partner – Kim Terry
- Finance Business Partner – Rob Finlayson

Our people

At the end of March 2020 there were a total of 228 whole-time firefighters, 351 On- Call and 86 support staff working for Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service. They offer safety advice and education to the residents of Oxfordshire, advice, support and fire safety enforcement for the businesses of the county and respond to emergency calls.

Our resources

There are 25 fire stations in Oxfordshire, staffed by whole-time and on-call firefighters. We have a fleet of 34 fire engines, and several specialist vehicles to support large or complex incidents. These include an aerial ladder platform, and a specialist technical rescue vehicle that attends road traffic collisions and specialist rescues.

Other specialist vehicles are provided for incident support, incident command, bulk water supplies, environmental protection and firefighter decontamination. As part of a national response strategy we also have a specialist vehicle for detecting and identifying hazardous materials and a high-volume pumping unit.

We have a range of specialist officers that support the service for investigating fires, dealing with incidents involving hazardous materials, dealing with incidents of a terrorist nature as well as enforcing Fire safety legislation to keep the residents of Oxfordshire safe.

CHIEF FIRE OFFICER'S STATEMENT ON EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

As a Fire and Rescue Service and as part of Oxfordshire County Council we aim to be leaders in our field providing: inclusive services, workplaces and communities; ensuring equitable access to services; and equality of opportunity.

We are an inclusive workplace; We value the contribution that everyone in our organisation makes and respect individual differences, seeing the diversity of our workforce as key to our success. We will eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other unacceptable conduct.

We will promote equality of opportunity and promote good relations between everyone with respect to their disability, sex, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, transgender status or gender reassignment, age, marital status and pregnancy or maternity.

We will develop and provide relevant, appropriate and accessible services that meet the needs of our diverse community. We will eliminate discrimination and promote equality in the provision of these services.

Director of Community Safety and Chief Fire Officer - Rob MacDougall

[Equality and inclusion case studies](#)

WHAT IS A STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE?

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018 (the Framework) sets out the requirement for all fire and rescue authorities to provide annual assurance on financial, governance and operational matters and to show how they have due regard to the requirements included in the Framework and the expectations set out in the authorities' own risk management plans (CRMP). To demonstrate this, the Framework requires that each authority must publish an annual statement of assurance.

This statement of assurance outlines the way in which the fire authority and its fire and rescue service, has due regard to the National Framework, the Community Risk Management Plan and to any other relevant strategic plan prepared by the authority for that period.

1. Risk Management

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (the Framework) requires us to have due regard for the management of risk within the county. This is achieved by the production of an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP), known in Oxfordshire as the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), that identifies, assesses and addresses foreseeable fire and rescue related risk that could affect its community, including those of a cross border, multi authority and / or national nature.

The CRMP is Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service's (OFRS) analysis of the county's community risk profile, together with our five-year strategic approach detailing how we intend to effectively manage those risks.

Each year we create an annual action plan to support our CRMP, where we set out the actions we intend to deliver to support the five-year plan.

The action plan sets out several priorities and projects to ensure that residents and businesses are safer, whilst at the same time delivering an efficient and effective emergency response when necessary.

[CRMP Action Plan 2020 – 2021](#)

OFRS also has a risk management strategy that follows the principles of the Office of Government Commerce's Management of Risk Framework. All members of staff work to identify any threats and opportunities to the service and our communities on an ongoing basis. Once a risk has been identified we decide how we want to deal with it, and then monitor it closely. Risk registers are maintained for strategic and operational risk.

Social risk

Oxfordshire's population is estimated to be 685,000 and in 2017 the county secured a housing and growth deal which will see 100,000 new homes built by 2031. The county's cumulative growth has been higher than any other local area with the population increasing by 78,000 people since 2002 and an expected population of around 781,000 by 2023.

The county is the most rural in the South East region, the majority (60%) of Oxfordshire's residents are concentrated in Oxford City and the county's main towns, with almost 40% of people living in smaller towns and villages.

As of January 2018, just over a quarter of primary school pupils and around 1 in 5 secondary school pupils were from an ethnic minority background.

People in Oxfordshire are living longer. In 2017, older people aged 65+ made up 20% of the estimated population of Oxfordshire's four rural districts, compared with 12% of the population of Oxford City. The population aged 85+ is expected to increase by 63% (+10,900) by 2032 and historical data shows that older people are at a greater risk from suffering serious injuries or death from accidental fires.

There are clear inequalities across Oxfordshire, with people in the more deprived areas having significantly lower Life Expectancy compared with the less deprived.

The gap in Life Expectancy between more deprived and less deprived areas in Oxfordshire appears to have increased.

Our Home and Community Safety team, through partnership working, will continue to target the people most at risk through safe and well checks and education. To further develop our intelligence led approach we will use technology to identify both localities and individuals that would benefit from timely prevention activities.

Oxfordshire adopted the national Safe and Well programme in 2017 as a key part of its prevention strategy. This approach extends the range of vulnerabilities that are assessed as part of a wider visit supporting residents to live in their homes with confidence independently. These visits go far beyond the previous home fire safety checks and address the wider risk in the home and aim to influence better lifestyle choices amongst recipients for example assessing risk of slips trips and falls, fuel poverty as well as alcohol use and smoking cessation.

Economic risk

On 31st January 2020, the UK has now seen its exit from the European Union. As yet the impact of this is still evolving.

As a Fire and Rescue Service we must be prepared for any impact this may have on both the economic and societal risks to the county.

We have carried out Business Impact Assessments to ensure that any potential impact does not disrupt the critical service to the county.

Unemployment in Oxfordshire remains significantly below the average for England. The county is a global seat of education, learning and research, a centre of engineering and scientific excellence, a world leader in automotive and advanced manufacturing, publishing, health care and life sciences, and an iconic tourist destination.

This includes many nationally and internationally recognised businesses such as, BMW Mini, Oxford Instruments, the Williams and Renault Formula One Teams, the city's two universities and many important military establishments. Our operational and fire protection teams work with businesses to plan for emergencies and carry out fire protection enforcement and advice.

Risks beyond our borders

Over the border mutual aid arrangements

The Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004 makes provision for securing mutual assistance with other Fire & Rescue services (FRS's) under sections 13 and 16 for the purpose of discharging the functions of an FRS on any of the authorities within the scheme. OFRS have agreements with all FRS's that border the county of Oxfordshire who are Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes, Gloucestershire, Northamptonshire, Warwickshire and Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authorities for the provision of resources such as fire engines and specialist assets.

Oxfordshire is part of the national arrangements through the National Coordination and Advisory Framework (NCAF) to support major incidents across England and Wales such as widespread flooding and high-volume pumping, Urban search and rescue, hazardous material chemical analysis, mass decontamination, command and control or terrorist activity, by provision of specialist assets and additional resources that can be mobilised to deal with these events.

As new emerging risks present themselves to the service with such events as the London and Manchester terrorist attacks, the Thames Valley fire and rescue services have created a team of specialist officers who will respond to such incidents to support the Police and Ambulance service in the event of a marauding terrorist attack with the ability to work within the warm zone at these incidents.

The service exercises regularly with other FRS's in the Thames Valley as well as other emergency services to ensure cohesion when attending real incidents. This year saw a week-long exercise in the Thames Valley testing national resilience and response to a terrorist attack involving a train. Oxfordshire FRS worked alongside Thames Valley Police, South Central Ambulance Service, the Military and other FRS's during this exercise.

2. Strategic Plans

The County Council is committed to ensuring that we have Thriving Communities, Residents and Businesses and the fire and rescue service plans and strategies work towards achieving these aims. We are planning to transform all our services to modernise them to meet the future needs of the county. Below outlines the County Council and the FRS's plans and how they are inherently linked.



We strive to give every child a good start in life, and protect everyone from abuse and neglect

We enable older and disabled people to live independently. We care for those in greatest need



We help people live safe, healthy lives and play an active part in their community

We provide services that enhance the quality of life in our communities, and protect the local environment



We support a thriving local economy by improving transport links to create jobs and homes for the future

Our operational strategies are based on the delivery of our prevention, protection and operational response functions. These are supported by the organisational development strategy, the asset management strategy and the financial plan.

Our key strategic documents are shown in the following diagram:



3. Governance

OFRS is an integral part of Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), who are responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

OCC is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs and facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

OCC has approved and adopted a code of corporate governance that is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA / SOLACE Framework 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government'.

The OCC Annual Governance Statement enables the fire and rescue service to demonstrate that it has fulfilled its obligations under the Framework. Full details can be found in the OCC Annual Governance Statement, which is included in our 'Statement of Accounts' publication at the end of the document.

Annual accounts and audit

General arrangements for ensuring effectiveness of the system of Internal Control is governed by the Corporate Governance Framework, which sets out the Council's approach to corporate governance.

Corporate Governance Assurance Framework

The OCC Monitoring Officer has a statutory responsibility for ensuring the Council complies with its legal requirements and conducts its business properly. This is achieved through the following:

- Corporate Governance Assurance Group (CGAG): Co-ordinates preparation of the Annual Governance Statement and, therefore, receives corporate lead assessments as well as identification of areas of improvement on the internal control environment.
- Corporate Governance Policies: The Monitoring Officer has delegated authority to approve and amend operational policies and procedures relating to corporate governance, if necessary, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council.
- CEDR: Provides the strategic oversight of the work of the Council and reviews the work of Cabinet by scrutinising the Forward Plan and raising any issues of concern. The Monitoring Officer sits as a designated Officer on CEDR to advise and assist in relation to policies and strategies in compliance with legal requirements.
- Audit Working Group and Audit & Governance Committee: The Monitoring Officer reports to this Committee with regards to compliance of corporate governance policies, including Members register of interests.

Our legal responsibilities

Responsibilities under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004

The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 sets out the duties and powers of fire and rescue authorities. Under the Act, the Fire Authority has many core functions:

- Fire safety: Promoting fire safety, including the provision of information and publicity on steps to be taken to prevent fires. Giving of advice on how to prevent fires and on the means of escape from buildings in case of fire.
- Firefighting: Extinguishing fires and protecting life and property in the event of fires.
- To respond to and rescue people from road traffic collisions (RTCs) and protecting people from serious harm in the event of RTCs.
- Emergencies: When necessary deal with emergencies other than fires and road traffic accidents.

We address these core functions in the CRMP, which identifies and assesses foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect our community. Action plans are produced based on the CRMP setting out many priorities.

[The Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004](#)

[Community Risk Management Plans and Action Plans](#)

Responsibilities under the Road Traffic Act 1988 section 39

Oxfordshire County Council as the local authority has a statutory responsibility under section 39 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 for road safety engineering, education, training and publicity (ETP) that are discharged through both the Environment and Economy and OFRS. Full details of how we discharged our responsibilities to provide road safety information, advice and training under the Road Traffic Act 1988 can be found at:

[Road safety web page](#)

Responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (CCA) places certain duties on all Category 1 Responders as defined by the Act, including OFRS. One of these duties is the formation of the Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum (TVLRF).

The Act requires Category 1 Responders to maintain the plans for preventing emergencies; reducing, controlling or mitigating the effects of emergencies; and taking other action in the event of emergencies and provide advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations regarding business continuity management.

These plans are drawn from risk assessments and have regard for the arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public at the time of an emergency. The Emergency Planning Unit, which is part of OFRS, has overall responsibility and is key to helping the council meet these duties.

[Civil Contingencies Act 2004](#)

[Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum website](#)

Responsibilities under the Fire and Rescue Services (Emergencies) (England) Order 2007

The Fire & Rescue Services (Emergencies) (England) Order 2007 instructs fire authorities to make provision for:

- Decontamination of people and to limit harm to the environment at chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear emergencies.
- The rescue of people at emergencies involving collapse of building, structures, incidents involving trains, trams or aircraft, and where resources are required beyond the scope of day to day operations.
- Personnel, services and training and arrangements to carry out the above functions.
- Response to emergencies outside the fire authorities' area. We make provision for these requirements through operational planning and procedures as part of our involvement with the National Resilience Programme.

National Fire Chief Council is the organisation that provides assurance to the Home Office that the National Resilience Capabilities (NRC) generated can meet the new threats to national stability. NRC provides operational assurance at the strategic level.

[The Fire & Rescue Services \(Emergencies\) \(England\) Order](#)

[National Fire Chiefs Council](#)

Responsibilities under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

OFRS enforces general fire safety legislation on behalf of the county council. Other related legislation the authority enforces includes:

- The Dangerous Substances (Notification & Marking of Sites) Regulations 1990.
- The Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996.
- The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015.

Our enforcement activities adhere to the principles of 'better regulation' contained in the Enforcement Concordat and Regulators Compliance Code and we aim to support business and other responsible persons through education and the provision of advice and guidance. Where it is necessary, we will take enforcement action and will only consider prosecution where it is in the public's best interest.

Full details of how we discharge our responsibilities under fire safety legislation can be found at:

[Fire safety advice for businesses web page](#)

Responsibilities under the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999

OFRS operates within the county council's management framework which incorporates the provisions of the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and the responsibility to provide, so far as is reasonably practicable, a safe and healthy working environment for all employees.

Our health and safety policy documents explain how we discharge our responsibilities under health and safety legislation.

[Fire and Rescue Service Health and Safety Policy Part 2](#)

[Fire and Rescue Service Health and Safety Policy Part 3](#)

Responsibilities under the Localism Act 2011

The Localism Act 2011 gives fire authorities powers of competence to:

- Carry out its functions so that it will be able to do anything they consider appropriate for purposes linked to their statutory responsibilities to help deliver innovative and more personalised services to their communities.
- Make charges for certain services. These powers enable both councils and fire and rescue authorities to act innovatively to generate efficiencies and secure value for money outcomes.

Full details of the of the Localism Act 2011 and community right to challenge and right to bid for community assets can be found at:

[Community Rights and Localism Act web page](#)

The Fire and Rescue Service National Framework

The current Fire and Rescue National Framework for England sets out the government's priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in England to:

- Identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their areas face, make provision for prevention and protection activities and respond to incidents appropriately.
- Work in partnership with their communities and a wide range of partners locally and nationally to deliver their service.
- Be accountable to communities for the service they provide.

A gap analysis is currently underway to ensure that OFRS met the requirements of the framework document and an action plan has been completed.

[National Framework Document 2018](#)

Our collaborative arrangements

Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) officially opened in 2015 and bought together, under collaborative arrangements, the 3 control rooms from the fire & rescue services within Thames Valley. TVFCS continues to handle and manage the mobilisation of resources to incidents in Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire areas.

Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's) for support exist with other agencies such as Thames Valley Police, South Central Ambulance Service and the Defence Fire and Rescue Service, alongside MOU's with the voluntary sector including The British Red Cross and Oxfordshire Lowland Search & Rescue.

Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue have further strengthened our collaboration with a wider group of Fire and Rescue Services, going beyond the excellent outcomes we have already achieved jointly working with our colleagues in Thames Valley. We have agreed to work with Warwickshire and Gloucestershire (sharing the same governance model) to deliver joint procurement and share best practice.

One example this year is the joint procurement of 'public use' Smoke hoods for our Highrise risks to close out one element of the Grenfell action plan and have jointly agreed a single training package and supporting documents, reducing duplication.

4. Operations

How we performed during 2019-20

A description of the fire authority's key performance indicators and targets against which the service is measured, can be found in OFRS Annual Report. This report reviews our performance over the last financial year and shows the headline statistics and trends in incidents and emergencies that we have attended.

This allows us to recognise areas where we have done well, identify where we can improve our service and trends in specific incidents and emergency types. It helps us decide where to focus our efforts and resources to reduce threats and explore opportunities. The report contributes to our future planning and is essential to our process of integrated risk management.

[Annual performance report](#)

Response standards performance

Since April 2005 OFRS has had local response standards for attending emergency incidents in the county. The Chief Fire Officer is required to report annually on the fire and rescue service's performance against these standards and bring forward any recommendations as appropriate. Our response targets remain stretched, yet in 2018-19 we achieved our targets.

Local response standards are:

- 80 per cent of all emergency incidents will be responded to within 11 minutes.
- 95 per cent of all emergency incidents will be responded to within 14 minutes.

The above is measured by the time it takes to get the first fire appliance to the scene from the time at which the fire station is first alerted.

2019-20 Response Standards Performance

Response standards performance	Total emergency incidents in scope	Incidents responded to <11mins	per cent response standards <11mins	Incidents responded to <14mins	per cent response standards <14mins
19-20	4985	4500	90.27	4846	97.21

Benchmarking

We use national benchmarking reports and tools. We are also part of a National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) family group to facilitate benchmarking against fire and rescue services of similar size and demographics and to promote best practice. The Fire Statistics Monitor publication provides headline figures on fire, false alarm and special service incidents in England.

[Fire Statistics data tables](#)

Lessons learnt from incidents

We demonstrate our commitment to high performance and making improvements to our operational response by conducting active monitoring of all operational incidents and area training exercises.

Our audits highlight areas of good practice, identify trends and any required training or procedural improvements. This evidence base is used to review and update training across the service.

The results of operational audits are published on the service intranet for access by all personnel.

Incidents and exercises of note:

- **Acid Attack, Oxford** –Due to the use of a hazardous material, fire crews are mobilised to incidents involving an acid attack in order to provide specialist assistance in dealing with the chemical. Following an acid attack attended by fire crews in Oxford, all frontline appliances now carry a new specific water application device to dilute and reduce the impact of acid burns on the victims of attacks.
- **Grenfell Tower fire** – following the tragic fire in London, a review was conducted of the Highrise building evacuation risk in Oxfordshire. Breathing Apparatus teams in the county now carry ‘Fire Escape Hoods’ which are used in an emergency and given to members of public who are unable to escape buildings due to the presence of smoke or fire generated harmful gases, or for those who will be exposed to smoke or fire generated gases during the course of being rescued or evacuated.

Departmental reports

Emergency Response

Within Emergency Response we carry out many different functions to ensure that OFRS's operational response is the best that we can provide to the communities within Oxfordshire and beyond. We are always working to improve and some of these workstreams including –

- Working with our fire & rescue service colleagues in the Thames Valley to align our response to incidents and ensure that we provide the same equipment, training and standards to every incident. This includes working to adopt national operational guidance, obtain the same breathing apparatus sets, use the same procedures to use breathing apparatus, use the same equipment/training/procedures when working at height and many other aspects that will allow seamless working across the country borders within the Thames Valley.
- To update our fleet of vehicles, equipment. Also, linking this in to the work of alignment between the three fire and rescue services in the Thames Valley.
- The introduction of new technology to ensure that incident commanders can access up to date data concerning an incident (this can include details of the building, operational guidance, mapping, hazardous materials information etc).
- Refreshing and updating agreements we have with surrounding services and partner agencies.
- That we learn from incidents, training, safety incidents and exercises and ensure that we improve in light of this learning and share good practices and learning points locally and nationally.
- We inform the community and local politicians about incidents that we are attending.
- We investigate fires to try and reduce their numbers and assist the Police to reduce arson.
- We work with the Local Resilience Forum to assess the risks facing the Thames Valley and provide plans, training, exercises and public information to mitigate those risks.
- We provide support for national resilience to emergencies in the form of our -
 - High-Volume Pumping unit, where large amounts of water needs to be moved to either protect from flooding or to assist with firefighting.
 - Detection Identification and Monitoring vehicle, where hazardous materials are involved in an incident and advice is sought as to what it is, how it should be dealt with and how to protect people, the environment and personnel.

Over the coming years we will be working to –

- Update our fire kit to ensure that it provides the best protection for our crews.
- Update our breathing apparatus sets.
- Look to assess and adopt modern technologies to enhance our operational response and safety of our crews.

Training and Development

Our Training Centre continues to provide collaborative training opportunities via our firefighter initial course, which teaches an aligned course for both Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service and OFRS personnel at our Training Centre in Didcot.

Our Incident Command centre now provides bespoke Level 1 and Level 2 initial command courses for new incident commanders, alongside multi-agency training and assessment for all levels. A new, remote training solution has also been introduced that allows our incident command team to provide training to on-call stations throughout the county in evenings.

Our Driving Centre continues to work collaboratively with Buckinghamshire FRS and now provides training on electric vehicles and “Eco” driving alongside traditional courses and assessments. The centre also provides courses for external agencies and other FRS.

A new Maintenance of Competency framework is set to be rolled out to the service in April 2020, representing the completion of a large-scale project. This framework aligns to National Operational Guidance and will provide innovative, aligned and achievable training packages and lesson plans. This aims to ensure a greater objective standard of training is maintained for all operational personnel within the service.

Fire protection

Fire Protection was rated as “Good” by HMICFRS. We are now up to full establishment within the team after successful recruitment to vacancies. A high number of staff are on the path to becoming competent which reduces our capacity while they acquire the knowledge and competent staff support and mentor them through their development. The HMICFRS found that “... Oxfordshire FRS uses its enforcement powers proportionately and effectively.”

We are working collaboratively across the Thames Valley to address the issue of Unwanted Fire Signals. Our Risk Based Inspection Programme of commercial buildings has been reviewed and updated and we are up to date with the dates for the completion of the re-inspections.

The Grenfell Inquiry issued an interim report and we have taken actions to ensure that those issues are dealt with in Oxfordshire.

Fire prevention

Over the course of 2019-20 we have been reviewing all of our prevention activities to ensure that we are delivering the most effective and efficient prevention service to the communities of Oxfordshire and have developed an evaluation framework for three of our prevention programmes which will be implemented in 2020/21.

Our evaluation work will build on the learning from work with the Princes Trust which has led to the piloting of a week-long 'Get Started' programme for some of the county's most vulnerable 16-25 year olds.

We have completed a review of our approach to safeguarding which included being the first service to participate in the new Supportive Learning Visit process set up by the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board.

We have developed a new digital solution, on-line application for our staff and crews to deliver Safe and Well visits in people's homes and have improved the quality of our advice to residents through our partnership with Public Health, enabling us to embed the Making Every Contact Count (MECC) concept into our visits. We have continued to engage over 3,600 vulnerable people with Safe and Well whilst delivering service improvement.

We continue to deliver our broad range of prevention activities that educate children and young people to lead safer lives, including the collaborative Junior Citizens programme which, along with our partners, delivers safety education to over 4500 school children across the county every year.

The service has also been very successful in delivering more cycle training in schools through the Bikeability grant from the Department for Transport. In 2017-18 we trained around 2,500 school children to ride their bike more safely and this has increased to around 5,000 this year, meaning that there has been a significant increase in the number of children who feel safer cycling on Oxfordshire's roads. We are now offer cycle training in 243 schools across Oxfordshire which equates to 83%, compared with less than 40% of schools two years ago.

All of this prevention work supports our ambition to provide targeted support to those who are most at risk in their homes and communities. To this end, we have developed a methodology to help us better identify those most at risk, whilst continuing to provide universal community safety information and advice for all.

5. Finance

Where our money came from

Our budget for 2018-19

OFRS are an integral part of OCC who provide the statement of accounts and audit that can be found on the OCC public website:

[Annual accounts and audit](#)

What your money was spent on

Revenue expenditure

The total net expenditure for Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service for 2018-19 was £25.9m.

Expenditure per head of population¹

The cost of providing the fire and rescue service in 2018/19 was approximately 10p per day for each person within Oxfordshire.

The cost per head of population for 2018-19 was £37.69 compared to the average cost of:

- South east region fire and rescue services: £38.34
- Average family group: £39.42
- County council fire and rescue services: £35.72

Expenditure per member of staff

We provided a service at a cost of £50,703 per member of staff in 2018-19 compared to the average cost of:

- South east region fire and rescue services – £52,498
- Average family group – £52,754
- County council fire and rescue services – £46,719

[Pay Policy Statement](#)

Expenditure per incident

Our overall expenditure against the number of incidents we attend is £4,230 per incident in 2018-19 compared to the average of:

- South east region fire and rescue services – £3,864.
- Average family group – £4,274
- County council fire and rescue services – £3,985

How we provide value for money

OCC Corporate Plan 2018 to 2021 sets out the key objectives and priorities for action for the council. It is a key document and sets out the broad strategic direction, as well as the council's values and principles that guide all our work.

We have an absolute focus on ensuring services are efficient and delivering value for money for local people.

[The OCC Corporate Plan](#)

Auditors findings

A summary of auditors' reports and findings can be found in the Annual Audit Letter 2018-19 on the link below. The Accounts and Audit Regulations require local authorities, including fire and rescue authorities, to prepare an annual governance statement in support of the annual statement of accounts. Full details can be found in the OCC Annual Governance Statement, which is included in our 'Statement of Accounts' publication at the end of the document.

[Annual accounts and audit](#)

Audits

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS)

In 2018 Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service were inspected by the HMICFRS with the report released in 2019.

The assessment examines the service's effectiveness, efficiency and how well it looks after its people. It is designed to give the public information about how their local fire and rescue service is performing in several important areas, in a way that is comparable with other services across England, providing one of 4 grades:

- Outstanding
- Good
- Requires improvement
- Inadequate

OFRS has been judged to be good in all three areas of the inspection:

Effectiveness

The extent to which the service is effective at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks is good.

Efficiency

The extent to which the service is efficient at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks is good.

People

The extent to which the service looks after its people is good.

[Read the full report online](#)

Strategic Risk and Assurance Team

The Strategic Risk and Assurance Team ensures consistently high performance throughout the organisation in several ways, including by conducting quality assurance audits.

Since the inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in 2018, the strategic risk & assurance team have been working with and supporting all areas of the service on an action plan to build on the solid foundation it has achieved and continue to drive towards an outstanding service. Planning is now in place for the HMICFRS's return in 2020.

The team has also conducted reviews of the county's Emergency Planning team and personnel that lone work to ensure legislative requirements as well as personal safety is maintained. These reviews have led to action plan's being created to address the report's findings.

Customer Service Excellence Award

The government wants public services for all that are efficient, effective, excellent, equitable and empowering with the citizen always at the heart of service provision. Customer Service Excellence was developed to offer services a practical tool for driving customer focused change within their organisation.

The strategic risk & assurance team have continued to work with SGS with our annual reassessment having taken place in March 2019. Following the assessment, Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, were found to have a deep understanding of, and commitment to, Customer Service Excellence. The commitment was displayed from Senior Management levels through to operations and front-line staff.

[Customer Service Excellence Report](#)

How we secure business continuity

Business continuity management is a series of processes and plans that identify risk and develop OFRS resilience to ensure that adverse events cause minimal disruption to all services provided and that critical services are maintained. Plans have been developed for all sites and critical functional departments, and these plans have been tested and exercised to ensure a minimum level of disruption occurs.

The Chief Fire Officer, Rob MacDougall is the Corporate Lead on Business Continuity for Oxfordshire County Council. This involves leading and supporting the development of the whole Council's organisational resilience and business continuity to ensure that the council can maintain its essential services during any major disruptions. The Council's Emergency Planning team also provides advice and guidance on business continuity to local businesses as part of their responsibility under the Civil Contingencies Act.

Our future plans

Our CRMP has formed part of our approach to mitigate risk within Oxfordshire through prevention, protection and intervention strategies.

The following projects will be included within the fire authority's CRMP for the fiscal year 2020/21:

- **Project 1 – Risk profiling local communities**
- **Project 2 – Prevention Review**
- **Project 3 – On-Call retention review**
- **Project 4 – Proactive Role in improving standards in rented housing**
- **Project 5 – Establishing Community Safety Advocates or Wardens**
- **Project 6 – To increase the diversity of the Operational Workforce to reflect the community that we serve.**

[Community Risk Management Plan and Annual Action Plans](#)

Our community engagement

The CRMP Action Plan 2020-21 provides an update on the 6 on-going projects for the forthcoming year to improve public safety, reduce the number of emergency incidents and save lives.

The 6 projects held in the above plan were first presented in the CRMP action plan 2019/20 and was consulted on from the 8th November 2018 to 1st February 2019.

The Consultation Responses Report can be found at:

[Consultation Responses Report](#)

Comments and compliments

The fire and rescue service are passionate about delivering top quality customer service. Delivering excellent customer service that benefits us as individuals, our organisation and our customers. We also know that we need to continually adjust and improve our levels of customer service because we need to meet the changing needs and expectations of our customers.

If you have any comments, compliments, complaints or suggestions, please contact us using whichever of the following methods is most convenient to you:

Telephone: **01865 815906**

Email: **complaints@oxfordshire.gov.uk**

Online: **www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/complaints**

Post: write to:

Complaints Team
First floor County Hall
Oxford
OX1 1ND

Comprehensive information is available in the following links:

[Fire and rescue service comments, compliments and complaints](#)

How you can become involved

To make a request for a free Safe and Well check, call the community Safety Helpline free on 08000 325999 or visit 365alive.co.uk and complete our quick on-line questionnaire.



For fire and road safety advice, visit www.365alive.co.uk

Follow us on Twitter at [@OxonFireRescue](https://twitter.com/OxonFireRescue) or on Facebook at [Oxfordshirefireandrescueservice\(official\)](https://www.facebook.com/Oxfordshirefireandrescueservice(official)).

Access to information

Details regarding the fire authority's arrangements in respect of access to data and information can be found on the council's access to data and information web page.

