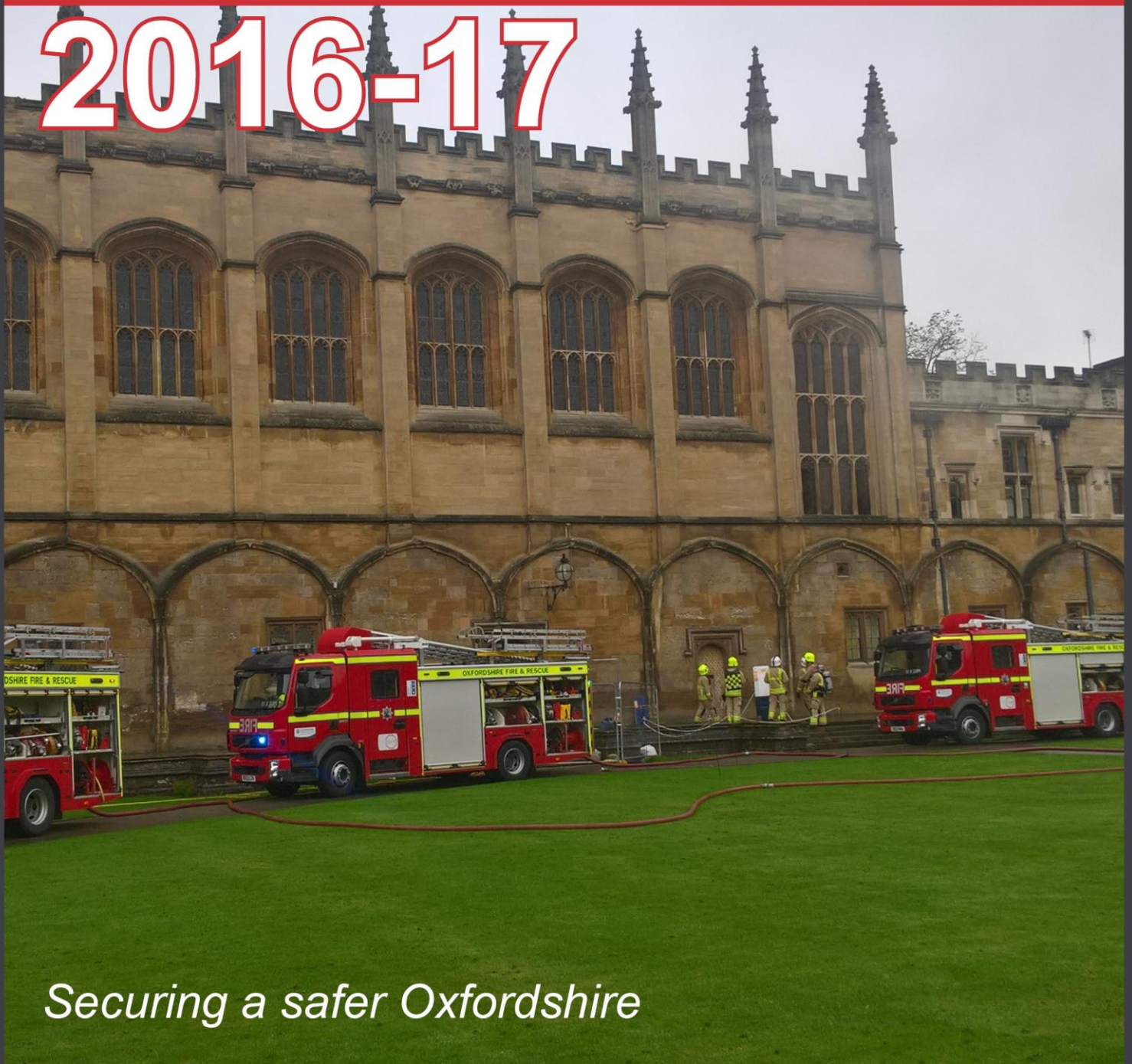


Oxfordshire County Council
Fire and Rescue Service

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Statement of Assurance

2016-17



Securing a safer Oxfordshire

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Welcome and foreword



Councillor
Rodney Rose
Cabinet member for
the fire and rescue
service



Chief Fire Officer
Simon Furlong

Welcome to Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service's Statement of Assurance. As the Cabinet Member and Chief Fire Officer for Oxfordshire we are pleased to present this statement for our local communities to demonstrate 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 financial, governance and operational matters and to show how we have due regard to our Community Risk Management Plans (CRMP). In 2017 we published our new CRMP to meet the challenges of 2017-22.

During 2016 we also launched our new 2016-22 365alive vision; 'Working together, every day, to save and improve the lives of people across Oxfordshire'. The 365alive vision was designed to ensure we are contributing towards the strategic ambition of a 'Thriving Oxfordshire' by ensuring all our activities align with the priorities of the Oxfordshire County Council Corporate Plan.

We ensure that our proactive approach, focussed on preventative activities, leads to a safer and healthier Oxfordshire. Our programme of collaboration, across the three Thames Valley fire and rescue services enables better integration and response to the public which focuses on delivering more effective, efficient service that is transparent and accountable to our communities.

In order to provide assurance and continue on our improvement journey which we commenced an Operational Assessment and fire peer challenge in 2016. This process comprises of a self-assessment and external peer challenge and is designed to allow a "whole system" look at how we lead, prioritise and deliver the interrelated functions of prevention, protection, preparedness and response.

We are extremely proud of what we have achieved during 2016-17. Our personnel are our most important resource and it is through them, with the support of our county councillors and our partner agencies that we will continue to be a cost effective, well governed organisation with transformational leadership.

Communities we serve

Our community

Oxfordshire is home to around 672,500 people many of whom live in rural towns and villages. The population is increasing and is forecast to rise to 754,000 residents by 2026. This is because the number of births is forecast to exceed the number of deaths by 36,000, life expectancy is increasing and 52,000 more people are forecast to move into Oxfordshire than to move out. The largest rises are expected within the older population group.

Our natural environment

Despite the forecast population increases, Oxfordshire remains the most rural county in the south east as well as being a popular visitor destination renowned for its rural beauty covering 260,595 hectares. The provision of a fleet of 4x4 response vehicles and partnership work through the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) and the Emergency Planning Team (EP) assists us to manage risks in rural locations and during periods of adverse weather.

Our built environment

Oxfordshire has significant plans for future economic and housing growth, with a focus on the Local Enterprise Partnership Hubs; the Science Vale UK Area (a Local Enterprise Zone), Bicester and Oxford City. There will be significant developments at other locations including Banbury, Carterton and Wantage.

We have an ongoing project in the west of the county with the aim of addressing identified low response standards. Research highlighted the benefit of providing a new community fire station in Carterton. A site has been agreed by the county council. Our priority is to provide a competent and safe workforce within the Carterton area and as a result we are developing and will implement a workforce development plan to ensure that we have a competent fire crew in place by the end of 2018.

Our heritage

Oxfordshire has over 12,000 listed buildings, including many sites of importance to the country's national heritage. The city of Oxford is internationally famous for its hotels, university and college buildings. Blenheim Palace heads a list of nationally important stately homes and is one of 390 Grade I listed buildings in the county. We will continue to work with owners and occupiers to ensure plans, risks, training and information is reviewed to safeguard our heritage.

The risks we face

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

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (the framework) requires us to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP), known as the 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 new strategic CRMP 2017-22 and Action Plan 2017-18 was consulted on from the 10 October 2016 to 9 January 2017. This was approved by Cabinet on the 14 March 2017.

The CRMP action plans sets out a number of 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.

- [National Framework Document Published July 2012](#)
- [Community Risk Management Plans and Action Plans](#)

Social risk

People in Oxfordshire are living longer. The number of people aged 75 and over is projected to grow by 66 per cent between 2011 and 2026. Historical data shows that older people are at a greater risk from suffering serious injuries or death from accidental fires.

Our Home and Community Safety Department, through partnership working, will continue to target the people most at risk through safe and well-being checks and education. To support our intelligence, community population profiles will be created and correlated to incidents to focus our activities.

Environmental risk

Oxfordshire has many waterways, which have associated risks of flooding and drowning. We have firefighters trained to rescue people from both moving and still water, including faster moving 'white water'. They will also respond to national emergencies resulting from large-scale flooding.

Our firefighters identify potential areas of danger on our waterways and develop procedures to ensure they can respond both quickly and effectively when an emergency occurs. All front line appliances carry water rescue equipment and the rescue tender has a boat for river incidents.

Economic risk

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 a number of nationally and internationally recognised businesses such as, BMW Mini, Oxford Instruments, the Williams and Renault Formula One Teams, the city's two universities and a number of 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

Through sections 13 and 16 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 OFRS has set up reinforcement schemes for securing mutual assistance with Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes, Gloucestershire, Northamptonshire, Warwickshire and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service Authorities to provide and utilise resources such as fire engines.

Plans are also in place, through the National Resilience Advisory Team (NRAT), to provide specialist appliances and crews for mass decontamination, urban search and rescue, water and high volume pumping, hazardous chemical analysis and command and control across England and Wales.

Tactical Operational Guidance

OFRS have been engaged in the National Fire and Rescue Service Collaborative Partnership Programme to promote a common approach when working across borders. In 2015 we opened a new joint fire control with two of our neighbouring fire and rescue services, Royal Berkshire and Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes, known as the Thames Valley Fire Control Service.

We have a team responsible for developing Tactical Operational Guidance (TOG) documents. This information is carried on fire engines and accessed via on-board computers known as Mobile Data Terminals. It enables all operational staff to access the most up to date guidance and information at the scene of an emergency with neighbouring authorities working to the same procedures. During 2017-18 we will implement the National Operational Guidance (NOG), which will replace TOG's.

The National Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Project (JESIP) has also been formed to enhance joint working further across blue light services and collaborate where possible. This also captures lessons learnt from incidents.

Overview of fire and rescue service

Overview of our structure

OFRS is governed by the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) whose full members are listed below. Full SLT meetings are held monthly with fortnightly meetings to discuss specific issues. SLT reports to County Leadership Team (CLT).

- Chief Fire Officer Simon Furlong (Director for Community Safety)
- Assistant Chief Fire Officer — Grahame Mitchell
- Assistant Chief Fire Officer — Rob MacDougall
- Area Manager Operations and Resilience — Mat Carlile
- Area Manager Strategic Policy – David Heycock
- Community Risk Management — Richard Webb
- Human Resources Business Partner — Kim Terry
- Finance Business Partner — Kathy Wilcox.

Strategic Leadership Team



Our people

At the end of March 2017 there were a total of 230 whole-time firefighters and 73 support staff. We also had 317 people working as on-call firefighters in Oxfordshire's local communities.

Our resources

There are currently 24 fire stations in Oxfordshire, which are staffed by whole-time and on-call firefighters. They offer safety advice, education and a response to emergencies calls.

We have a front line fleet of 34 fire engines, plus a resilience appliance and a number of 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.

Our other specialist vehicles are provided for incident support, incident command, bulk water supplies, environmental protection and firefighter decontamination following incidents involving hazardous materials. As part of a national response strategy we also have a specialist vehicle for detecting and identifying hazardous materials and high volume pumping units. Two Light Response Vehicles are being trialled in the fleet as an effective alternative to the traditional larger fire engine.

Going forward: Our 365alive 2016-22 vision

Our six core strategies are designed to contribute towards our new 365alive vision; 'Working together, every day, to save and improve the lives of people across Oxfordshire'. The fire and rescue vision is supported by the whole of community safety including; Trading Standards, Emergency Planning Unit, Commercial Training Service and Gypsy and Travellers Service.

This 365alive vision has been designed to ensure we are contributing towards the strategic ambition of a 'Thriving Oxfordshire' as detailed in the [Oxfordshire County Council Corporate Plan](#) and we will make sure all our activities align with the strategic priorities of the plan.



The new 365alive vision describes the strategic outputs that we aim to achieve by 2022:

- 6,000 more people will be alive because of our prevention, protection and emergency response activities. This supports the OCC strategic Priority: Efficient public services.
- 85,000 children and young adults better educated to lead safer and healthier lives. This supports the OCC strategic Priority: Protection for vulnerable people.
- 37,500 vulnerable children and adults helped to lead more secure and independent lives supported by safe and well-being visits. This supports the OCC strategic Priority: Protection for vulnerable people.
- 20,000 businesses given advice and support to grow. This supports the OCC strategic Priority: A thriving economy.
- We have set a social media reach target of 1.6 million interactions across various social media platforms. This supports the OCC strategic Priority: Protection for vulnerable people.



[365alive website](#)

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:

Key strategic documents



Our values

OFRS fully supports the underpinning values of the county council, as well as those agreed nationally by the Chief Fire Officers Association, the Fire Brigades Union, UNISON and a number of other fire and rescue services. These combined values provide a central focus on the standards and principles we expect our employees to promote, uphold and maintain.



Our challenges and priorities during 2016-17

Our CRMP has formed part of our approach to mitigate risk within Oxfordshire through prevention, protection and intervention strategies. During 2016-17 we successfully completed our project to trial emergency cover review recommendations in the Carterton area.

Our other major projects undertaken during 2016, which are still on-going, are:

- Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP) – This is a Home Office led national project, for the replacement of the Airwave/Firelink network.
- Thames Valley Collaboration- The aim of this project is to procure and implement a common fire appliance across Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes and Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Services.
- Carterton Community Safety Centre - We have an ongoing project in the west of the county with the aim of improving response standards by providing a new community fire station in Carterton. Our priority is to provide a competent and safe workforce within the Carterton area and as a result we are developing and will implement a workforce development plan to ensure that we have a competent fire crew in place by the end of 2018.

Going forward in 2017-18

The Home Office has set out a Fire Reform Programme that will provide transformation of fire and rescue services to:

- Deliver efficiencies and savings.
- Introduce a new rigorous and independent inspection regime system.
- Challenge services to transform the diversity of a firefighter workforce.
- Publish comparative procurement data from every fire and rescue authority in England and to encourage services to pool their purchasing power and buy collectively.
- Legislation to give Police and Crime Commissioners the ability to take on responsibility for fire and rescue services, through the Police and Crime Act 2017.
- Legal duty to collaborate with emergency services.

The Chief Fire Officers from all Thames Valley FRS's have decided that a more focused programme of collaboration, across the three organisations, will enable better integration and response to the public. It was recognised that there is considerable work going on within each service and that capacity and workload is a

significant factor to all of our management teams. As such an agreed number of key work streams are being proposed.

These projects will be:

- Thames Valley Fire Control – We shall be focusing on having one mobilising policy, this will enable staff in the control room to streamline their responses and free up time and effort to ensure that the community gets the best possible response.
- Fire Protection – The services will work together to produce one fire protection policy, succession plan and one way of working, providing consistency and opportunities for staff across the Thames Valley.
- Procurement – We shall be concentrating on getting one procurement timetable and looking to buy the same equipment and appliances in all of our respective authorities.
- Risk Modelling – We will work together to develop one risk modelling methodology, this will enable a consistent way of assessing risk whilst still allowing risk appetite to be defined locally.
- Workforce reform – The Services will work together on workforce reform, learning from each other and sharing best practice to enable our staff to have the best possible opportunities and also enable our staff to shape the future of our service.
- Blue light collaboration – The work going on with SCAS and TVP needs to be accelerated and highlighted to enable the community to get the best possible service.

Chief Fire Officer's statement on equality and diversity

OFRS recognise that all individuals have fundamental human rights and, therefore, adopts a rights-based approach to equality.

Practices will be developed that promote the right for everyone to participate in all aspects of life by promoting initiatives that remove barriers to participation and by actively promoting equality and social inclusion.

We will have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other unacceptable conduct, to promote equality of opportunity and to promote good relations between all persons 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 seek to develop and provide relevant, appropriate and accessible services that meet the needs of our diverse population. The service will eliminate unlawful or otherwise unjustifiable discrimination and promote equality in the provision of our services. As an employer we value the contribution that every employee makes and respect individual differences, utilising the diversity of our workforce as a positive benefit.

Chief Fire Officer Simon Furlong

The service fully supports the OCC Equality Policy and its objectives and publishes case studies to demonstrate how these objectives are met.

- [Equality and inclusion case studies](#)

Governance arrangements

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, that public money is safeguarded and 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.
- County Leadership Team (CLT): 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 CLT 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.

Your fire and rescue authority

OCC is a county authority and is the fire authority for Oxfordshire represented by a full council with all members. All the key decisions are made by cabinet members, meeting either jointly as the cabinet or as individual cabinet members, taking delegated decisions within their own responsibilities.

Councillor Rodney Rose, Deputy Leader of the Council, has responsibility for:

- Fire and rescue
- Fire control
- Trading standards
- Emergency planning
- Flooding
- Internal management
- HR and industrial relations
- Strategic rail
- Policy co-ordination
- Equalities
- Localities

- Community cohesion
- Voluntary & Community Sector.

The performance of the fire and rescue service is overseen by the Performance Scrutiny Committee and the Audit and 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](#)

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 a number of 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 that set out a number of priorities.

- [The Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004](#)
- [Community Risk Management Plans and Action Plans](#)

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 purpose of this forum is to ensure that there is an appropriate level of preparedness to enable an effective multi agency response to emergencies that may have a significant impact on the communities OFRS serve.

TVLRF is a partnership consisting of representatives from police, local authorities, fire, ambulance, environment agency, health and the military as well as utility and transport companies.

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. 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 make arrangements to carry out these 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.

Chief Fire Officers Association National Resilience (CNR) is the organisation that provides assurance to the Home Office that the National Resilience capabilities generated are able to meet the new threats to national stability. CNR provides operational assurance at the strategic level.

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

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 absolutely 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.

We undertook a full external Royal Society for Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) Quality Safety Audit (QSA) of our Health and Safety management systems in June 2014, achieving an 87 per cent score and completed a further internal audit in October 2015.

- [Audit reports | Oxfordshire County Council Intranet](#)
- [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 published in 2012 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 was undertaken to ensure that OFRS met the requirements of the framework document and an action plan has been completed.

- [National Framework Document Published July 2012](#)
- [National Framework Requirements Gap Analysis](#)

In July 2016 the Home Office reported on progress made by FRS's with the national framework and is satisfied that all FRS's are compliant. Areas of focus include:

National Resilience

Over recent years large scale emergency incidents have increased in the UK. This has been due to severe weather events and terrorist activities. As a direct result the Government introduced the 'National Resilience' programme. OFRS host a High Volume Pump (HVP) and a Detection, Identification and Monitoring (DIM) team.

These assets are available at all times for national deployment. Assurance is provided on upkeep of assets and operational capability via periodic external audits by the National Resilience Advisory Team (NRAT). We continue to maintain competence and availability of both assets by;

- HVP – competence is maintained via regular ‘in house’ exercises and attendance at the Fire Service College for NRAT provided training. Assurance for the HVP is embedded within the NRAT three yearly assurance cycle, which involved participation in a national exercise during summer 2016, a self-assessment planned for 2017/18 and an external audit by NRAT in 2018/19.
- DIM – competence is maintained by external quarterly assessments by Bureau Veritas along with attendance at the fire service college for NRAT provided training. Availability is maintained 24/7 across the three Thames Valley FRS's by FDS officers.

Firefighter Fitness

OFRS are committed to ensuring that it has a fit and healthy workforce, which is ready for the physical demands of the role of a firefighter. The service currently has a fitness policy in place which is being reviewed in line with the recommendations from the NJC circular NJC/1/16 which provides guidance on best practices for fitness within the fire service.

The service follows the National framework for England for Firefighter fitness and provides support and advice to Firefighters via our current arrangements with our Occupational Health provider and our Service Fitness Advisor, a role of which the service is looking to expand over the coming year. The service has a comprehensive fitness testing regime which is carried out in July each year.

Management of risk

The county council has a risk management strategy which aims to ensure that there is continuous improvement in the arrangements for managing risk across the directorates.

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. These are published each year, on the Council’s website at:

- [Annual accounts and audit web page](#)

OFRS risk management strategy follows the principles of the Office of Government Commerce’s Management of Risk Framework. All members of staff work to identify threats and opportunities to the service and our communities.

Once a risk has been identified we decide how we want to deal with it then monitor it closely. Risk registers are maintained for strategic risk and operational risk. The nature of certain risks means that not all records will be accessible to all.

- [Risk Management Strategy](#)

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 are responsibilities to provide road safety information, advice and training under the Road Traffic Act 1988 can be found at:

- [Road safety web page](#)

Our collaborative arrangements

Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's) exist with other agencies such as Highways Authority, Thames Valley Police, South Central Ambulance Service and the Defence Fire and Rescue Service.

We also have MOU's with other local organisations such as RAF Brize Norton, British Red Cross, HMP Huntercombe, Emergency Response Team Search and Rescue and Oxfordshire Lowland Search and Rescue.

A full list of Memorandums of Understanding can be found on the website at:

- [Memorandums of understanding document](#)

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 the 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.

Our performance

How we performed during 2016-17

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.

- [Performance information - Annual Reports](#)

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 stretching, yet in 2016-17 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.

2016-17 Response Standards Performance

Response standards performance 2016-17	Total emergency incidents in scope	Incidents responded to <11mins	per cent response standards <11mins	Incidents responded to <14mins	per cent response standards <14mins
Totals	6093	5592	91.78%	5928	97.27%

- [Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service performance web page](#)

Benchmarking

We use national benchmarking reports and tools. We are also part of a [Chief Fire Officers Association](#) (CFOA) 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 Monitor Report](#)

What others have said about our performance

Operational Assessment (OpA) Peer Challenge

One of the main external assurance mechanisms for the fire and rescue is the Local Government Associations (LGA's) Fire Peer Challenge. OFRS previously completed an OpA in May 2014 which resulted in positive feedback from the peers within their report. An action plan was created, based on the final report, which has been completed and closed out. The 2014 OpA report can be found on the link below:

- [Peer Challenge Report](#)

The fire peer challenge is a voluntary process and in order to further improve our performance we have requested a new OpA to be completed in November 2017. An initial self-assessment to establish a benchmark against the seven Key Assessment Areas (KAA's) was undertaken by OFRS during January 2017. This has resulted in greater organisational self-awareness and we have developed a new action plan to assist us on our improvement journey.

The new KAA's include: Community risk management, Prevention, Protection, Preparedness, Response, Health, Safety and Welfare, Training and Development.

Customer Service Excellence Award

The government wants services for all that are efficient, effective, excellent, equitable and empowering with the citizen always at the heart of service provision.

With this in mind, Customer Service Excellence was developed to offer services a practical tool for driving customer focused change within their organisation. OFRS have maintained the Customer Service Excellence award following the re-assessment in March 2017 and the report can be found on the link below.

- [Customer Service Excellence Report](#)

Strategic Risk and Assurance Team

The Strategic Risk and Assurance Team ensures consistently high performance throughout the organisation by conducting quality assurance audits. The Strategic Risk and Assurance Policy outlines how the service is assured and the Procedure on Strategic Risk and Assurance Audits details the audit process. The following audit was completed in 2016-17:

- Audit of Fire Protection and Business Safety Review

During 2017 we undertook an assurance mapping exercise covering all key areas of our service, as part of a wider Oxfordshire County Council initiative. The assurance statements and assurance mapping show key control measures and level of assurance provided.

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.

Themed audits are conducted for specific incident types to ensure that correct operational procedures are being implemented. The themes for our operational audits are identified from new national procedural implementation, national highlighted areas of concern and following the issuing of new operational equipment.

Our audits highlight areas of good practice and also identify trends and training needs. This evidence base is used to feedback into reviews of training across the service. The results of operational audits are published on the service intranet for access by all personnel.

Our Incident Commanders conduct hot debriefs after most incidents. If the incident reaches a pre-determined level or is of special interest we hold a structured debrief. The outcomes from structured debriefs result in action plans that are feedback into training and available to all personnel.

Coroners Regulation 28 Notices

The coroner, through Regulation 28 of the Coroners (investigation) Regulations 2013, has the authority to produce a preventable future death report. OFRS have reviewed the reports and created actions plans to ensure we follow the recommendations and lessons learnt, from the Regulation 28 notices. We have also created an action plan following the publication of the Fire Brigades Union Warwickshire Report.

Financial performance: statement of accounts

Where our money came from

Our budget for 2016-17

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 budget for Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service for 2016-17 was £23.832m, with a controllable service budget of £21.967m. A summary of OFRS expenditure can be found in the Annual Report at:

- [Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service performance](#)

The following financial data is provided by CIPFA based on 2014-15 information; this will be updated in April / May 2017 to include 2015-16 data, when published by CIPFA.

Expenditure per head of population¹

The cost of providing the fire and rescue service in 2014/15 was approximately 10p per day for each person within Oxfordshire.

The cost per head of population for 2014-15 was £38.62 compared to the average cost of:

- South east region fire and rescue services - £41.09.
- Family group fire and rescue services - £38.02.
- All English fire and rescue services - £40.46.
- County council fire and rescue services - £38.59.

Expenditure per member of staff

We provided a service at a cost of £44,125 per member of staff in 2014-15 compared to the average cost of:

- South east region fire and rescue services - £48,706.
- Family group fire and rescue services - £45,902.
- All English fire and rescue services - £47,372.
- County council fire and rescue services - £42,218.

¹ Financial data is taken from the CIPFA Fire and Rescue Statistics 2014/15, as CIPFA 2015/16 statistics are not currently available. County council fire and rescue service figures do not include Isle of Wight or Isles of Scilly as they do not represent a fair comparison due to their size

- [Pay Policy Statement](#)

Expenditure per incident

Our overall expenditure against the number of incidents we attend is £5,106 per incident in 2014-15 compared to the average of:

- South east region fire and rescue services - £4,796.
- Family group fire and rescue services - £4,461.
- All English fire and rescue services - £4,667.
- County council fire and rescue services - £4,589.

How we provide value for money

OCC Corporate Plan 2016 to 2020 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 of our work. We have an absolute focus on ensuring services are efficient and delivering value for money for local people.

- [The Corporate Plan | Oxfordshire County Council Intranet](#)

Auditors findings

A summary of auditors' reports and findings can be found in the Annual Audit Letter 2015-16 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 | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

Our future plans

Community Risk Management Action Plan 2017-18

The following projects are to be undertaken during 2017-18:

- Project 1: Review the whole-time shift duty system.
- Project 2: Review / implement changes to key stations and provide area based strategic cover.
- Project 3: Removal of second fire engine from Chipping Norton Fire Station.
- Project 4: Review opportunities to share resources and assets to improve outcomes for Oxfordshire.
- Project 5: Alignment of operational policy across fire and rescue services in the Thames Valley.

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

OFRS Station and Departmental Risk Management Plans 2016-17

In 2016-17 we are facing increasing business and efficiency challenges set against a changing public sector environment.

In order to meet these challenges we have created Station and Departmental Risk Management Plans to provide all our staff with details of the context in which we are working and provide information to enable them to make an effective contribution to the vision of Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service. The actions are based on the findings of the OpA self assessment.

Our community engagement

Consultation on our new strategic CRMP 2017-22 and Action Plan 2017-18 was consulted on from the 10 October 2016 to 9 January 2017. In order to obtain the widest spectrum of responses, several different means of capturing opinions and ideas were used in the consultation process.

The Consultation Responses Report can be found at:

- [Consultation Responses Report](#)

Comments and compliments

The fire and rescue service is passionate about delivering top quality customer service. Delivering excellent customer service 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:

- [How to make a complaint about Oxfordshire County Council](#)
- [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 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](#).

Signature

Signed on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council:

Date: April 2017

Councillor Rodney Rose

Cabinet member with responsibility for the fire and rescue service