Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, Community Risk Management Plan

2022-26

OXFORDSHIRE
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL

1. Opening statements

Oxfordshire County Council is the Fire and Rescue Authority in Oxfordshire. As the Cabinet Member for Community Services and Safety the Fire and Rescue service is a significant part of my portfolio.

This Community Risk Management Plan 2022 to 2026 sets out the Fire and Rescue Authority's strategic assessment and long-term plans on how it will manage and reduce the risk from fire, road traffic collisions and other emergency incidents within Oxfordshire.

It will be the responsibility of the Chief Fire Officer and Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service to deliver against this document on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council and performance against this plan will be monitored by myself as the portfolio holder, the Cabinet and the Council's Performance Scrutiny Committee.

**Cabinet Member for Community Services & Safety –
Cllr Neil Fawcett**

This document clearly sets out what we need to achieve over the next four years to make sure we continue to manage and reduce the fire related risks to Oxfordshire.

It also identifies that where we add to broader community safety work, we will undertake to protect our communities, reduce harm and save lives. We also have a responsibility to provide part of the national response required to mitigate national events that can affect the UK.

The document is laid out to not only explain what we intend to do but also why we need to do it. It also explains how we will know if we have done this successfully.

We will continue to work together with our colleagues in the county council and Cherwell District Council, other local authority partners, other emergency services and other key partners to deliver the future services that our communities will need across Oxfordshire.

**Director Community Safety and Chief Fire Officer –
Rob MacDougall**

Community Safety Services Vision 2026

The Community Safety Services Vision 2026 is the cornerstone document for this service area with Oxfordshire County Council and Cherwell District Council. It directly links to overarching corporate plans and strategies and sets the direction of how the Fire and Rescue Service will improve over the next four years in order to deliver against this plan.

Our **purpose** is the reason why we exist as services. Our **vision** sets out what we want to be in the future, and we have chosen to set out what we want to be by 2026. We have also described in more detail the **elements of our vision** so we are clear on what this means. Our **strategic objectives** are what we need to do to achieve our vision. Our **values and behaviours** describe how we will work together to reach these objectives. These are set across Oxfordshire County Council under our value and behavioural framework and can be cross-referenced to the **Core Code of Ethics for the Fire and Rescue Services**.

Our purpose: we are here to **protect our community, reducing harm and saving lives.**

Our vision:

'to provide outstanding services that are community focussed and forward thinking, trusted, inclusive and sustainable'

Elements of our vision:

Community focussed – we will be delivering highly valued work at the heart of our communities, putting the public first and leading with our partners on community safety across Oxfordshire.

Forward thinking – we will be agile, dynamic and dare to do things differently, making sure we are supported by data and digital to supply sound professional judgment in the improvement of our services.

Trusted and inclusive – we will be an employer and partner of choice and a learning organisation where everyone can contribute with leadership at every level and where people feel supported and empowered to be the best they can be.

Sustainable – positive climate action will be a primary concern in all our decision making and we will have a defined timeline as to how we will become carbon zero and reduce our impact on the environment.

Our strategic objectives are by 2026 to be:

- ☑ providing services that reduce the likelihood of harm to people and their environment; services that put our community first, ensure equality in our provision and achieve greater value for money.

- ☑ working together internally, with key partners and other emergency services to achieve stronger collaboration that improves the services we provide to our communities.

- ☑ able to evidence how our response to emergencies and other incidents prevents or minimises harm to people (including our firefighters), property and the environment and be clearly demonstrating how we learn and improve in key areas.

- ☑ applying collective leadership and supporting teams so our people take responsibility, are proud of their professionalism and proud to belong to a diverse and inclusive organisation that is kind and caring.

Our values and behaviours are set out below as part of the council's organisational values and behaviours framework

Be kind and care

We value our staff; we respect and treat everyone with understanding and compassion; we care not just for our customers but each other. We take care of our own and others well being.

Taking responsibility

We hold ourselves accountable, take responsibility for what and how we deliver; we give and seek to be empowered to make a difference; we actively contribute to delivering the best for all.

Daring to do it differently

We innovate, we look to do things differently and improve the way we do things every day; we're not satisfied with the status quo and work creatively to solve problems.

Equality and integrity

We embrace equality, diversity and inclusion; valuing the difference in others. We always act with integrity, working in honest, ethical and supportive ways, building effective relationships; we trust each other to do what we promise.

Always learning

We create an environment that enables people to grow and develop: we seek feedback, we act on it: we always looks to be even better; learning from our mistakes.
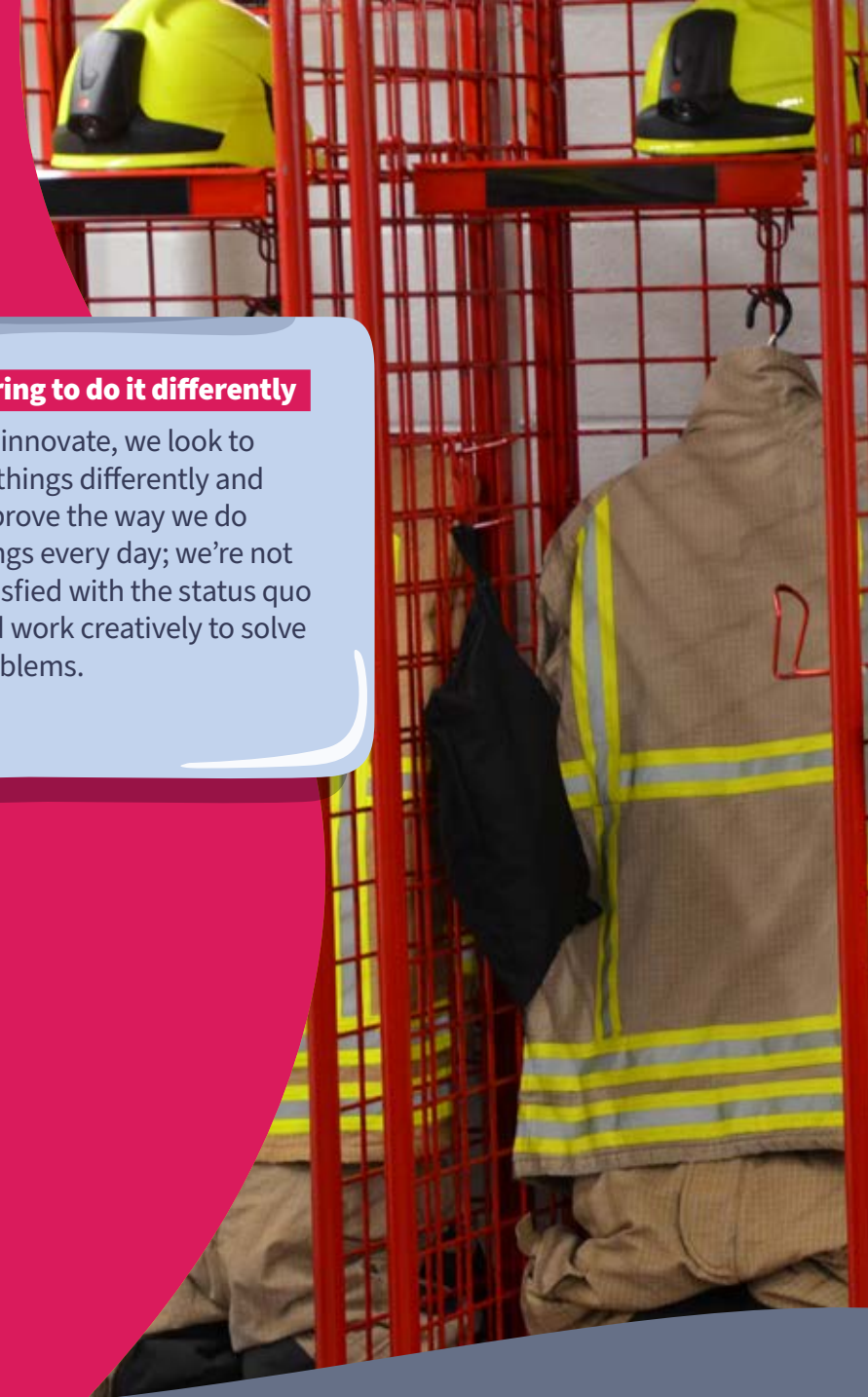
2. County of Oxfordshire

Oxfordshire is the most rural county in the south east with a population of 700,000. The larger concentrations of population are found in the historical city of Oxford and the large town of Banbury, the county has a thriving network of villages and market towns. They are home to around 40 per cent of the population. There are several main trunk routes through the county, M40, A34, A40 and A420. There is a railway line connecting Oxfordshire to London, Birmingham and other parts of the country.

Oxfordshire has one of the strongest economies in the UK. It is a net contributor to the UK exchequer and it is also rapidly growing, with an average growth of 3.9 per cent growth year-on-year in nominal terms since 2006.

We are home to around 678,000 people and 31,000 VAT registered businesses, including a high concentration of technology-based businesses that are at the forefront of global innovation.

The region is home to the University of Oxford, the top performing university in the world, as well as Oxford Brookes, one of the leading young universities in the UK for teaching and research.

Find more information from the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership **https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/**

We have 25 fire stations located across the county's towns and villages, as well as Oxford City. We have 34 fire engines in total, supported by a number of specialist engines. In 2018 we opened a new fire station in Carterton.

We collaborate with our other Thames Valley Fire and Rescue Service partners, Buckinghamshire and Royal Berkshire, to improve the service we deliver to the public. This joint working has resulted in the joint purchasing of fire engines and equipment, as well as breathing apparatus equipment sets.

Since 2015, we have had joint control room that handles all emergency calls across the three services, Thames Valley Fire Control Service. This ensures we send the fire engine that will get there the quickest and has improved our overall response to incidents.
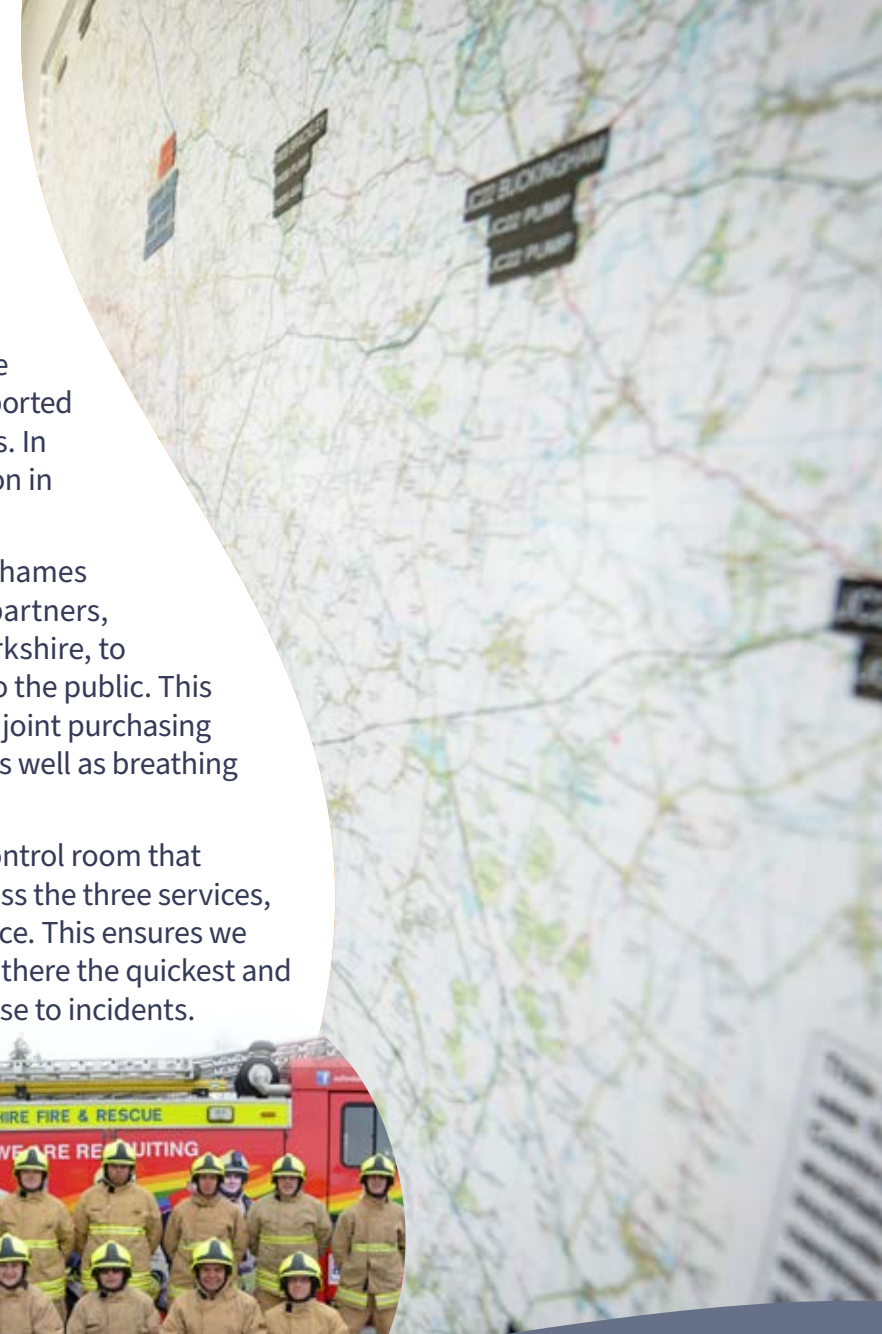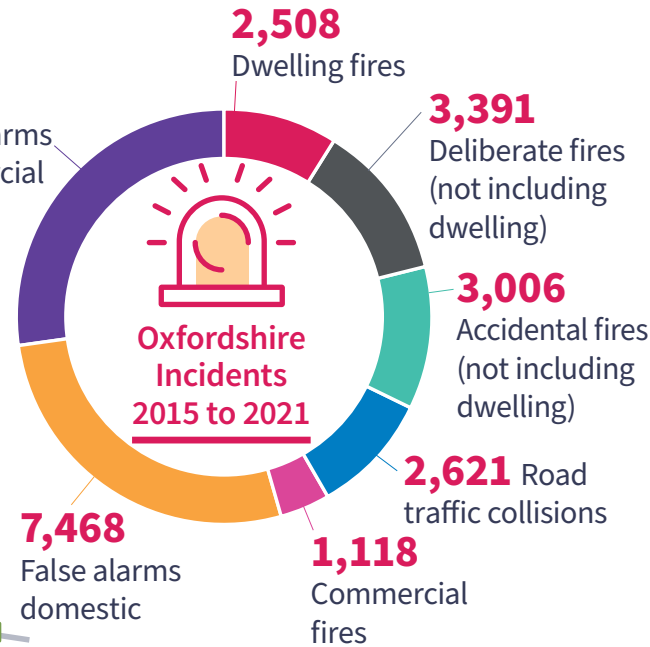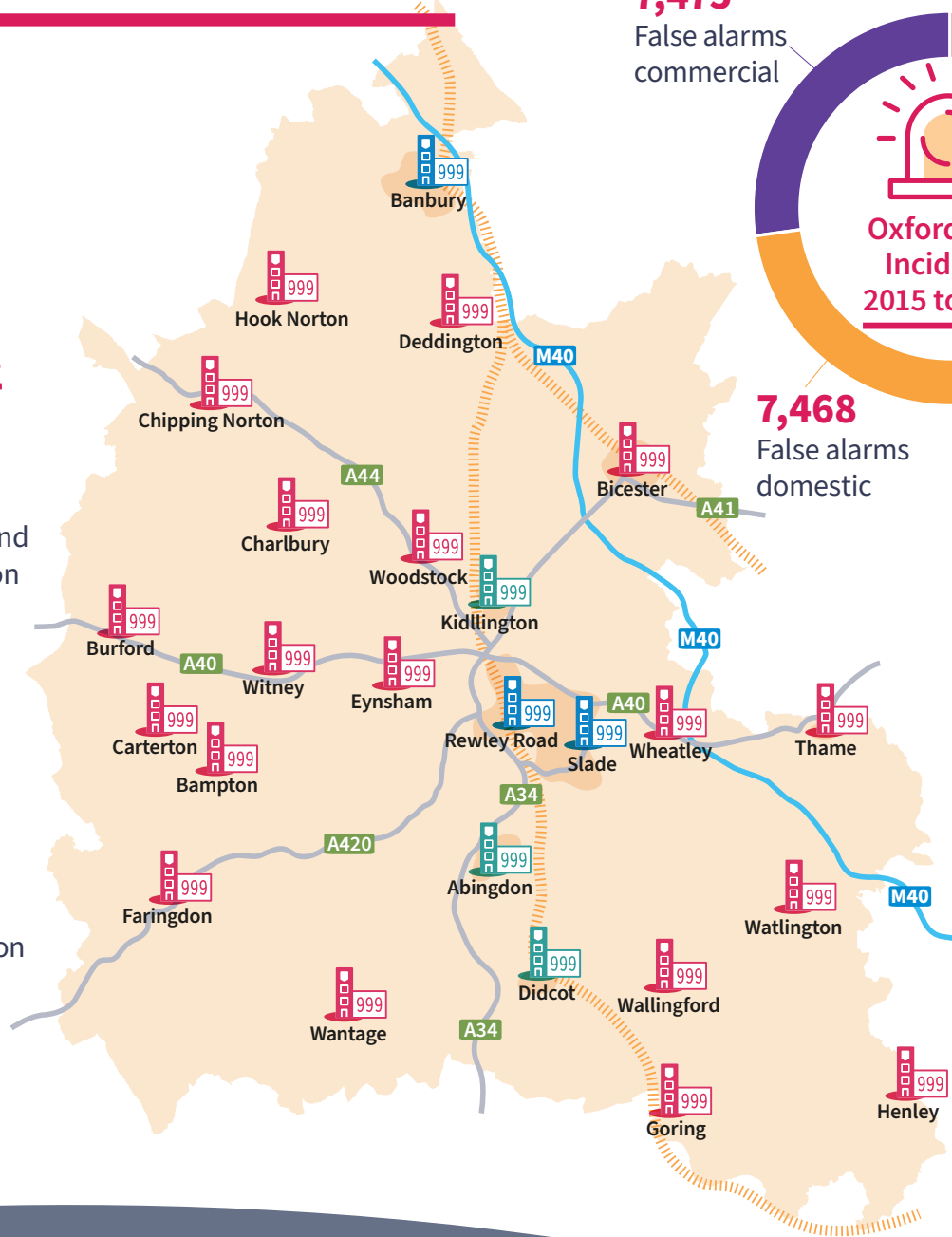
2. Your Fire and Rescue Service

25
fire stations

Wholetime and on-call station

Day crewing and on-call station

On-call station

Map stations

- Banbury
- Hook Norton
- Deddington
- Chipping Norton
- Charlbury
- Woodstock
- Bicester
- Burford
- Witney
- Eynsham
- Kidlington
- Carterton
- Bampton
- Rewley Road
- Slade
- Wheatley
- Thame
- Faringdon
- Abingdon
- Watlington
- Wantage
- Didcot
- Wallingford
- Goring
- Henley

Oxfordshire Incidents 2015 to 2021

- **2,508** Dwelling fires
- **3,391** Deliberate fires (not including dwelling)
- **3,006** Accidental fires (not including dwelling)
- **2,621** Road traffic collisions
- **1,118** Commercial fires
- **7,468** False alarms domestic
- **7,475** False alarms commercial

Staff

681
staff (as of April 2021) in total working in Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service.

- **358** On-call operational staff
- **236** Wholetime operational staff
- **87** Support staff

Response times

76%
of incidents attended in less than 11 minutes

88%
of incidents attended in less than 14 minutes

Data 2020-21

34
fire engines
supported by a number of specialised engines

3. Requirement of the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP)

The Fire and Rescue National Framework 2018 outlines how Fire Authorities will discharge their functions with regards to the fire and rescue service. The framework requires us to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP), called a Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). The CRMP identifies and assesses foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect our community.

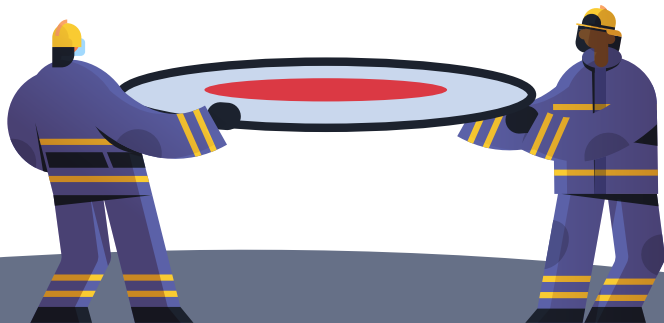**Further information on the requirements of a CRMP can be found here**

Our Community Risk Management Plan 2022-2026, will be the driver for change within Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, setting out our strategic priorities and how we intend to manage the existing and future risks within the county.

The CRMP will be an integrated approach linked into the County Council's corporate plan and vision, driving our strategies, shaped by our organisational learning and auditing activity and monitored through our performance monitoring, risk management processes and health and safety reporting.

The following plans and documents have influenced our thinking and planning of this CRMP

- Oxfordshire County Council Corporate Plan
- Oxfordshire Insights Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Oxfordshire Investment Plan 2020
- Oxfordshire Plan 2050
- National Framework 2018
- Fire Standards
- National Fire Chiefs Council, Community Risk Management Program

3. How our plans link together

Horizon Scanning

PESTELO, Oxfordshire County Council Corporate Plan, Value for Money.

Strategic Direction

CRMP, Response Strategy, Prevention Strategy, Protection Strategy, People and Wellbeing Strategy, Property Asset Strategy, Fleet Asset Strategy, Communications Strategy, Digital Strategy

Strategic Objectives and Annual Action Plans and Annual Priorities

Quarterly Priorities

Projects Performance Risk Annual Priorities

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

Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service is inspected independently by the HMICFRS. The inspection is designed to give the public information about how their local fire and rescue service is performing in a number of key areas, in a way that is comparable with other fire and rescue services across England.

Our inspection in 2018 assessed us as Good across the three areas of efficiency, effectiveness and people.

Information about the inspection and our latest reports can be found here

Effectiveness

Oxfordshire assessed as

GOOD

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

Efficiency

Oxfordshire assessed as

GOOD

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

People

Oxfordshire assessed as

GOOD

The extent to which the service looks after its people.

6. Strategic priorities

Our purpose: we are here to protect our community, reducing harm and saving lives.

Our Strategic Priorities for the service outline areas that we will work on over the course of this CRMP, to improve our effectiveness, efficiency and people.
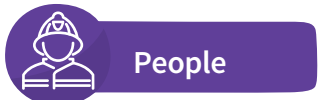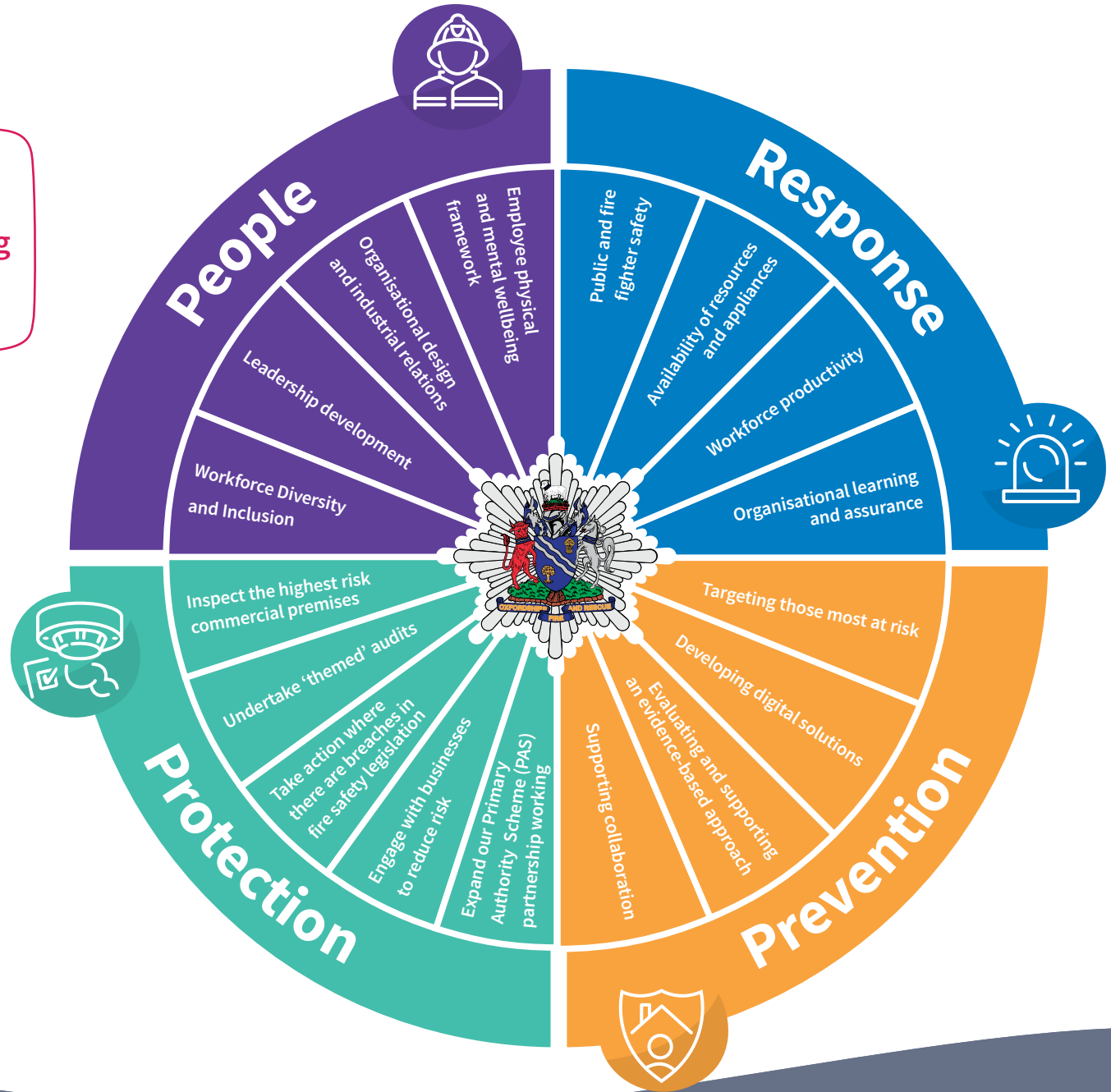
- Response
- Prevention
- Protection
- People

People
- Employee physical and mental wellbeing
- Organisational design and industrial relations
- Leadership development
- Workforce Diversity and Inclusion

Response
- Public and fire fighter safety
- Availability of resources and appliances
- Workforce productivity
- Organisational learning and assurance

Protection
- Inspect the highest risk commercial premises
- Undertake 'themed' audits
- Take action where there are breaches in fire safety legislation
- Engage with businesses to reduce risk
- Expand our Primary Authority Scheme (PAS) partnership working

Prevention
- Targeting those most at risk
- Developing digital solutions
- Evaluating and supporting an evidence-based approach
- Supporting collaboration

Response

The Service will provide an effective emergency response to all fires and other emergencies across Oxfordshire. We achieve this by having fully trained and competent staff, equipped with the most appropriate equipment to protect the public at incidents.

Our response standards are:

80% of incidents in 11 minutes

95% of incidents in 14 minutes

We send our nearest available fire engine to incidents. These standards are based on the average response time we make across all incidents and is dependant on the location of the incidents.

The standards were created to provide a benchmark and to recognise the spread of our resources across the county.

Our aspiration is 100 per cent availability of our fire engines by providing a mixture of wholetime (full time) and on-call (part-time) staff, across 25 stations. We have challenges with the recruitment and retention of our on-call staff and are working to improve this. We have set out a programme of work to address this.

To ensure public and firefighter safety, we gather relevant and up to date information on risks across Oxfordshire and our neighbouring counties. We hold information on businesses, specific sites and public events for use at emergency incidents and to support our training.

As a learning organisation, we look to take every opportunity to learn from operational incidents. We carry out operational assurance of incidents through audits and debriefs. These review our procedures and equipment and look for opportunities to improve. These improvements are captured in action plans to make sure they are delivered.

We share our findings from incidents nationally through the national systems for learning (National Operational Learning and Joint Operational Learning). This ensures that the learning from local incidents can have a positive, national impact.

The National Security Risk Register, identifies risks that have the potential to impact the public on a larger scale such as flooding, pandemic or terror attack. We work with partners to provide an effective response to these risks through the National Resilience teams, the Local Resilience Forum and other blue light agencies.

Spotlight section

- We have made improvements to how we gather and provide risk information for our operational crews. We have provided digital devices to operational crews to access the most up to date information on the incident.

- We will use our resources and skills, in partnership, to provide positive community outcomes. Our responses to gaining entry to properties for South Central Ambulance Service has increased the chances of patient survival and reduced the workload for Thames Valley Police. We will continue to look for opportunities like this that make a positive difference to the community.

- We have trained all our Incident Commanders in the latest Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme, to enable them to respond effectively to a multi-agency incidents.

What we will do

- We will adopt and implement all National Operational Guidance. NOG sets out guidance for services to follow at operational incidents to ensure a consistent approach, and ensure that it is recorded, communicated, tracked and reviewed.

- We will work with Thames Valley Fire and Rescue Service colleagues to ensure that a system is in place to examine operations to ensure that best practice is shared, lessons are learnt, and any new ways of working are reviewed and adopted where practical.

- We will continue to support the UK's national resilience to significant incidents.

- We will explore and identify the best and most suitable methods of recruitment for the on-call duty system.

- We will explore and identify different ways to improve retention of on-call staff. For example, different retainer payments and a more flexible approach to availability.

- We will ensure that we keep up to date with the changing environment for building, transport and infrastructure, to deal with all incidents.

Measuring success

- Maximising our availability to provide the quickest response to emergency incidents.

- An effective response to emergency incidents that protects the public and the safety of firefighters.

- Improving our response to emergency incidents through a learning culture that supports openness and improvement – we will look to learn and not blame.

Prevention

The number of fires in the UK has been decreasing over the last decade, although this decrease has now flattened out. A fire in the home is still a devastating event and can lead to the loss of life.

Feedback from people receiving our Safe and Well visits shows that they feel safer after we visit, however, we need to expand the reach of this valuable service by increasing the number that we complete and target them at those who need them most.

Nationally road fatalities have stopped decreasing. In 2019 there were 1,748, reported in the "Road casualties in Great Britain" report. In Oxfordshire this was 23. Pedestrians, pedal cyclists and motorcyclists are all described as vulnerable road users and we will continue to target our prevention activities towards these groups.

We wish to utilise our resources better and promote self-help by providing more for prevention such as online content, telephone sessions and interactive videos. This will free up our resources to carry out face-to-face work with those that are most vulnerable.

Our operational based staff are an important part of our prevention activity and we need to empower them to design locally tailored solutions that address local need. We need to increase our capacity, and our activities can be delivered and supported by volunteers, so we will look to expand the numbers of volunteers we use.

Partnership working is key to achieving our ambitions, by helping us to use our resources more efficiently and achieve better outcomes. We need to understand the value partnerships are adding and how they are making our communities safer. We are committed to working in partnership for the good of Oxfordshire residents.

Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service supports the countywide Safer Oxfordshire Partnership, which brings together a wide range of practitioners (public health, safeguarding, Thames Valley Police) to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour across the county.

Spotlight section

- We have well developed safeguarding arrangements in place to help those most vulnerable in society. This is due to our strong relationships with our social care partners, which has supported the development of a strong safeguarding culture among our teams.

- We have developed an evaluation strategy to enable us to evaluate our prevention activities, to ensure they continue to make people safer.

- We will use our evaluations to give the public a voice, to make continuous improvements and to ensure that our efforts are making positive differences for the community.

What we will do

- Evaluate all our activities where it is possible to do so.

- Match our delivery methods to those most at risk so that we can target our resources at the most vulnerable.

- Establish effective partnerships to increase our effectiveness and our contribution to thriving communities.

- Develop our data to support our decision-making.

- Increase the number of Safe and Well visits we complete to reduce the number and impact of fires in homes.

Measuring success

- The use of prevention activity to reduce harm and save lives in relation to fire, road and water risk.

- Effective partnership working that targets our resources at those most vulnerable in the community.

- The evaluation of our prevention activities to maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of our resources.

Protection

Any commercial building could experience a fire but the consequences are varied. The type of building and the occupancy can increase the level of risk if a fire should start. For example, these include buildings where people sleep but are unfamiliar with the layout such as hotels and guest houses or where people would struggle to escape from a fire because of health factors, such as care homes.

Our risk-based inspection programme targets these higher levels of risk to life to make sure we focus our activity on the right types of properties. In addition, we use local knowledge, feedback from our fire crews and national incidents of note, to identify other areas of high risk.

Our fire protection teams carry out audits on commercial buildings to ensure that they comply with fire safety regulations. Commercial buildings require specific sets of fire safety measures to protect the employees and other occupants. We carry out these audits to ensure that these measures are in place and are being well maintained.

Over the course of this CRMP we will be looking for an increase in the number of audits we complete as the expanded team (12 inspectors to 22 inspectors) become fully competent.

We also have duties to respond to building consultations, licensing applications and fire safety concerns raised by the public. In addition, we use local knowledge, feedback from our fire crews and national incidents of note, to try and identify areas of high fire risk that we can focus on.

There are major legislative changes progressing through parliament. The Building Safety Bill and the Fire Safety Bill 2020, which will amend the Fire Safety Order 2005. These are a legislative reaction to the Grenfell Tower tragedy. This will have a direct impact on fire and rescue services and we will monitor the developments closely.

Spotlight section

- We have an Intelligence Based Dynamic Reinspection Programme (Risk Based Inspection Programme) that is used to determine our proactive inspection work. This programme targets those premises that have a higher risk of fire and combines this with the potential impact of fire on the occupiers/building users.

- We have adopted the NFCC national guidance document "Competency Framework for Fire Safety Regulators", and have development programmes in place for staff to ensure they have the right skills, competency and technical knowledge to carry out inspections to a high standard.

- We have invested in our protection team to increase work capacity by increasing the team from 12 to 22 members of staff.

What we will do

- Increase the number of audits that we complete, focusing our efforts on the inspections within our risk-based inspection programme to reduce the risk that fires cause in commercial buildings.

- Adapt to the requirements of new legislation to be an effective regulator.

- We are working with the other fire and rescue services across the Thames Valley to look at new ways of reducing the amount of false alarms we attend.

- Increase our work around business engagement to raise levels of fire-safety knowledge.

- Complete intelligence-led campaigns to reduce high fire risk.

Measuring success

- To identify fire safety situations in workplaces that present a high risk to the public and employees and to use the full range of our enforcement powers to reduce harm.

- We will increase the level of fire safety knowledge in workplaces through prevention and education to increase self-compliance and reduce harm.

People and wellbeing

The fire and rescue service is going through a period of significant change and we need to ensure that our workforce is able to adjust to these changes and contribute innovatively. This in turn also requires workforce interpersonal relationships and industrial relations that work for the good of the organisation.

We have had plans in place for the last three years to increase our diversity within our operational staff, as we recognise that diversity helps to increase creativity and innovation, and ultimately supports better decision making and improvements. By reflecting the community we serve, this also breaks down barriers and fosters better community relations. We recognise that we still have a long way to go in this area however currently 8 per cent of our operational workforce are women, just under 2 per cent are from the BAME community and just under 2 per cent are from the LGBTQ community.

We have adopted the six key areas of the NFCC's People Strategy as strategic objectives:

- Strengthen leadership and line management to support organisational change and improved community outcomes.

- Developing cultural values and behaviours that make the fire and rescue service a great place to work for all our people.

- Ways of working that are able to respond to service needs.

- Provide excellent training and education to ensure continuous improvement of services to the public.

- Continue to support the health and wellbeing of all our people.

- Strengthen our ability to provide good service by diversifying our staff and creating a fair and equal place to work.

We have developed the following insight to guide strategic actions going forward:

- A diverse workforce could deliver increased creativity and innovation and will help to ensure that our prevention and protection messages have increased reach.

- A reduction in operational incidents is resulting in increased skill fade, requiring experience to be gained in other ways, such as through more training and simulated experiences.

- The service will need to find new ways to enable members of the public to become on-call firefighters without the role being too burdensome to their primary employment, families and leisure time.

Spotlight section

- The HMICFRS rated Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service as good at looking after its people and the service was judged as outstanding in how it promotes the right values and culture of the services.

- HMICFRS also felt that the service was good at getting the right people with the right skills and at ensuring fairness and promoting diversity.

What we will do

- We will continue to pursue a more inclusive culture and a more diverse workforce so we can represent the community we serve and staff can fulfil their potential.

- We will embed the NFCC's leadership framework to support our positive culture and support leadership at all levels of the organisation.

- We will continue to work with staff and representative bodies to use staff on wholetime duty systems in such a way as to bridge the gaps in on-call appliance availability.

Measuring success

- Creating a workforce that is representative of our communities.

- Support our staff through targeted wellbeing initiatives.

- The development of our leadership approach to support the continuation of our "outstanding" cultural assessment by the HMICFRS.

- Supporting the availability, competency and experience of our on-call staff through improved retention.

How we will monitor our improvements and the level of risk

We will monitor and review our strategic priorities in the following ways:

- Progress will be monitored through our risk and performance meetings and reported to the strategic leadership team.

- Our annual Service Delivery Plan will outline our key priorities for delivery against our CRMP.

- Agreed key performance indicators will be monitored quarterly and reported through our annual report.

- Our annual statement of assurance will provide assurance the service is delivering against expectations and legislation.

- Inspections from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services, will assess the service against key areas to determine the level of service we are providing to the communities of Oxfordshire.

- Annual review of our risk analyses documents will ensure that we continue to horizon scan and assess risks to communities and the service.

- Creating key service action plans after national events or organisational learning will ensure that we improve our delivery to the communities of Oxfordshire.

- We will use learning from incidents and other events to ensure continued improvement of our service delivery.

- We will use learning from National Operation Learning and Joint Operational Learning to ensure continued improvement of our service delivery.
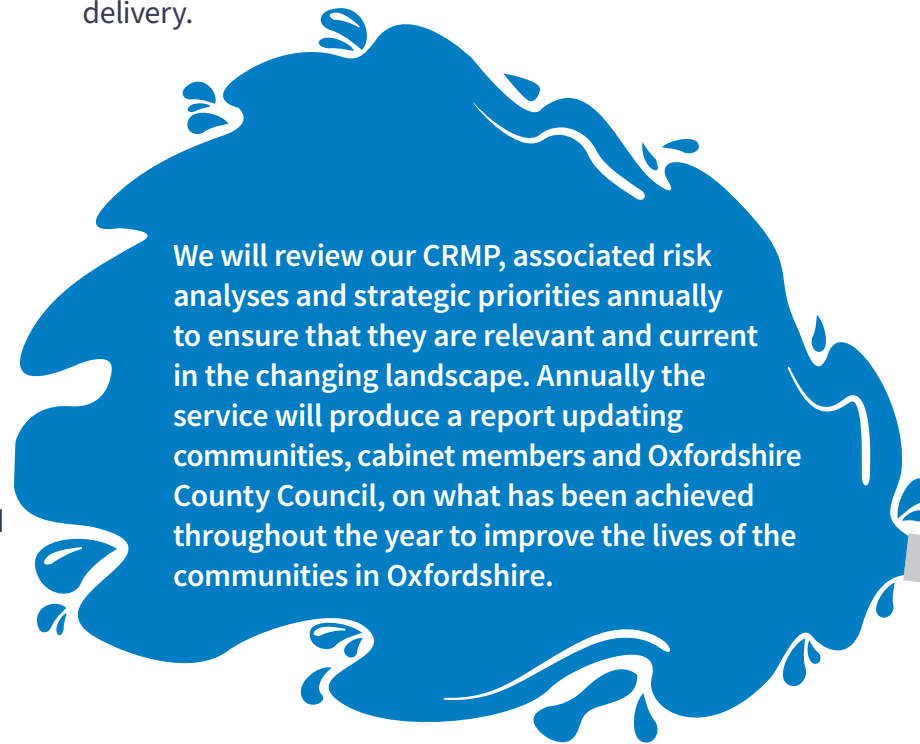
We will review our CRMP, associated risk analyses and strategic priorities annually to ensure that they are relevant and current in the changing landscape. Annually the service will produce a report updating communities, cabinet members and Oxfordshire County Council, on what has been achieved throughout the year to improve the lives of the communities in Oxfordshire.