Northamptonshire Commissioner (Fire Authority)

Fire and Rescue Statement of Assurance 2024/25

Northamptonshire Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority (NCFRA)

Fire and Rescue Statement of Assurance
2024/25

Introduction and Background

Fire and rescue services have a pivotal role to play in making our communities safer. Not only delivering an effective response to the incidents and emergencies that occur, but by also working with partners and developing highly skilled teams to prevent incidents from occurring through community education and protecting people from fire and other risks through advice and enforcement where required.

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (2018) provides overall strategic direction and guidance with how fire and rescue authorities discharge their functions. Within the framework, there is a requirement for the authority (NCFRA) to provide annual assurance on financial, governance, and operational matters by publishing an Annual Statement of Assurance.

In addition, strategic direction is also provided by other plans for which the annual assurance is also required to show due regard to:

- The Police, Fire and Crime Plan
- The Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP)

Performance

The Authority monitors fire and rescue performance through the Office of the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner (OPFCC) Accountability and Assurance Board. This board maintains oversight of key delivery areas including operational response, prevention and protection. This board holds strategic leads accountable for the delivery of community outcomes, improvement actions and performance outcome.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

Key Performance Indicators

The outcome measures we will prioritise:		2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	3 year Assessment
KPI1	Number of deliberate primary fires per 10,000 population	2.80	3.15	3.00	**2.93**	**Reducing**
KPI2	Number of deliberate secondary fires per 10,000 population	6.30	7.90	6.11	**5.70**	**Reducing**
KPI3	Number of primary fires per 100,000 population	118.08	119.65	114.41	**115.35**	**Reducing**
KPI4	Total number of fatalities due to primary fires per 100,000 population	0.66	0.13	0.38	**1.01**	**Increasing**
KPI5	Total number of non-fatal casualties in fires (excluding precautionary checks and first aid) per 100,000 population	3.17	3.43	3.18	**3.79**	**Increasing**
KPI6	Number of accidental dwelling fires per 10,000 dwellings	13.95	10.69	9.36	**10.01**	**Reducing**
KPI7	The number of deaths arising from accidental fires in dwellings per 100,000 population	0.00	0.13	0.38	**0.63**	**Increasing**
KPI8	The number of injuries (excluding precautionary checks), arising from accidental fires in dwellings per 100,000 population.	1.72	1.91	1.53	**1.89**	**Stable**
KPI9	Number of fires in non-domestic premises per 1,000 non-domestic premises	6.05	5.49	6.93	**6.90**	**Increasing**
KPI10a	Killed or Serious Injury (KSI) Road Traffic Accidents attended by NFRS	233	261	213	**266**	**Increasing**
KPI10b	People killed in road traffic accidents (STATS 19 fatal data)	39	42	34	**35***	**Reducing**

Data subject to revision at any time **** Data to Dec24 as latest available***

The Input measures we will track and understand:		2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	3 year Assessment
KPI11	Standards of Operational Response – Average (mean) Full Response Time (attended incidents)	00:10:27	00:10:30	00:10:23	**00:10:26**	**Stable**
KPI12	Standards of Operational Response – Average (mean) Call to Mobilise Time	00:01:45	00:01:45	00:01:51	**00:01:48**	**Stable**
KPI13	Average Appliance Availability (including flexi) *(Minimum expected of 14)*	18.9	18.4	18.5	**18.2**	**Reducing**
KPI14	Home Fire Safety Visits and refits completed.	4259	5675	5659	**5478**	**Reducing**
KPI15	% of Home Fire Safety Visits completed in target groups	77.4%	71.8%	78.9%	**74.4%**	**Reducing**
KPI16	Total number of Protective Full Risk Inspections (FI) and Re-Inspections (RI) completed.	1221	1228	1158	**1397**	**Increasing**
KPI17	Full Fire Safety Audits (RBIP) *(Not all required to be repeated annually)*	591	860	653	**406**	**Reducing**

Data subject to revision at any time

Financial assurance

The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) acting as Northamptonshire Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority (NCFRA) is responsible under legislation for ensuring all financial activities are carried out in accordance with statutory and professional requirements. This includes safeguarding public money, receiving all income due to the organisation and meeting all financial obligations for Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue.

As a corporation sole, NCFRA is required to have a Section 151 Officer. In line with the options set out within the Home Office Financial Management Code of Practice, the role of NCFRA Section 151 Officer in Northamptonshire is also undertaken by the PFCC and Group Section 151 Officer for Policing.

The PFCC delegates financial arrangements within NCFRA to ensure day to day activities can be undertaken and decisions can be made by those who have the knowledge and authority to do so. The PFCC delegates the operational Fire service budget to the Chief Fire Officer and sets out the requirements of this allocation in an annual strategic outcomes letter. Delegation arrangements and levels are set out within the Joint Corporate Governance Framework.

Regular financial monitoring reports are considered monthly by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and regularly throughout the year at the Accountability Board. Financial updates are considered by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel throughout the year. Financial performance, level of reserves and medium-term financial outlook is included within the annual NCFRA Statement of Accounts and is subject to external audit.

The 2024/25 Draft Statement of Accounts are expected to be published on the OPFCC website in line with statutory deadlines. These ensure compliance with Codes of Practice issued by CIPFA.

Governance assurance

The governance of Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service is the responsibility of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire in her role as NCFRA.

Governance is concerned with how NCFRA manages its affairs on a day-to-day basis including its business practices, standards of conduct and overall management procedures. These arrangements are set out within the Joint Corporate Governance Framework, a copy of which is available on the OPFCC website.

Governance of Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service is carefully managed through regularly reviewed policies, procedures and assurance systems managed by the Commissioner's office, Statutory Officers and Senior Leadership Officers. Effective systems of internal control are assured through a Joint Corporate Governance Framework (CGF).

For the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 25, NCFRA have prepared an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) as part of the Statement of Accounts. This is due to be published on the OPFCC's website at:

Statement of accounts and independent auditor reports Archives - Northamptonshire Police & Fire Commissioner

Operational assurance

Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service functions within a clearly defined statutory and policy framework. We address these core functions through our Community Risk Management Plan which identifies and assesses foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect our community.

Community Risk Management Plan 2025 – 2030

Published following both internal and public consultation, Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service has produced a detailed CRMP outlining how we will reduce risk to the people of Northamptonshire via our prevention, protection and response priorities which take account of current and future risks. The plan also outlines how we will carry out our statutory responsibility to support national emergencies in other parts of the UK.

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Fire and Rescue Services report 2023-25

The service was inspected in April and May 2024. Across the 11 areas of the inspection framework, the HMICFRS found NFRS to be Good in 3 areas, Adequate in 5 areas and improvements required in 3 further areas. The report findings were published in September 2024 and can be found here along with any associated public facing action plan.

Effectiveness, efficiency and people 2023–25: An inspection of Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service

Prevention activity

The Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) Community Engagement team are actively involved in working with educational settings, community groups and partners with the aim of keeping our community safe through education and advice.

We have targeted engagement work where fire service staff visit people in their homes and provide advice on staying safe and well where we regularly visit the most vulnerable and are able to provide a comprehensive service which includes health information alongside safety education.

In addition to schools' education, we undertake Youth intervention work with young people to ensure they develop a safe understanding of hazards and risk and understand the impact of nuisance behaviour and hoax fire calls.

We also have an Arson Task Force who operate to tackle fire-setting and work with partners to reduce fire related crime.

Fire Protection activity

The fire protection team work with our community's business owners to support and advise them, ensuring they comply with fire safety legislation through a blended approach of face-to-face visits along with innovative technological solutions.

Using our highly skilled and specially trained staff, NFRS visit commercial premises through our risk-based inspection programme, and in response to fire safety concerns reported to the service, where we will monitor, provide advice and where required, enforce compliance with the relevant safety legislation, keeping our communities safe and helping businesses to thrive.

Emergency Response

The location of our fire stations, our fire engines and other resources, response staff, working patterns, and well-established service practices enable NFRS to deliver a flexible approach to fires and other emergencies. And the regular monitoring of our response to incidents ensures we maintain good levels of cover and meet the strategic direction set out in our CRMP.

Collaboration arrangements

NFRS contributes to national resilience arrangements and can make a number of its assets available to support a national emergency.

Whilst the Authority is primarily a locally based service, mutual aid arrangements are in place with other services where incidents occur near our borders and to provide resilience for large scale or complex incidents where additional resources need to be called on.

Training and Development

NFRS recognises the importance of highly skilled and knowledgeable operational staff, enabling them to respond to different types of emergencies at any time. Our centralised training teams ensure safety critical areas of operational training continues to be maintained, and a robust training delivery and recording process (the Competency Based Training Framework CBTF) has been established to manage and monitor all staff competence.

National Operational Guidance and Learning

National Operational Guidance provides industry good practice for fire and rescue services within the UK to develop local policies and procedures. NFRS have aligned our hazard, risk and training information with nationally agreed operational standards.

The Service ensures it maintains an overview of learning from local training and incidents along with national events and embeds National Operational Guidance and National Operational Learning (NOL) into all aspects of training and development.

Fire Standards

The Fire Standards Board have produced a set of professional standards for fire and rescue services in England. The standards establish what good practice looks like and are a benchmark

that HMICFRS Inspectors use to measure performance against. Embedding the Fire Standards remain a core part of the Services organisational strategy.

You can read more about the National Fire Standards.

Overall assurance arrangements

The assurance arrangements that the Authority have in place are considered to meet the requirements set out in the National Framework.

The Northamptonshire Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority has carried out its functions in accordance with the defined statutory and policy framework in which it is required to operate. The key documents setting this out are:

- The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004
- The Civil Contingencies Act 2004
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- The Fire and Rescue Services (Emergencies) (England) Order 2007
- The Localism Act 2011
- The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England
- The Health and Safety Act at Work etc Act 1974

A copy of the current Police, Fire and Crime plan, CRMP and related documents can be found on our website at: https://northantspfcc.org.uk/

Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

www.northantspfcc.org.uk