



**Tracey Lee**  
Chief Executive

Plymouth City Council  
Civic Centre  
Plymouth PL1 2AA

Please ask for Helen Wright, Democratic  
Support

T 01752 304022

E [helen.wright@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:helen.wright@plymouth.gov.uk)

[www.plymouth.gov.uk/democracy](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/democracy)

9 April 2013

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD TASK AND FINISH GROUP – DEVON AND SOMERSET FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE DRAFT PLAN 2013/14 TO 2014/15**

Wednesday 17 April 2013

4 pm

Council House, Plymouth (next to the Civic Centre)

### **Members:**

Councillor Mrs Nelder, Chair.

Councillors Nicholson and Tuffin.

Members are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business overleaf.

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# **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD TASK AND FINISH GROUP – DEVON AND SOMERSET FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE DRAFT PLAN 2013/14 TO 2014/15**

## **AGENDA**

### **PART I – PUBLIC MEETING**

#### **1. APOLOGIES**

To receive apologies for non-attendance submitted by Overview and Scrutiny Management Board Members.

#### **1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members will be asked to make any declarations of interest in respect of items on this agenda.

#### **3. CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**

To receive reports on business which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be brought forward for urgent consideration.

#### **4. DEVON AND SOMERSET FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE DRAFT PLAN 2013/14 TO 2014/15:**

##### **4.1. Review of Documentation**

**(Pages 1 - 64)**

Members will review the following documentation –

- Project Initiation Document
- Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service Draft Plan 2013/14 to 2014/15

##### **4.2. Witnesses**

Members will hear from a number of witnesses including the Assistant Chief Fire Officer, a representative from Plymouth Community Homes, the relevant Cabinet Member and a representative from Plymouth City Council's Civic Protection.

#### **5. SUMMARY AND REVIEW**

The task and finish group will take the opportunity to review and summarise its findings and identify potential recommendations.

## **6. EXEMPT BUSINESS**

To consider passing a resolution under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that it (they) involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph(s) ... of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

## **PART II (PRIVATE MEETING)**

### **AGENDA**

#### **MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO NOTE**

that under the law, the Board is entitled to consider certain items in private. Members of the public will be asked to leave the meeting when such items are discussed.

NIL.

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# REQUEST FOR SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME ITEM



**PLYMOUTH**  
CITY COUNCIL

	Title of Work Programme Item	Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service Draft Plan 2013/14 to 2014/15
2	Responsible Director(s)	Tracey Lee (Chief Executive)
3	Responsible Officer  Tel No.	Giles Perritt Head of Policy, Performance and Partnerships  01752 305546 <a href="mailto:giles.perritt@plymouth.gov.uk">giles.perritt@plymouth.gov.uk</a>
4	Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Councillor Peter Smith, Deputy Leader
5	Objectives	Safeguard the community by ensuring that the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service's budget reductions to the city are minimal.
6	Who will benefit?	The community by ensuring residents live in a safe city
7	Criteria for Choosing Topics (see table at end of document)	Value for Communities
8	What will happen if we don't do this review?	Plymouth will not have participated in a major consultation exercise the outcome of which would impact on vital services delivered by the city.
9	What are we going to do?	Engage in a Task and Finish Group
10	How are we going to do it? (witnesses, site visits, background information etc.)	Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service Draft Plan 2013/14 to 2014/15 Witness sessions (representatives from the Dockyard, DSFRS trade union, Plymouth Community Homes and Plymouth Community Healthcare) Representations from city's MPs
11	What we won't do	The Group will not consider any issues outside the scope of the DSFRS draft plan 2013/14 to 2014/15

<b>12</b>	<b>Timetable &amp; Key Dates</b>	Task and Finish Group meeting(s) March/April 2013 Cabinet Member approval mid April 2013 Submission of recommendations to DSFRS by 22 April 2013
<b>13</b>	<b>Links to other projects or initiatives / plans</b>	Corporate Plan 2012-2015
<b>14</b>	<b>Relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel / Membership if Task and Finish Group (to be decided by OSP before submission to OMB)</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Management Board
<b>15</b>	<b>Where will the report go? Who will make the final decision</b>	The recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board will be submitted to the Deputy Leader for approval, subject to which this will be forwarded to the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority.
<b>16</b>	<b>Resources (staffing, research, experts, sites visits and so on)</b>	Staffing from across several departments (Emergency Planning and Safer Communities) Witnesses
<b>17</b>	<b>Is this part of a statutory responsibility on the panel?</b>	Although this is not a statutory role of the Board, it forms part of the Board's terms of reference to scrutinise partners' budgets as part of the Annual Budget Scrutiny process
<b>18</b>	<b>Should any other panel be involved in this review? If so who and why?</b>	No – the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board comprises of Members who represent the five scrutiny panels
<b>19</b>	<b>Will the task and finish group benefit from co-opting any person(s) onto the panel.</b>	None identified at this time
<b>20</b>	<b>How does this link to corporate priorities?</b>	Supports Value for Communities

#### Criteria for review

(Items would be expected to meet at least two of the following criteria)

- Corporate priority area
- Poor performing service (evidence from PIs, benchmarking or where high levels of dissatisfaction from customers are recorded)
- High budgetary commitment
- Pattern of not reaching budget targets
- Issue raised by external audit, management letter, inspection report
- New government guidance or legislation
- Issue consistently identified by Members as key through constituency activity
- Public interest issue covered in local media



DEVON &  
SOMERSET  
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

## Our draft plan for 2013/14 to 2014/15

“Integrated risk management in action – saving money, improving safety”

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## Executive Summary

We are currently facing the biggest change to public sector funding for some time and we have worked on a set of proposals to ensure we minimise the impact on public safety and the effectiveness of our emergency response.

Our proposals for 2013/14 and 2014/15 are shown in the following pages, along with the supporting rationale.

Our Government grant has been reduced by 10.3% in 2013 and a further 7.3% in 2014. This means that we will have approximately £5.5m less grant by 2014. As such, we are unable to operate in the way in which we currently do. In addition, we are expecting further government grant reductions for the period 2015-2017 which will require us to make considerable further savings. The current forecast is that total savings in the region of £11m will be required by 2017.

We have worked hard over the last few years in preparation for the expected reductions. This is so we could seek to avoid making compulsory redundancies where we can. As part of this strategy, we have held open vacancies and have only filled necessary posts with staff on fixed term contracts, some of which we will now not renew. To put this into perspective, we have approximately 25 wholetime operational members of staff leaving each year and if we didn't replace any of them, we would save less than £1m each year. The savings we need to make are much greater than this so we need to make significant changes to how we provide our services so that we can operate with fewer people, as this is where most of our money is spent, without reducing the quality of the service we provide.

Through careful budget management we have already managed to reduce how much we spend and have been able to put a considerable amount of money into our reserves. This will allow us to reduce the likelihood of having to make compulsory redundancies in the short term.

We are also developing plans to increase our income generation, which will be used to reinvest in our service in the future.

We have spent time considering our options, listening to staff and starting to work differently. At this stage we are not proposing to close fire stations or remove fire engines.

Some of the changes to staffing levels outlined in our proposals will mean that we will initially have more staff than we need to operate in the new model. We want to avoid making these staff redundant; instead, we would like to use those staff not directly needed to crew fire engines to undertake more preventative community safety work, or provide guaranteed cover for some of our 'on call' (Retained Duty System) fire stations and in doing so will improve community safety. Our experience has shown that increases in prevention activity is the best way to save lives

Therefore, for this plan, we aim that none of our currently serving members of staff with a permanent contract will be forced to leave.

Rather than making cuts in service standards, we are applying our intelligence and knowledge of community risk to put together a range of proposals that we believe will deliver improved safety as well as savings. There will be some significant change for some of our staff and during the consultation period we will be seeking their

views as to how best to ensure the new model meets the community and staff needs.

We have an excellent track record of successful change in how we deliver our service and our understanding of risk. We have won numerous awards for our intelligence led approach and have demonstrated where we can make savings, but not compromise on community safety. We want you to be reassured that these proposals have taken time to develop and this has involved detailed work by a team of expert, professional fire officers using extensive evidence based modelling techniques.

#### **Alternative options to this approach:**

- We could close fire stations and make staff redundant. This would save money but we believe this would negatively impact on public safety and our staff.
- We could consider just meeting this shortfall by putting up council tax, but it would take a 24% increase to plug the financial gap. This would solve the financial problem but it would require a referendum to be held, which would be cost prohibitive and would almost certainly not receive political, professional or public support.

Whatever proposals are chosen, we will need to significantly reduce staffing numbers. We feel that the proposals laid out in this plan balance the need to make savings whilst improving our service to the public. We will ensure our staff are able to be deployed from any of our 85 stations, to the areas where they are most needed. Initially staff will have the choice to stay on the existing shift system

and we will ask staff to be involved in developing any new working practices.

#### **Specific Proposals**

Our proposals are designed to meet the savings required and improve or maintain our performance. In the event that further significant savings are needed we will bring forward additional proposals but we are confident that the proposals outlined in this plan will meet the budget shortfall created by the Government grant reduction announced in December.

Views from staff, the public and other interested parties will be considered during the consultation process, collated and presented for decision by the Fire Authority later in 2013.

#### Proposed internal changes:

- We will reduce our support staff by at least 5% by investing in technology which will mean we can operate with fewer people.
- We will make savings through greater efficiencies in our back office support functions, e.g. through better procurement.
- We will ensure that our support functions effectively support our new model for front line service delivery.
- We will continue to challenge and carefully manage recruitment for the foreseeable future.
- We are creating a flexible staffing approach to provide improved efficiency, fire cover and prevention activities.

Anticipated savings from the proposed internal changes =  
£1.5million (A)

Proposed external changes (public facing).

REF	DESCRIPTION
<b>Proposal 1</b>	We will begin to start rolling out our Light Rescue Pump vehicles which we consulted on, and was agreed, last year.
<b>Proposal 2</b>	We will begin to implement the changes in how we will respond to automatic fire alarms (98% of which are false alarms) so that we only respond to high risk premise automatically.
<b>Proposal 3</b>	Mobilise one co-responder directly from home/work. Note: This is the arrangement that some other Fire Services operate.
<b>Proposal 4</b>	Reduce the number of middle/senior managers.
<b>Proposal 5</b>	Invest £450k in additional prevention activity in 2013
<b>Proposal 6</b>	Change the crewing of three fire engines in Plymouth to 'on call' rather than whole time: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plympton and Plymstock fire engines become on call crewed</li> <li>• Camelshead retains one fire engine crewed by whole-time firefighters</li> <li>• Crownhill receives the fire engine moved from Camels Head and would have two fire engines, one crewed by whole-time and one crewed by on call firefighters</li> </ul>
<b>Proposal 7</b>	Crew the Aerial Ladder Platform (ALP) at Crownhill fire station in Plymouth with 'on call' staff. Note: no other ALP is permanently crewed so this harmonises Plymouth with the other 6 aerials ladder platforms.
<b>Proposal 8</b>	End the pilot at Yeovil fire station where an additional 4 fire fighters are provided (this standardises crewing so that Yeovil is crewed the same as other similar fire stations).
<b>Proposal 9</b>	Change the crewing arrangements of the second fire appliance at Taunton from whole time to 'on call'.
<b>Proposal 10</b>	Change the crewing arrangements of the second fire appliance at Torquay from whole time to 'on call'
<b>Proposal 11</b>	Change the crewing arrangement of the fire engine at Ilfracombe from day crewed (whole time day time only) to 'on call'.

Anticipated savings from the proposed external changes = £5.3million (B).

**Total savings from both the proposed internal and external changes (A + B) = £6.8million.**

*(This figure relates to full year savings which will not be deliverable in the next 2 years. The amount delivered will be dependent on the natural turnover of staff during this period however the Service has built up sufficient reserves to balance the budget should turnover of staff not be at expected levels. It should also be emphasised that there is much more to do to deliver savings of £11m by 2017.)*

## Introduction and Overview

In this plan we present some 'options for change' which we feel will help address the reduction in Government Grant without compromising public safety.

The Government announced in December 2012 that the Government Grant for Devon & Somerset Fire and Rescue Service will be reduced by 10.3% in 2013 and a further 7.3% in 2014. We are acutely aware that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has also extended the period of austerity until 2018 so the financial outlook for us as a service is challenging. Whilst we do not know what savings will be applied in 2015-2018, we know that we will have to operate with a reduced budget.

In response, we have three main options to resolve the gap in funding announced: (1) We meet the shortfall by putting up council tax (this could equate to as much as a 24% increase) which we are not recommending.(2) We close fire stations and make staff redundant or (3) We look to do what many other organisations are doing and reform what we do and in the process aim to minimise the negative impact on the public and our staff whilst meeting the savings target at the same time.

This plan focuses on option (3) and presents some options for change along with the associated impact and the savings generated if implemented.

We present examples as to where we can improve public safety and reduce costs. One example presented is the

introduction into our fleet of a large number of smaller fire engines (Light Rescue Pumps) which will mean we get incidents more quickly (typically 10-15%), whilst at the same time providing savings over the cost of a traditional fire engine.

Not all of our options for change will be popular but we are faced with a financial challenge that requires us to operate with far less money than we have at present. We outline in this document some of our thinking as to how we may achieve this reduction in budget whilst protecting the public and continuing to make progress on our journey towards excellence as an organisation.

We do not plan on making compulsory redundancies as a result of these proposals and will try to achieve the reductions in staff numbers through natural turnover. We have worked hard over the last few years to hold certain vacancies open and if our options are agreed later this year, following the consultation period, we will simply not fill these vacancies. So unlike many other private and public organisations, we hope that we will not have to force any existing member of staff on a permanent contract to leave.

We will however have to change the way we do business and we will engage staff and trade unions in the process.

It is important to stress that the decrease in fire deaths in Devon & Somerset in the last 10 years has been achieved as a direct result of more targeted prevention activity, not faster fire engines or more firefighters. We will

always need highly trained, competent, professional and committed firefighters to respond to fires and other emergencies when prevention activities fail, but the number of fires has reduced significantly whilst the number of firefighters and fire stations has remained essentially the same. We are simply unable to continue the same level of resourcing with a shrinking budget.

Our main proposed savings come from changing the crewing arrangements on some fire engines. It will mean that a greater number of our fire engines are crewed as and when required by 'on call/retained duty system' staff.

If we proceed with the changes as proposed and agree a model which requires fewer staff to be permanently on our fire stations, we will have a number of firefighters available for redeployment until such times as the natural turnover of staff brings our actual staffing level down to our new staffing level.

As a result, we plan for these staff to undertake additional prevention activities and/or to provide operational cover on some rural fire stations where we historically have difficulties in recruiting sufficient staff or providing sufficient cover.

This will improve performance in a number of areas by ensuring a fire engine is available (this is not always the case on some of our part time fire stations at present) and improve the extent of our prevention work.

In addition, we will be able to use firefighters and junior officers to provide even greater support towards our emphasis on targeting those most vulnerable in society - those most at risk of dying in a fire have high risk factors such as drug/alcohol dependencies and mobility/ill health problems. Many of these people are known to other agencies. By working more closely with police, social services and health agencies, we will be able to focus time, effort and money into protecting those most at risk.

The options outlined show how we plan to reform the Service, 'reducing costs and maintaining safety' and we are interested in your views. We will be consulting across Devon & Somerset to better outline our thinking, to listen to your concerns and alternative suggestions and to inform a subsequent decision by the Fire Authority later this year.

Let us know what you think by commenting on our proposals. To find out more about the changes that may affect you, turn to the **our plans** section on page 25. For more information about what we do and who we are please visit our web site [here](#)

Chairman Fire Authority



Chief Fire Officer



## Our strategy

“Towards 2014” is our strategy document. It sets the direction against which we plan and deliver our services. The strategy is our most important document and is constructed around the three strategic principles shown below. To access the strategy [click here](#).



## Our behaviour and values

High standards of behaviour are required and staff are expected to demonstrate the nationally developed Core Values for the Fire and Rescue Service. These values will impact on how we deliver the service in all roles through the organisation. Our core values are:

### We value Service to the community by:

- Working with all groups to reduce risk
- Treating everyone fairly and with respect
- Being answerable to those we serve
- Striving for excellence in all we do

### We value all our People by practising and promoting:

- Fairness and respect
- Recognition of merit
- Honesty, integrity and mutual trust
- Personal development
- Co-operative and inclusive working

### We value Diversity in the service and the community by:

- Treating everyone fairly and with respect
- Providing varying solutions for different needs and expectations
- Promoting equal opportunities in employment and progression within the service
- Challenging prejudice and discrimination

### We value Improvement at all levels of the service by:

- Accepting responsibility for our performance
- Being open-minded
- Considering criticism thoughtfully
- Learning from our experience
- Consulting others

To see our detailed Equality commitment and objectives, see ‘Considering Needs’ [click here](#).

## Context

### A risk that's changed

Our current resource distribution and crewing arrangements are based upon national standards of fire cover devised following the Second World War.

This means that the service has the same number of fire engines and fire stations largely in the same places as they have been for over 60 years.

Since that time, successive governments have introduced legislation and regulations that have had a positive impact on community safety by greatly reducing the number of fire deaths e.g. the introduction of: fire safety law; foam furniture regulations; building regulations that provide a safe period of time for escape; and more recently, the need for smoke alarms.

In the last ten years alone there has been a 48% reduction in the number of fires nationally, and fire deaths have been reduced to a new national low of 304 in 2011/12. This improved level of community safety is to be celebrated as a success story.

It also highlights that it is time to reconsider the way in which we match our resources to local risk.

Consider the following facts.

- In 2011/12, 71% of our stations had two or less incidents per week.
- Four of our on call stations had higher levels of

activity than two of our whole time stations in Plymouth.

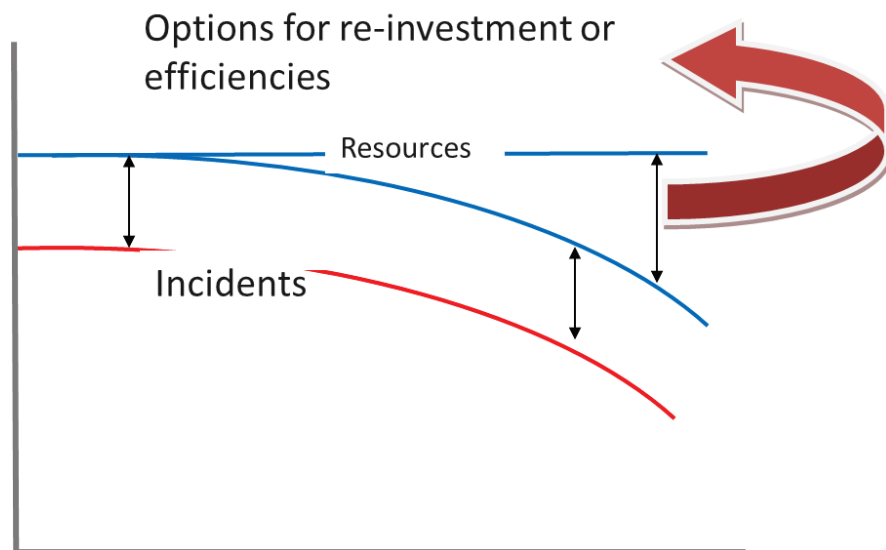
In 2011/12:

- One of our whole time stations attended 120 incidents on its station ground. This equates to a cost of £8,947 per incident. However, if this station were an on call station it would have cost only £1,140 per incident;
- our new staff availability management system identified in a 12 month period that several fire stations did not have sufficient crew to respond during the day on a regular basis

Note: The total amount of time when on call stations were not available for emergency response was 51,525 hours, which equates to 6 fire engines permanently unavailable

Chart 1 illustrates the success of incidents reducing over time in comparison to the relatively static provision of fire and rescue resources. This shows that we have the opportunity to realign our resources to the level of risk and use the overprovision to reinvest into community safety as well as supporting the need to reduce our budget. Incidents have also reduced over time.

Chart 1: Illustration that resources have remained the same whilst incidents have reduced



## Legislation

The success of improved fire safety in buildings and preventing incidents from happening in the first place is largely attributable to the introduction of new legislation over many decades. Over time legislation and regulations are renewed and today we are guided by the following key legislation as we work towards our strategy 'Towards 2014':

- Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 [\(click here\)](#)

- Fire and Rescue National Framework for England [\(click here\)](#)
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 [\(click here\)](#)
- Civil Contingencies Act 2004 [\(click here\)](#)
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998 [\(click here\)](#)

We have a requirement to produce an integrated risk management plan. The principles of integrated risk management planning are summarised as 'matching our resources to risk' and are embedded throughout our planning approach. It is demonstrated within this strategic level plan and also our Local Community Plans.

## An overview of our community

We provide a community safety services across Devon and Somerset. This means that the services we provide need to manage remote rural risk through to densely populated urban areas, protecting over 1.7 million people.

The natural beauty of the coast and countryside attracts many visitors and increases the population by about 25% during the holiday season. Within the counties there are airports and a large military presence including a major naval base in Plymouth. In Somerset there is the Hinkley Point nuclear power station which is also the proposed location for an additional reactor.

The resident population continues to grow as the area remains a popular retirement location. At the 2001 census



the ethnic minority population across the counties was relatively low at approximately 1.7%, rising to 6.4% in Plymouth.

However, a more recent source of data through Equality South West finds that across the 2 counties 3.3% of residents are from an ethnic minority. Regardless of which survey you use, the ethnic minority population of our counties is made up of diverse communities and cultures; the services we provide need to reflect this diversity. It is vital, therefore, that we continually develop our knowledge of, and seek to improve our engagement with, the different communities and cultures within Devon and Somerset.

Employment within the Devon area focuses on service and manufacturing with nearly 30% of the working population employed within the public sector. In Somerset, tourism and distribution are the key employers. Outside of the principal cities and towns, the remainder of the population lives in widely spread, relatively small towns and villages and extremely rural locations.

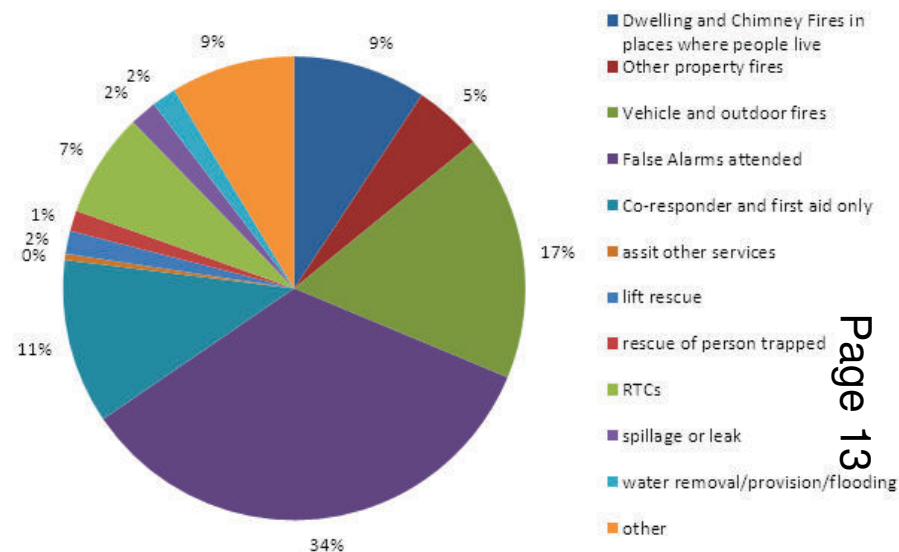
Infrastructure here is poorer though with winding narrow lanes making travel times longer. This situation presents real challenges for any service provider for which response times are important.

### The types of emergencies we attend

The context in which we operate is community risk and the demand this places on our prevention, protection and

response services. Chart 2 below represents, proportionately, the demand for our services over the last five years.

Chart 2: Emergency services provided over the last five years



The chart shows that fires in the home equates to about 9%, of our overall activity. People are safer now than they have ever been as a result of early warning (smoke detector ownership is high), changes in legislation (foam filled furniture regulations), societal trends (fewer people now smoke) and national and local fire safety campaigns are having an impact.

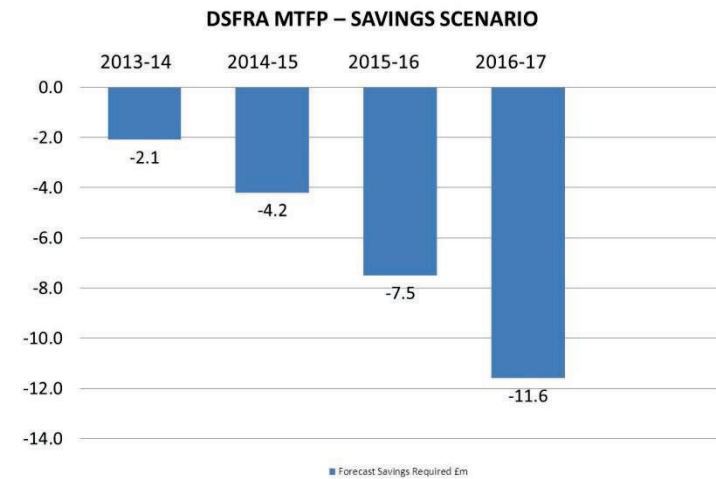
## Public sector funding

The Service draws funding from three main sources - Government grant, local share of business rates (a new systems from April 2013) and local Council Tax precept. Two years ago it was announced that the grant element for FRSs was to be reduced by 25% over four years. This has been applied to date by means of a formula, rather than being equally shared, with 19% of the reduction to be applied over the next two years equating to a reduction in grant funding of £5.5m by 2014.

There has been no direct statement about future FRSs funding given the extended austerity programme but it is reasonable to assume that grant reductions will continue.

Chart 3 shows the estimated budget savings required. The figures for 2013-14 and 2014-15 are based on actual grant reductions announced in December 2012 and assumptions relating to council tax increases in both years. The figures for 2015-16 and 2016-17 are based upon forecast grant reductions in both years.

Chart 3: Budget savings required for the next two years and forecasts for 2015/16 and 2016/17



## **Strategic Principle 1: Work with people, communities, businesses and partners to make Devon and Somerset a safer place to live, work and visit**

### **Local plans for your safety**

Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service develops a bespoke Local Community Plan for each community area around its fire stations. Each plan is unique to that area and contains the actions we will take to reduce risk and improve community safety. The plans are informed by a community risk profile which brings together historic incident data, demographic, commercial and infrastructure risk factors.

The involvement of the community to help shape the plans for local areas is important to us. We would like your thoughts on the activities planned for your area and invite you to tell us whether we should be doing things differently for your community. To see your Local Community Plan [click here](#).

### **Prevention services**

Our prevention services provide community safety advice and support to help prevent incidents from occurring. To

effectively and efficiently promote community safety, the Authority works to engage with communities, understand their values and the services they need. We work in partnership with agencies and organisations that represent vulnerable groups in the community most at risk from an emergency. The range of community safety prevention activities includes:

- schools fire safety education
- home safety visits
- arson reduction programmes
- youth inclusion programmes
- investigation of fires to identify cause and impact, including hate crime
- reduction of unwanted fire signals
- road traffic incident reduction.

### **Fire Protection**

Our protection services are focused on ensuring buildings in which people work, visit and enjoy leisure time are provided with facilities that will ensure a safe means of escape in the event of a fire starting. We will work with businesses to help them have safe and sustainable premises and, as a last resort, continue to enforce the law so that members of the public and local employees are protected from the risk of death and injury caused by fire. Fire protection activities will be targeted at those

premises we believe, through an evidence based approach, present the greatest risk to the community. The range of community safety protection activities include:

- Fire safety checks
- Fire safety audits
- Building regulation consultations
- Providing tailored advice
- Education events
- Prohibiting or restricting the use of buildings if there is a serious risk of death or serious injury
- Prosecuting, in exceptional circumstances, when the situation risks life and there is no other option left.

More information about our services can be found [click here](#).

### **A successful change - targeted services**

We have a track record of successful change in how we deliver our prevention and protection services. In 2011, following consultation, we adopted a more targeted approach to delivering our prevention and protection services. We understand that we need to use our scarce resources as efficiently and effectively as possible and a key part of this is to focus our efforts on those who are most at risk. Our analysis tells us that the following groups and buildings are most at risk and will benefit most from our services:

#### Groups at risk of fire

The groups that our analysis has identified as being most at risk of dying in a fire are:

- Young well educated city dwellers, e.g. students and single people living in multi-let houses and single people poorly supported by family and neighbours.
- Elderly people reliant on state support, e.g. older people requiring a level of social support such as welfare payments, care or accommodation.
- Young people renting flats in high density social housing, e.g. tenants with or without children, multicultural tenants and young single people in multi-ethnic communities.
- Families living in low rise social housing with high levels of benefit need, e.g. vulnerable young parents needing substantial state support.

### Buildings at risk of fire

The buildings we have identified as having the greatest life risk in the event of a fire are:

- Houses in multiple occupancy e.g. any building in which two or more families / individuals share basic amenities (bathroom, kitchen etc.).
- Non-domestic buildings where people sleep e.g. hotels, hospitals and care homes.
- Mixed use buildings e.g. a restaurant with a flat above licensed premises e.g. pubs and clubs.

As a result of targeting, our firefighters now conduct Fire Safety Checks on at risk buildings and our specialist fire safety officers are involved only on those requiring action.

### Groups at risk of a road traffic accident

The groups that our analysis has identified as being most at risk of being killed or seriously injured in a road traffic collision are:

- Low income workers living in urban terraces. This group includes young people, single people and low income families in low quality accommodation.
- Residents with sufficient incomes living in right to buy social housing. This group includes middle aged couples and families, low income older couples, older families and often indebted families.
- Families living in low rise social housing with levels of benefit need. This group includes older tenants, families with varied structures and vulnerable young parents requiring substantial state support.

## Partnerships

Partnerships are important in helping us achieve our desired outcomes in making Devon and Somerset a safer place to live, work and visit. Examples of our key partnerships are presented in the Table 1.

<b>Table 1: Examples of our formal key partnerships that are helping us to improve community safety</b>	<b>Local</b>	<b>Regional</b>
Strategic partnerships in Devon, Somerset, Torbay, Plymouth	✓	
Home safety partnerships	✓	
Crime & disorder reduction partnerships	✓	
Wider Devon road casualty reduction partnership	✓	
Somerset road safety partnership	✓	

Our measures, targets and performance for Strategic Principle 1 are shown in Table 2

Table 2: Strategic Principle 1: measures and targets																	
Measure and target	Performance																
<p>Measure: deaths which occur as a result of fire in the places where people live</p> <p>Target to achieve a downward trend in fire deaths in places where people live</p>	<table border="1"> <caption>Fire deaths in places where people live</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Deaths</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>2007/08</td><td>11</td></tr> <tr><td>2008/09</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>2009/10</td><td>8</td></tr> <tr><td>2010/11</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>2011/12</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>2012/13</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>2013/14</td><td>5</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Deaths	2007/08	11	2008/09	3	2009/10	8	2010/11	5	2011/12	7	2012/13	6	2013/14	5
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Table 2: Strategic Principle 1: measures and targets																	
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## Strategic Principle 2: Respond to local, regional and national emergencies with the appropriate skills and resources

### How we are organised

The Service is split into three Area Commands; Western, Central and Somerset. Risk maps have been produced that cover each station area within Devon and Somerset.

These maps represent the socio-demographic and historical incident data for the current distribution of resources. Analysis of these risk maps shows early indications of imbalances in the provision of operational resources. This analysis suggests that our resources may not be matched most appropriately to the local community risk. In basic terms this suggests we will deliver a better service if we change arrangements for crewing resources in some areas.

We believe there will be opportunities to improve community safety by using our resources more effectively to achieve an increase in the proportion of Devon and Somerset covered by the 10 minute response criteria. We hope to achieve this increase through the improved distribution of emergency response resources.

The maps of our 10 minute response area can be found within each Local Community Plan, [click here](#).

The concept of matching resources to risk is the foundation of our proposals for consultation. For more information on our plans, go to page 25.

### Emergency response services

In the event that an emergency incident does occur, we will mobilise our personnel, vehicles and equipment to provide assistance where it is needed. We will attend a wide range of incidents including those listed below:

- fire fighting and rescue
- response to road traffic collisions
- response to terrorist incidents
- other non-fire rescues e.g. people trapped in machinery, lift rescues, animal rescues
- Urban Search and Rescue
- response to major flooding incidents
- response to serious non-road transport incidents e.g. train or air accidents
- line rescue (rescues from height and confined spaces)
- Co-responder medical response (an initial medical provision to stabilise casualties in life threatening emergencies prior to the arrival of the ambulance service).

### A successful change – crewing of aerial appliances

We already have a successful track record of analysing the way we provide our response service and making appropriate changes. In 2008 the service introduced a new way of crewing its aerial appliances called ‘dual crewing’ where there was no longer a permanent, dedicated crew. The use of aerial appliances since the introduction of this new approach demonstrates that their use remains of a non-life critical nature and has not had a detrimental impact on community safety. See Table 3. In the five years since combination the aerial appliance has not been used to rescue a single person from fire.

Table 3: Incident type attended by aerial appliance	2009 /10	2010 /11	2011 /12
Person rescued – Fire	Nil	Nil	Nil
Person rescued – non Fire	13	10	15
Fire-fighting operations (fire-fighting i.e. water tower)	70	60	54
Working Platform – Non Fire (unsafe guttering / sign / guttering / glass / chimney etc.)	23	16	24
Animal Rescue	7	11	13
Assisting other agencies	8	7	3
Other	2	2	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>110</b>

### Partnerships

Partnerships are important in helping us achieve our desired outcomes in responding to local, regional and national emergencies. We work in partnership with our neighbouring fire and rescue services to provide emergency response in their geographic areas. These arrangements exist with Avon, Cornwall, Dorset, and Wiltshire fire and rescue services where the locations of our resources mean we can respond quicker into our neighbours’ area than their nearest resources.

We have also recently entered a new partnership with Dorset, Hampshire and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Services to share a common fire control IT system. Each service will retain its own fire control building and staff but the IT system used will be common thereby adding resilience and reducing operating costs.

Examples of our key partnerships are presented in the Table 4.



Table 4: Examples of our formal key partnerships that are helping us to improve community safety	Local	Regional
Co-responder with South West Ambulance Trust	✓	
Moorland partnerships (Dartmoor & Exmoor)	✓	
Local & regional resilience forums	✓	✓
Environment Agency	✓	
Fire Control	✓	

The community risk registers produced by the resilience forums inform our response planning arrangements. This approach ensures we are joined up with other authorities and agencies in the event of larger scale emergencies where co-ordinated efforts are required.

Our measures, targets and performance for Strategic Principle 2 are shown in Table 5.

**Table 5: Strategic Principle 2: measures and targets**

Measure and target	Performance												
<p>Measure: occasions where our response standards are met (first attendance in 10 minutes for dwelling fires)</p> <p>Target to achieve an upward trend in performance for first attendance in 10 minutes at dwelling fires</p>	<table border="1"> <caption>Performance for first attendance in 10 minutes at dwelling fires</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Performance (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2009/10</td> <td>75.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2010/11</td> <td>72.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011/12</td> <td>70.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012/13</td> <td>68.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013/14</td> <td>70.00</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Performance (%)	2009/10	75.00	2010/11	72.00	2011/12	70.00	2012/13	68.00	2013/14	70.00
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2013/14	70.00												
<p>Measure: occasions where our response standards are met (first attendance in 15 minutes for RTCs)</p> <p>Target to achieve an upward trend in performance for first attendance in 15 minutes at RTCs</p>	<table border="1"> <caption>Performance for first attendance in 15 minutes at RTCs</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Performance (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2009/10</td> <td>78.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2010/11</td> <td>75.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011/12</td> <td>75.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012/13</td> <td>75.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013/14</td> <td>75.00</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Performance (%)	2009/10	78.00	2010/11	75.00	2011/12	75.00	2012/13	75.00	2013/14	75.00
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<p>Measure: a publicly available and current Local Community Plan for each station</p> <p>Target: 100% of all LCPs to be publicly available by 1<sup>st</sup> April of each year</p>	<p>The target of 100% of all LCPs to be publicly available by 1<sup>st</sup> April of each was met on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012.</p>												

## Strategic Principle 3: Work hard to be an excellent organisation

The Fire and Rescue Service works in a dangerous environment sometimes and we need to continue to ensure that we are doing all that we can to protect our staff whilst meeting public expectations.

To progress this commitment the Chief Fire Officer has launched a 'zero harm' campaign, which has the following components at its heart:

- Listening to staff and trade unions as to how we can further improve Non Operational & Operational safety.
- Ensuring our training is not just good enough but 'excellent' as our Staff deserve no less.
- Ensuring our systems for sharing information between fire safety and operational staff are seamless.
- Supporting our incident commanders making difficult decisions at operational incidents.

To ensure this work is taken forward effectively, we have put systems in place to highlight how we are progressing on our journey.

By way of external validation of our approach, RoSPA have recently presented the Service with its highest award which acknowledges the high standard of Health &

Safety Management Systems we have developed using the RoSPA Quality Audit System over the last 4 years in particular.

It also represents a very high level of dedication and hard work from personnel from all corners of the Service to improve health, safety and welfare systems and to subsequently further reduce the number of personnel injuries we sustain, which have already seen a 37% fall over the last 3 years. We remain focused on reducing injuries further though.

We are also progressing a number of other initiatives to further improve fire-fighter safety including: developing standard operating procedures, matching resources to risk and providing smaller fire appliances which are fit for purpose as well as continuing to drive down emergency calls.

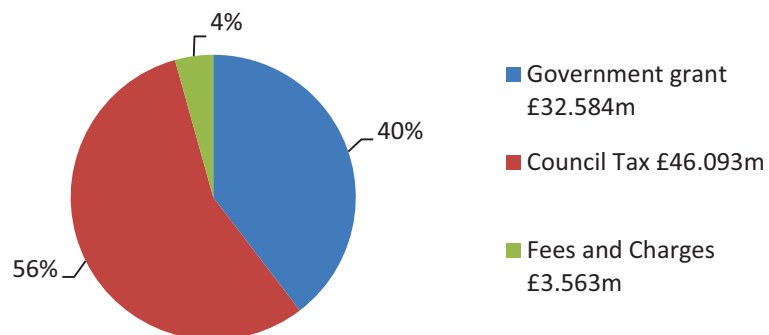
A challenge to improving fire-fighter safety is that the success achieved in the declining number of incidents perversely results in a reduction of operational experience. Whilst the Service is recognised as providing excellent training, this does not always fully replicate operational experience.

### Finance

Currently, there are three sources to our funding: government grant, council tax and other income from fees and charges. The proportion that each of the three

elements contributes to the budget is shown in Chart 4 below. For 2013-14 the government is making a significant change to the way that local authorities are to be funded which includes a Business Rates Retention Scheme. This will mean that some of our funding, which currently comes from government, will in future be paid from local business rates.

Chart 4: Proportion of our funding from the key sources in 2012/13

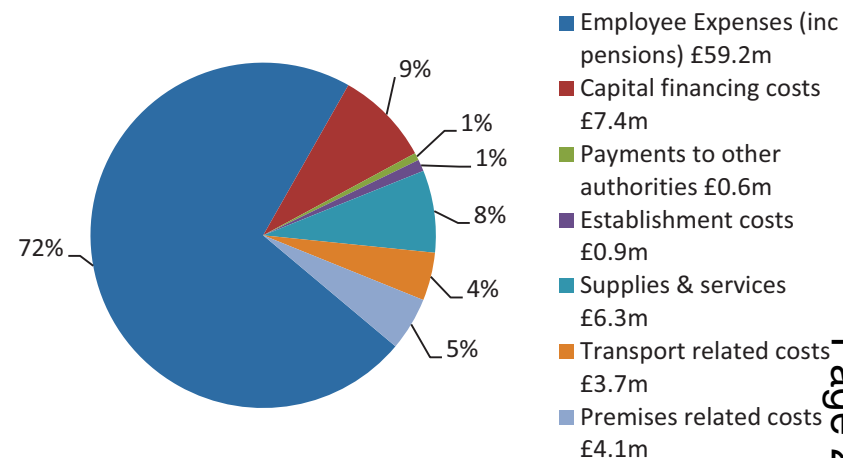


The revenue budget for 2012/13 was set at £78.677m. The level of council tax for a Band 'D' property for 2012/2013 was set by the Authority at £73.92, representing a 3% increase over the 2011/12 charge.

The proportion of the total council tax bill that funds Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service is on average, approximately 4% of the total bill received by households.

Our money is spent on different associated costs in the organisation. The planned costs for 2012/13 are shown in Chart 5.

Chart 5: Costs in 2012/13.



### **A successful change – cost reduction in the ‘back office’ or support functions**

The Service has been, and will continue to be, committed to reducing its costs in the support functions before it considers significant changes that affect frontline service delivery. Since the combination of the Devon and Somerset fire and rescue services the following have provided savings that have been removed from the base budget.

Reduction in three senior management posts (One Deputy Chief Officer post and two Corporate Directors) = £250k.

Reduction in the number of Area Managers from 12 to 6 saving over £400k.

Changes to the way we manage our budgets = £300k.

Reduction in costs of vehicles = £400k.

Combination of two Fire Control rooms into one = £500k.

Work continues to reduce the cost of supporting the service and further budget savings are predicted through at least a 5% reduction in staff numbers of our traditional ‘back office’ functions in the next few years.

### **Generating income**

We recognise that all public services need to operate differently in the face of significant reductions in budget. One of the ways in which we are meeting this challenge is to generate income.

We have a great many strengths as an emergency service and provider of risk critical services and training. As such, we have made considerable progress in our commercial activities and our newly formed company is becoming better known and is already effective in pursuing and successfully obtaining contracts with external public and private organisations.

However, we recognise that money generated from one year to the next will be subject to a number of factors, some of which are outside our direct control. As such, it is our intention to use money made to support our funding of specific projects, such as rebuilding fire stations rather than being used to make up a shortfall in our revenue budgets. This will greatly help in keeping our debt to prudent levels.

We are able to establish a commercial business through existing powers and we have experience over many years of providing some training to other fire and rescue services. We are expanding the range of goods and services offered and in doing so, reducing the financial pressure on the Service and gaining valuable private sector experience at the same time. This is also helping us review how we operate and can become more efficient moving as we head into the future.

It is key that these opportunities are undertaken whilst not compromising the core activities, function and reputation of the Service.

### **Environmental impact**

We have a Carbon Management Plan that has been prepared in conjunction with the Carbon Trust. The Earth's climate is changing and we recognise we have a part to play in tackling it. We will seek to reduce our impact on climate change by implementing a programme of progressive reductions in our greenhouse gas emissions across all of our activities. To achieve this we have embarked on a programme of projects across the Service for completion by 2014 to meet our aspirational target of a 30% reduction in our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions

### **Performance Management**

To be able to meet our commitments we need to manage our performance. Performance management is a core process of any organisation; it exists at different levels, from organisational performance to the performance of individuals. During 2010 we introduced a new personal performance development system to ensure that all staff have a clear performance development plan and structure. The performance management process for the Service is constructed around the basic principle of Plan, Do, Review.

A key part of developing our approach to organisational performance management is to be a data and intelligence led service. This means we will continue our current approach of evidence based decision making but will re-organise ourselves so we have a co-ordinated support structure in place. At present we have people working to provide data and intelligence in different parts of the service and the key teams will be brought together to provide better business resilience, data quality and service to the organisation.

In 2010 we undertook a baseline assessment on our organisational performance using the EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) Excellence Model. This model assesses the whole organisation and not just service delivery or business support activities. The key results of the assessment indicated we needed to:

- focus effort on a long term strategy.
- understand our business processes and work within a process framework.
- improve the way we manage change and improvement.
- improve and be more consistent in how we review work.

We are addressing these issues, and our reassessment, conducted in 2011, shows we have made significant progress already. We will continue to use the EFQM Excellence Model for our internal organisational

assessment, to determine our progress towards excellence and for identifying improvements.

Our performance is reported through the Audit and Performance Review Committee. To view the reports submitted [click here](#).

### Partnerships

Partnerships are important in helping us achieve our desired outcome to be an excellent organisation. Examples of our key partnerships are presented in the Table 7.

<b>Table 7: Examples of our formal key partnerships that are helping us to</b>	<b>Local</b>	<b>Regional</b>
E-government / procurement partnerships	✓	
Commercial partnerships with private and public sector companies	✓	✓

Our measures, targets and performance for Strategic Principle 2 are shown in Table 6

<b>Table 6: Strategic Principle 3: measures and targets</b>	
<b>Measure and target</b>	<b>Performance</b>
Measure: EFQM assessment score  Target: to progress towards the EFQM 'excellence' benchmark score by 31 March 2014	In 2010 a baseline assessment was undertaken and provided a good result. In August 2011 we reassessed ourselves and the results show a positive direction of travel. In 2013 we will be formally assessing ourselves for a
Measure: staff survey results  Target to continue improvement in staff survey results	The next staff survey is due to be carried out in 2012. The survey approach will be reviewed and the development of the new survey will be guided by feedback from previous surveys. Part of the review will be to identify and recommend those questions that will be used to

## **Our risk based improvement plans for 2013/14 to 2014/15**

Like all public sector organisations, the Service has to operate with a reduced level of funding. Our proposal is that we implement an 'Integrated Approach'. This will provide a long term template against which we will re-shape our frontline services. The 'Integrated Approach' is explained in more detail in Part 1.

Part 2 presents some specific changes we propose to implement over the next two years.

To support our key proposals we have produced Draft Equality Risks and Benefits Analyses. These draft documents are available for comment together with this plan. To find out how to comment on the plan please go to the Having Your Say section on page 59.

There are no fire station closures or removal of fire engines in our current proposals.

## **PART 1: An integrated approach**

The concept of the Integrated Approach is underpinned by three key elements.

- A. Stations, vehicles, their crew and equipment will match local risk
- B. Prevention and protection activity will be targeted to those at highest risk
- C. Our staff will be working in a new, more flexible way

Through these elements we are looking to match the provision of our resources to risk which will provide the flexibility needed to better respond to emergencies both now and in the future. The proposal presents how we will reshape the way we respond to emergencies to provide both an improved service and operate within a reduced budget. It is the foundation for a long term dependable, resilient, sustainable and improved service.

The changes will reflect risk and operational requirement by moving resources that contribute little to community safety and improve the availability and provision of resources in those areas where we struggle to maintain our service.

### **WHY IS A NEW APPROACH NEEDED?**

Nationally fire deaths and injuries have fallen dramatically over the last ten years, not through providing more firefighters or faster fire engines but through a greater focus on prevention and working with partner agencies to protect those most vulnerable in society. Although the number of fires has reduced by 48%, the provision of fire engines and firefighters has broadly remained the same, whilst costs have risen.

To continue to reduce risk to the public and firefighters within a reduced budget, we will have to change. This new way of working will see us deliver more with less by moving resources to more closely match local risks – continuing to modernise our fleet, changing working practices and using evidence to better target prevention work.

There are many challenges that are currently faced in providing our service and which underline why we need a new approach:

- The number and distribution of resources based on national standards devised between the two world wars
- Modern commuting practices impacting on the ability to recruit and maintain an on call workforce in rural areas
- A reduction of public sector funding
- A history of success in reducing incidents whilst costs have increased

### **WHAT IS THE DETAIL BEHIND THE INTEGRATED APPROACH?**

#### **Stations, vehicles and equipment will match local risk**

There are several parts to this key element, the main part being the introduction of tiered response.

#### Tiered Response

Tiered response is a level of fire engine and equipment provision that escalates in level dependent upon the type of incident. Our emergency response will change from being a 'one size fits all' with inconsistent availability of many fire engines, to a tiered response which means having smaller, more agile fire engines that are supported by enhanced teams located in strategic areas, crewed by staff on a contract that provide flexibility and resilience.

The tiered response proposal would introduce four levels of emergency response:

- Tier 1 – First response

The principle of Tier 1 is to send the appropriate number of firefighters in smaller, more agile vehicles that carry critical equipment for local needs. The foundation of Tier 1 is the introduction of smaller fire engines that was consulted on and agreed in 2010. These fire engines will be widely provided across the two counties to those communities that will benefit



most from a smaller vehicle. A number of these vehicles are now in our fleet and have been well received by staff, are saving money (approximately £70k each per vehicle) and improving our performance. In the future we may consider additional first response resources for different emergency calls.

- Tier 2 – Enhanced response

The Enhanced Response is to provide additional support at larger incidents requiring greater levels of operational capability and equipment. These resources will be strategically positioned across Devon and Somerset and will compliment Tier 1. Tier 2 resources are our existing fire engines and are already provided at most fire stations at present.

- Tier 3 – Specialist rescue response

The third tier is the specialist rescue response. These resources are used less frequently but provide an important operational capability. The vehicles used include: aerials ladder platforms, hose layers, foam carriers, command and control vehicles, and off road rescue. The vehicles are strategically located to meet organisational and local need. In addition, we have four specialist rescue teams who are specially trained in rescue from height, water/flooding rescue and rescues from confined spaces. We also have access

to national resilience capabilities such as Urban Search and Rescue for local emergencies.

- Tier 4 – Advisors and national response

Tier 4 is a small group of officers that will act as subject matter advisors in specialist operational areas, such as major flooding or terrorist incidents, in support of the incident commander and will act as a technical liaison advisor to other multi – agency forums.

In addition, we also provide both regional and national resilience capabilities such as Urban Search and Rescue (USAR). Outside of London our USAR Team is the largest in the country. Examples of incidents of where this team would use its specialist skills are: building collapse, landslide, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents.

The purpose is to provide the right fire engine and equipment appropriate to the type of incident. It will remove the inefficient and expensive approach of having a one-size fits all fire engine irrespective of the community need. Fire-fighter training can also become more specific to the equipment carried on the fire engine used within their community; scarce training time need not be spent on equipment rarely used. Tiered response will therefore have a positive impact on fire-fighter safety.

A Tiered Response is not a new concept and we already have examples of it. Specialist teams, for example carry out large animal rescue and line rescue offer expertise and support at more complex incidents.

### Stations

Most of our 85 local fire stations are largely in the right place either because they are centred on large areas of population or because they are located in key areas that allow sufficient emergency cover across Devon & Somerset.

However, our crewing of these stations may no longer be appropriate given the reduced risk presented by us having far fewer fires to deal with and given the reduced budget we now have.

Within the timescale for this plan, there are no plans to close fire stations. Instead we plan to reform how we use our resources to better protect the public and save money in the process.

We are mindful that over time community risk may change and in the future, as we continue our analysis, it may be identified that we no longer have a requirement to have our operational resources located in their current positions. It may mean we need to build new fire stations in better locations and/or close fire stations.

We will however continue to use our resources as efficiently and effectively as possible and further changes are likely if additional savings are required in future years.

These will be evidence based and consulted on prior to any changes being made.

### Fire engines and crews

As a result of changes in demographics and the risk profile, we have some areas where we have staff and vehicles that are not being used to their full effect and are really needed in areas where we don't have sufficient resources.

At the same time, the risk has fallen sharply in recent years and we simply do not go to anywhere as near as many fires as we did even ten years ago. People are much safer now that they were in the past and much of this is due to improvement in fire prevention approaches and societal trends generally.

However, we need and want to ensure we have a response service that continues to meet the need and expectations of the public.

We have spent two years looking at and analysing, checking and validating data. The way we crew fire engines has remained largely unchanged whilst the risk has fallen in recent years.

Armed with this comprehensive analysis of historical data, we now believe that we can make changes to crewing levels and in doing so save money, whilst not compromising public safety.

Options in terms of how we might do this are shown below.

### **Prevention and protection will be better targeted at those at highest risk**

Targeted prevention activity remains a key element of the modern Fire and Rescue Service. New homes are much safer than ever before as they have hard wired smoke detectors fitted, furniture that is fire resistant and access routes that are designed to ensure a fire engine can get to people when needed. At the same time, fewer people smoke. These factors mean that most people are safer from fire.

However, the people we see who die in accidental fires often have some common characteristics that make them high risk. Many smoke and have drug/alcohol dependency. Many have ill health issues (including psychological problems) and some have mobility problems.

As such, the people who die in fires often are known to other agencies and over the last few years we have been working hard with our partners to share data and work together in order to find, influence and then protect those most at risk.

With a population of 1.7m, it is difficult to find everyone at risk and how best to influence human behaviour is not a precise science. However, we are committed to making Devon and Somerset a safer place and will continue to

focus time, attention and resources to prevention activities in a targeted approach, working with partners.

We plan to work even more closely with partners, including embedding fire officers within other organisations to provide intelligence and support to others in protecting the public. We have much to offer other organisations and we can assist them deliver their objectives. This will also support our targeted prevention approach and allow us to focus on those most at risk.

Our protection activity will continue to target those premises we believe, through an evidence based approach, to present the greatest risk to the community.

### **Our staff will be working in different and more flexible ways to match local need**

It is important that we have a flexible workforce to meet the demands of providing a modern service in today's society. We require the flexibility to support each station and fire engine with the appropriate working arrangement that is matched to the local risk. There are three parts to this element:

1. Crewing arrangements are matched to local risk
2. Standardised crewing
3. Flexible contract

### Crewing arrangements matched to local risk

At present the crewing arrangements across our stations and fire engines have not been updated to match any change in risk or demand. We have four methods of crewing a fire engine:

#### Wholetime

In our cities and larger towns we have fire engines that are permanently crewed with firefighters working on a system of two day shifts, two night shifts and four days off, working an average of 42 hour per week. For most whole time stations there are four watches of seven firefighters so that with leave, course attendance and other absences there are always five available to attend incidents. This means we need 28 whole time firefighters to send out a fire engine with five people As such, this arrangement is expensive but does provide an immediate response to be provided.

#### Day crewed

A fire engine is permanently crewed from Monday to Friday during the day time only. Outside of these times, cover is provided by on call firefighters.

#### \*On call (Retained)

Most of the fire stations in the smaller towns and villages are crewed by retained firefighters. These are men and

women who have other jobs or are homemakers but carry an alerter and take on their fire-fighting role when an incident occurs. This type of crewing arrangement is very efficient as apart from an annual retaining fee and paying for training time, firefighters are called in as and when needed. This system is worked in all areas except for Plymouth.

\*Note. On call firefighters are already used to support wholetime firefighters in our larger cities and towns and once the whole-time crews are deployed, will turn into the fire station to take out supporting fire engines as required.

#### Volunteer

We have two volunteer fire stations. Kingston and Lundy Island. This is similar to the On Call model outlined above.

Many of our proposals this year aim to change the way some of the fire engines are crewed so that they are matched to local demand and risk as well as being more cost effective. As demand has reduced, the way in which the appliance is crewed may need to change.

### Standardised crewing levels

Each station requires a set number of firefighters to remain operational taking into account factors such as: leave, sickness and training. The total number of firefighters required on a station is its crewing level.

Prior to the merger between Devon Fire Service & Somerset Fire Service, different crewing levels were in place on some fire stations to cover the same type and number of fire engines.

In 2011 we commenced the standardisation of crewing levels on watches so that every whole time station had the same number of staff per watch across the Service. This year's proposal looks to complete this work by implementing a standard crewing level across the Service.

#### Flexible staff

We currently offer additional (voluntary) contracts for staff who want to undertake prevention, protection or response work for us. We will extend the use of this to better ensure that we have a flexible and responsive ability to meet peaks in demand.

This additional contract is voluntary and at present, we anticipate that if those currently working the existing shift system wish to remain doing so, they will be able to continue to do so.

It should be noted that if the proposal for different crewing arrangements on a number of our whole time fire stations is agreed, we will have more staff than we need on those stations until such times as people retire and leave the organisation.

We will use these staff to firstly cover any gaps in emergency cover elsewhere in the organisation and in

doing so we will be able to improve the number of fire stations where we have adequate cover. At the same time, we will use staff to undertake prevention and protection activities in accordance with their role and conditions of service.

As outlined above, the financial climate will be challenging for a number of years to come. In this plan, we present our approach to make considerable progress towards this uncertain future and specifically, to meet the challenges outlined within the 2013 and 2014 budget as announced in December 2012.

It is true to say that professionals and politicians would want more resources to help make the public even safer. However, we also have to work within the resources we have and this plan aims to focus on the reality of operating with a reduced budget.

Through this plan, we aim to improve public safety and reduce costs at the same time. However, it should be noted that Devon & Somerset Fire and Rescue Service is already operating efficiently and we will now focus time and effort with Government to minimise the adverse impact of any future budget reductions in the next Comprehensive Saving Review.

## **PART 2: Specific changes proposed for 2013/14 to 2014/15**

The sum of the savings from the following proposals is estimated to be £5.3million.

### **Proposal 1: Introduction of Light Rescue Pumps**

#### **Current arrangement**

The current arrangement is that we have a 'one size fits all' approach to the size of fire engine we use and the equipment they carry. These fire engines are large, can carry up to six firefighters and are often slowed down or obstructed on their way to an incident by parked cars and narrow roads or country lanes. Back-up engines and specialist vehicles are mobilised to attend an incident where additional equipment or support is needed.

#### **New arrangement and proposed change**

Introduce smaller fire engines (Light Rescue Pumps) to stations in areas that find having the larger fire engine a disadvantage.

#### **Context**

A key part of this 2013/14 to 2015/16 plan is the proposal for a new way of working we call 'integrated approach'. An element of this is having tiers of response whereby we mobilise different resources depending upon the type of incident. The introduction of light rescue pumps carrying critical equipment for local needs is part of the implementation of the Tier 1.

The introduction of these fire engines was consulted on and agreed for the 2011/12 to 2013/14 Corporate Plan. The results showed that 80% of respondents agreed that we should implement the proposal to purchase smaller fire engines.

A number of these vehicles are now in our fleet and have been well received by staff, are saving money and improving our performance.

## Effects of change

The rural and urban nature of Devon and Somerset means that travel to emergency incidents can be impeded by narrow roads and parked cars which can negatively impact on travel times. The smaller fire engine will be able to manoeuvre more easily through narrow roads and parked cars. This will help the crew travel and arrive at the incident with less delay. An example of this is shown on the map opposite.

The smaller vehicle will carry equipment that is matched to the local risk. Analysis has shown that only 40% of the items of equipment carried on the larger fire engines are used at 80% of all incidents.

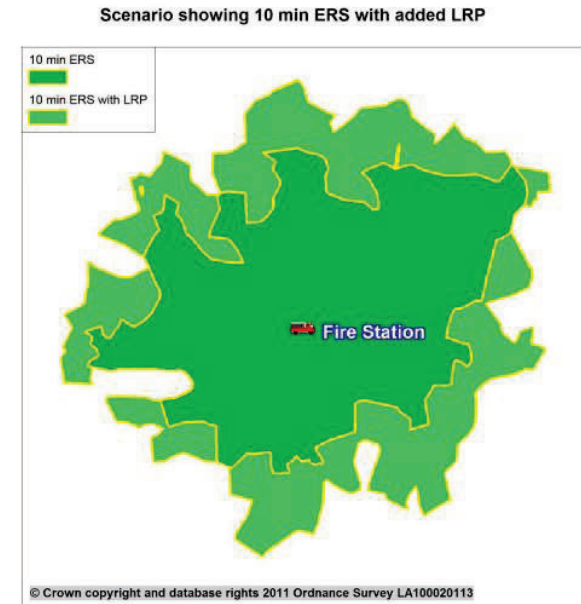
## Benefits

- Each vehicle will provide a cost saving over a traditional fire engine.
- The use of LRPs has been piloted. The benefits were identified as:
  - Improved performance against response standards with a larger area being reached within 10 minutes, thereby providing improved level of service to the community
  - Reduced impact on the environment
  - Improved firefighter safety

## Risks

- The implementation of the smaller fire engine is delayed and they are not available to support the integrated approach where station crewing has been altered.

**Engagement activity:** Previously consulted on in 2011. We now plan to extend the roll out of these vehicles.



## Proposal 2: Reduce attendance to automatic fire alarms.

### Current arrangement - Non-Domestic (Non-Residential)

The current response to a Non-Domestic (Non-Residential) Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) call is to send at least one fire engine from the closest station to the incident so that the cause of the alarm can be investigated. Businesses are already required by law to maintain their own fire safety procedures and an alarm system is to warn those present in the building of a potential fire in good time so that they can exit the building safely.

### New arrangement and proposed change

As consulted on last year, we proposed that the Service should no longer attend AFA calls unless the building's occupants can confirm that there is a fire. We said that this proposal would apply seven days a week between 08.00-18.00 hours and would only relate to the Non-Residential property types listed below unless a prior risk assessment indicated that other arrangements were necessary:

- Religious
- Retail
- Sporting Venues
- Transport Buildings
- Entertainment and Culture
- Food and Drink
- Industrial Manufacturing
- Vehicle Repair
- Industrial Processing
- Offices and Call Centres
- Public Administration
- Warehouses and Bulk Storage

We recognise that some non-domestic properties have greater risks associated with them and so we would continue to implement an automatic attendance to high risk premises only. Including:

- All domestic properties
- Education establishments
- Hotel/motels
- Boarding schools
- Sheltered housing
- Hospital and medical (including care homes)
- Houses of Multiple Occupation
- Residential care/nursing homes
- Youth hostel
- Stately homes

No changes would be made to the way that fire safety advice and support is provided to the organisations affected by the change. As with our existing policy we will request that alarm receiving companies seek confirmation from their customers that there is a fire before they call on the Service to attend.

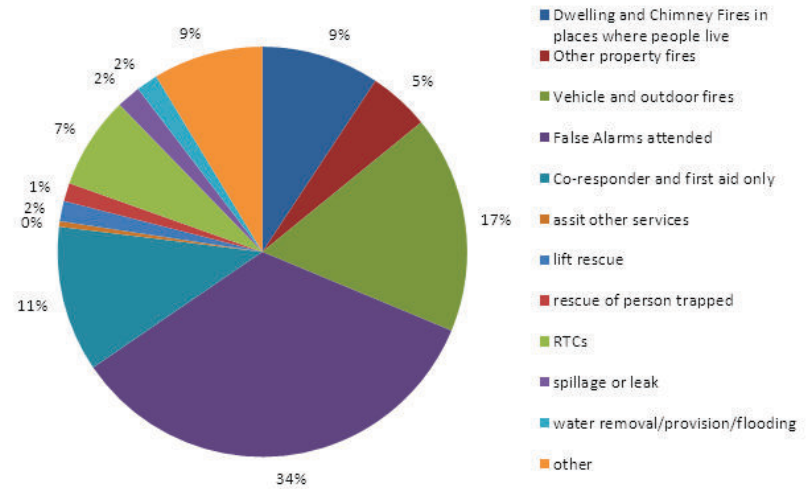


**Context**

The purpose of a fire alarm system is to give notice to those in a building that there is a fire and therefore they need to make their way out. 98% of automatic calls are false alarms and these calls take up a significant amount of time and money.

In 2011 we considered the consultation results for the automatic fire alarm proposal for the 2012/13 to 2014/5 Corporate Plan. The results of the consultation showed that 63.7% of respondents agreed that attendance to low risk Non-domestic (Non-residential) properties should be stopped between 8.00am and 6.00pm unless the person making the AFA call could confirm that there is a fire on the premises.

Part of the consultation involved focus groups with members of the business community. Having heard the proposal 65.4% of businesses supported this approach.



**Effects of change**

Following comprehensive communications with those likely to be affected by our proposed changes to our policy in late 2011-2012, we have already identified that there would be support from both the business and residential community.

**Benefits**

- Reduced costs
- Improved community safety from less fire engines mobilisations
- Reduced environmental impact

**Risks**

The Service could be criticised for potentially exposing businesses and the community to unnecessary risks from fire and the detrimental effect it would have the local and wider community.

**Engagement activity:** Previously consulted on in 2011. We now plan to introduce this change.

### Proposal 3: Mobilise a single co-responder to co-responder incidents

#### Current arrangement

A Co-Responder team of two is mobilised to a medical emergency supported by later attendance of Paramedic/s. The Co-Responder team responds to the Fire Station base, collects the vehicle and proceeds to the address given. This builds in a delay of between 3 and 5 minutes. Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service only receive funding for those calls where it meets the response requirements of South Western Ambulance NHS Foundation Trust and is under no statutory duty to undertake this activity. The percentage of calls that we receive funding for is shown in the chart opposite. Co responders volunteer to undertake this activity – it is not a requirement on them.

#### New arrangement and proposed change

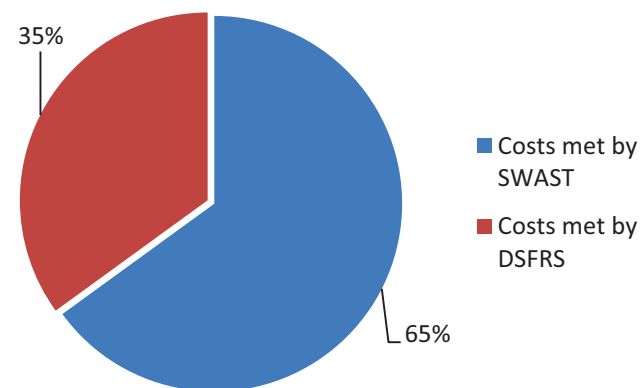
It is proposed to introduce a response of a single Co-Responder direct from their home address or place of work. The response vehicle would be located with the Co-Responder at their home or place of work. The Co-Responder would be mobilised directly by South Western Ambulance NHS Foundation Trust. This is the arrangement that is in place in some other Fire Services and improves the chances of a heart attack victim surviving.

#### Context

The cost of operating the scheme rises in line with the increase in emergency calls to the ambulance service. There is scope for improving successful attendance to Co-Responder calls within the specified 8 minutes by eliminating the need for two Co-Responders to attend the Fire station first.

Consultation previously undertaken for the 2011/12 to 2013/14 Corporate Plan on the proposal to introduce a response of a single Co-

Percentage of co-responder incidents attended by the Service that are funded by SWAST



Responder showed support from the public. The results showed that 67.7% agreed that the proposal should be implemented and 59.4% indicated that they would feel safer under the proposed arrangement.

A single response scheme is currently operated by Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service and other volunteers operate in the same way.

### Effects of change

Co-Responders will be able to reach medical emergencies in a shorter time. Additional funding from SWAST will be received by the Service for increased level of performance. The cost to the Service will also be significantly reduced by only mobilising a single responder rather than two. If an individual does not feel comfortable in attending on their own, they will not be compelled to continue to act as a Co-Responder.

#### Benefits

- Improved level of response time to Community.
- Improved level of immediate clinical care in Life Threatening Medical emergencies
- Reduced cost to the Service.
- Improved availability of crew for Fire Appliance when Co Responder is mobilised
- Improved partnership working
- If we perform better we will receive more funding from SWAST.

#### Risks

- Staff currently operating the scheme may withdraw their availability due to concern of operating as single individuals.
- Staff who no longer take part in the scheme, particularly at low fire activity stations, may leave the Retained Service due to infrequency of call outs.
- South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust may seek to identify alternative response arrangements in those locations where the scheme became unviable due to lack of Co-Responders or poor response performance.

**Engagement activity:** Previously consulted on in 2011. We now plan to introduce this change.

## Proposal 4: Reduce the number of middle / senior managers

### Current arrangement

The number of senior managers, since the combination of Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Services, has reduced to provide efficiencies. These efficiencies have been possible as the new combined organisation did not require two strategic level management structures.

### New arrangement and proposed change

We feel we can reduce the number of middle/senior officers further over the next few years by not replacing some vacancies (no compulsory redundancies). We will do this by changing the way we do business and providing a greater focus on collaboration with other Fire and Rescue Services and reforming how we operate.

### Context

Efficiency savings have already been made by reducing the number of senior manager in the following roles:

One Deputy Chief Officer post and two Corporate Directors = £250k.

Six Area Managers = £400k.

### Effects of change

As a result of our business process changes, we will be able to reduce officer numbers without compromising performance.

#### Benefits

- Reduced costs

#### Risks

- Business process changes are not achieved

**Engagement activity:** Staff

## Proposal 5: Invest £450,000 in additional prevention activity in 2013

### **Current arrangement**

We currently deliver prevention services through a range of activities including raising awareness across a whole range of community risks and practical advice and where necessary installation of smoke alarms through visits to individual homes of those most vulnerable from fire.

In addition we work with businesses to assist them in providing a safe place for people to work and visit. We achieve this by raising awareness to the risks of fire and through fire safety checks and audits.

In order to ensure we use our resources efficiently we target our activities to those most at risk. We achieve this by using a wide range of data which enables us to identify the people and places where an incident is most likely to occur. We then ensure we direct our activities to the people who most need it using the most appropriate intervention.

### **New arrangement and proposed change**

A significant increase in staff time and money will ensure even higher levels of preventative work across the service area. Our analysis shows that for every £145k targeted prevention activity, we significantly reduce the likelihood of a fire death. This will directly support our targeted approach and additional expenditure on prevention will make people safer.

### **Context**

By its nature an operational response occurs after a failure, whether that is a fire or some other incident. Whilst response is important it is clear that more lives can be saved by prevention rather than response.

The positive effect of effective prevention activity is proven and it is a major factor in the significant reduction of incidents attended by Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service. Effective prevention not only reduces risk to life (both to the public and firefighters), damage to property and the associated societal impact, it can also save significant amounts of money to property owners, businesses, the health service etc. A direct saving to the Fire and Rescue Service arises from the reduction in attendance at incidents.

**Effects of change**

Local community plans identify the most appropriate activities that can be delivered within the budget available. This proposal recognises the benefit of investing in preventative work and provides additional resource and funding that would enable a greater number of targeted activities to be completed.

**Risks**

- Continued activity at current levels inhibits the potential for greater risk reduction. This proposal will accelerate the positive impact of prevention activities.

**Benefits**

- Our Local Community Plans are effective in identifying those at risk. Providing the resources and funding to enable increased, intelligence lead prevention activity will reduce risk and lead to less deaths, injuries and loss of property across the service area making Devon and Somerset a safer place for people, communities and business.
- Fewer fires will also mean that our costs will reduce.

**Engagement activity:** Comments invited

## Proposal 6: Dual crew the aerial appliance in Plymouth with on call firefighters

### Current arrangement

The aerial appliance based at Crownhill fire station is currently crewed by permanent firefighters.

### New arrangement and proposal

We propose to standardise the crewing arrangements of the aerial ladder platform at Crownhill Fire Station so that it is operated in the same way as all the other aerial appliances within Devon and Somerset.

This change will mean that the vehicle will move from being crewed by wholetime firefighters to being crewed by on call firefighters. To achieve this will require the introduction of on call contracts at the Crownhill Fire Station. It is proposed that this will be accomplished by moving one wholetime fire engine from Camels Head to Crownhill and changing its crewing to on call who will then also crew the aerial appliance

### Context

Before 2008 all 'aerial appliances', the hydraulic platforms and turntable ladders used to improve access to inaccessible fires, had dedicated crews of three wholetime firefighters that only responded to emergencies where an aerial appliance was needed.

Because of the low number of emergencies they attended, dedicated crewing of the aerals by wholetime firefighters was felt to be unnecessary. Therefore following consultation in 2007, the Authority gave approval early in 2008 for the aerial appliances outside of Plymouth to be dual-crewed by on call firefighters. This was not possible in Plymouth at the time as there was no on call presence in the city.

Aerial appliances remain an important resource and are used in many different scenarios. There has not been a need to use an aerial appliance to rescue a person from fire in the last five years. The table above shows the detailed usage over the last three years.

Incident type attended by aerial appliance	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Person rescued – Fire	Nil	Nil	Nil
Person rescued – non Fire	13	10	15
Fire-fighting operations (fire-fighting i.e. water tower)	70	60	54
Working Platform – Non Fire (unsafe guttering / sign / guttering / glass / chimney etc.	23	16	24
Animal Rescue	7	11	13
Assisting other agencies	8	7	3
Other	2	2	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>110</b>

**Effects of change**

The change will have no adverse impact. In the last five years there has not been a single rescue from a fire by an aerial appliance so a slight delay in mobilising will make little difference.

**Benefits**

- Reduced cost
- More effective use of personnel
- Matching resources to risk
- A consistent approach is applied

**Risks**

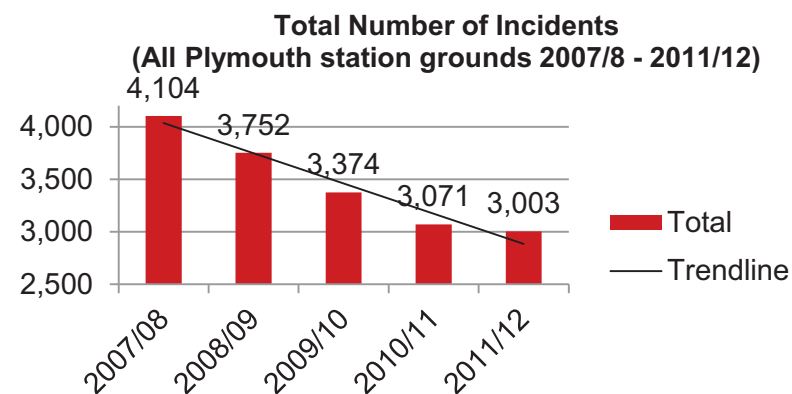
- Slight delay in response times (minimal)

**Engagement activity:** Previously consulted. Comments invited



## Proposal 7: Crew three fire engines in Plymouth as 'on call' rather than whole time

Current arrangement	Current		Future		Changes	
	WT	On Call	WT	On Call		
In Plymouth there are five wholetime fire stations with seven fire engines. There are currently no fire engines crewed by on call firefighters.						
<b>New arrangement and proposal</b>						
The proposal is not to reduce the number of fire engines and equipment provided in the Plymouth area but to change the way they are crewed and where they are located. Therefore, there will remain seven fire engines but the proposal is that four will be crewed by wholetime firefighters and three will be crewed by on call firefighters. One of the fire engines would move from Camels Head to Crownhill. The new distribution of resources matched to risk is shown in the table opposite.						
Some wholetime firefighters affected at the Plymouth stations may be offered on call contracts or new, flexible contracts that would provide improved efficiency, increased fire cover in rural areas and promote community safety as appropriate. We would seek to avoid compulsory redundancies wherever possible.						
<b>Context</b>						
Between 2007/08 and 2011/12 the number of emergency incidents attended within the Plymouth station grounds has declined by 27%. The graph opposite shows this decline annually.						
	Camels Head	2	0	1	0	Move 1 x MRP to Crownhill
	Crownhill	1	0	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receive 1 x MRP from Camels Head</li> <li>• Introduce on call crew</li> <li>• Standardise ALP Crewing (Dual Crewing)</li> </ul>
	Greenbank	2	0	2	0	No changes
	Plympton	1	0	0	1	Change wholetime crew to on call crew
	Plymstock	1	0	0	1	Change wholetime crew to on call crew
	<b>All</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>No change to the number of fire engines</b>



The reduction in the number of incidents is positive and the improvements in our prevention and protection work has, in our opinion, made the high level of cover provided in Plymouth disproportionate to the risk that is now faced in the area.

### Effects of change

Currently we aim to have our first fire engine at the scene of an emergency within 10 minutes and our second fire engine there within 13 minutes. The map below gives an idea of the current areas that can be covered by our vehicles in 10 and 13 minutes by the wholetime crews based in Plymouth. The size of these areas varies depending on traffic and weather conditions for example. The map also shows the locations of neighbouring stations.

Both 10 and 13 minute zones would be affected by the proposed changes as one fire engine would be relocated and three of the seven fire engines would be crewed by On Call firefighters rather than by wholetime firefighters. The change this produced is shown in the second map.

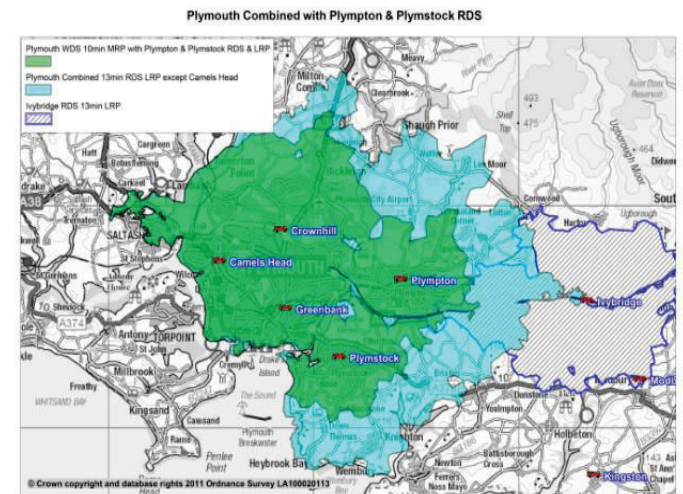
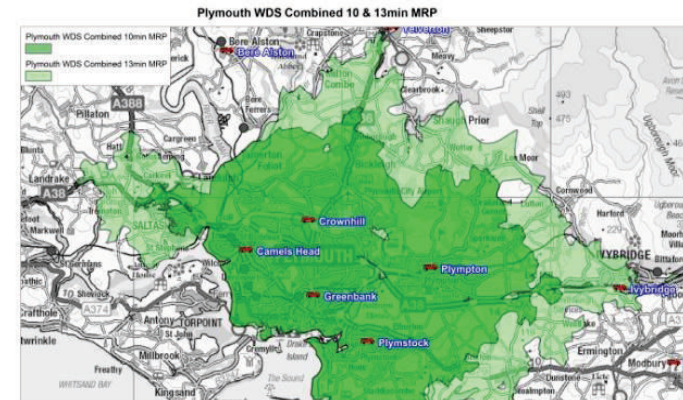
By making these changes, the number of households we could reach within 10 minutes of receiving an emergency call would drop by 1,551 from 112,977 to 111,426. For the 13 minute zone, the number of households would decrease by a total of 1,006 (from 118,947 to 117,941).

Of the households no longer within the 10 minute zone, 37 are considered to be higher than average risk. Of the 1,006 households affected by the changes that affect the size of the 13 minute zone, 27 are considered to be higher than average risk.

This demonstrates that the measurable impact of the proposed changes on those living in and around Plymouth is negligible.

There will still be 7 front line fire engines in Plymouth. Response times are largely unaffected and may be further improved by the future introduction of smaller fire engines (Light Rescue Pumps).

The proposal to increase the amount of prevention activity by investing an additional £450,000 supports this proposal by helping to provide



additional fire safety to those households affected.

### **Benefits**

- Reduced costs
- Improved public safety as firefighters released from the wholetime crews would provide additional flexibility to provide cover at stations where we struggle to provide a crew for the fire engine.
- Improved safety as firefighters would be gaining more operational experience.

### **Risks**

- Fires happen in high risk dwellings before we have visited them with targeted fire prevention services
- Not all high risk dwellings are identified for receiving targeted prevention services
- Emergency incidents increase and we cannot match our resources to the new risk
- Delays in providing a smaller fire engine affects the size of the response zones.

**Engagement activity:** public and staff

**Proposal 8: End the pilot at Yeovil fire station where an additional 4 fire fighters are provided (this standardises crewing so that Yeovil is crewed the same as other similar fire stations).**

<p><b>Current arrangement</b></p> <p>The wholetime Yeovil fire station currently has eight firefighters per watch. The standard number of firefighters per watch for all other wholetime fire stations in Devon and Somerset is seven.</p> <p><b>Context</b></p> <p>Following the consultation on the 2011/12 Corporate Plan proposals we commenced the standardisation of crewing levels on watches so that every whole time station had seven staff per watch. The results of the consultation showed that 71% of respondents agreed with standardising the crewing levels.</p> <p>The only exception to the standard number of seven staff per watch was Yeovil fire station where a pilot scheme had been proposed by the station to operate at 7+1. The additional member of staff was to undertake additional activity community safety activity with an increase in productivity, including some work that is currently undertaken by officers within the Group Support Team at Somerset. However, the pilot scheme has not been as successful as had been anticipated and as a result, it is now proposed to end this pilot scheme and reduce the staffing levels down to the standard level of seven.</p> <p><b>Effects of change</b></p> <p>All wholetime watches would be operating with a standard number of firefighters.</p> <p><b>Risks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This change will have no negative impact.</li> </ul>	<p><b>New arrangement and proposed change</b></p> <p>The number of firefighters per wholetime watch would be reduced by one to seven. Yeovil fire station would then be operating with the same number of firefighters per watch as other similar fire stations.</p> <p><b>Benefits</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced costs</li> </ul>
<p><b>Engagement activity:</b> The affected staff will be involved in the transition.</p>	

**Proposal 9: Change the crewing arrangements of the second fire appliance at Taunton fire station from whole time to ‘on call’.**

**Current arrangement**

Taunton fire station currently has three crewed fire engines. Two of these are crewed by wholetime firefighters (Four watches of firefighters that crew their stations 24 hours a day) and one is crewed by On Call Firefighters (firefighters that respond to the station only when there is an emergency call).

All three fire engines are Medium Rescue Pumps (MRPs), the large fire engines generally seen around Devon and Somerset at the moment

**New arrangement and proposed change**

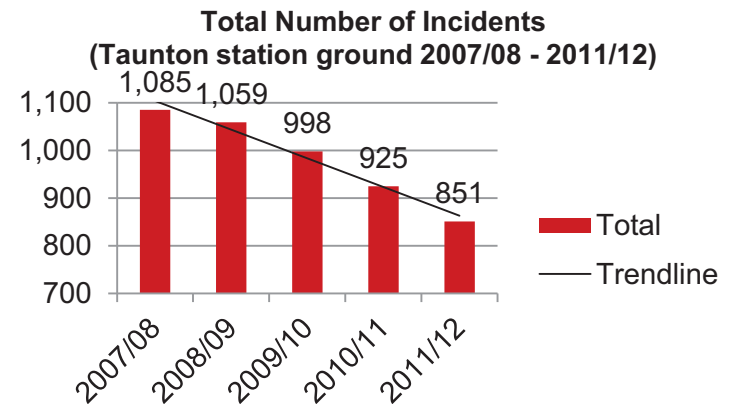
Taunton fire station would still have three fire engines. One fire engine would be crewed by wholetime firefighters and the other two would be crewed by On Call firefighters (note activity levels for the third fire engine is low) as appropriate.

Two of these fire engines would be large fire engines (MRP) and the other would be a smaller sized fire engine: a Light Rescue Pump (LRP). It is envisaged that the third fire engine would remain at the fire station to be used only when demand required additional emergency resources.

Some wholetime firefighters affected at the Taunton station may be offered on call contracts or new, flexible contracts that would provide improved efficiency, increased fire cover in rural areas and promote community safety as appropriate. We would seek to avoid compulsory redundancies wherever possible.

**Context**

The number of emergency incidents attended on Taunton station ground has decreased over the last 5 years, see graph opposite. A direct comparison of 2007/08 with 2011/12 gives a total reduction in the number of incidents attended of 21.57%.



In the three years between 2009/10 and 2011/12, there were 81 emergency incidents, within the area covered by Taunton fire station, (2.92% of the total incidents attended by the station in the same period) that required three or more fire engines.

The situation is not much different across the service. The pie chart opposite shows the number of fire engines sent to all incidents attended by the Service in 2011/12. Only 5.92% (920) of the 15,535 emergency incidents we attended needed three fire engines, and 315 (2.03%) required four or more fire engines.

92.05% (14,300) of incidents required only one or two fire engines.

This outlines the very low requirement for three fire engines to be mobilised but we do not plan to remove the fire engine at this stage.

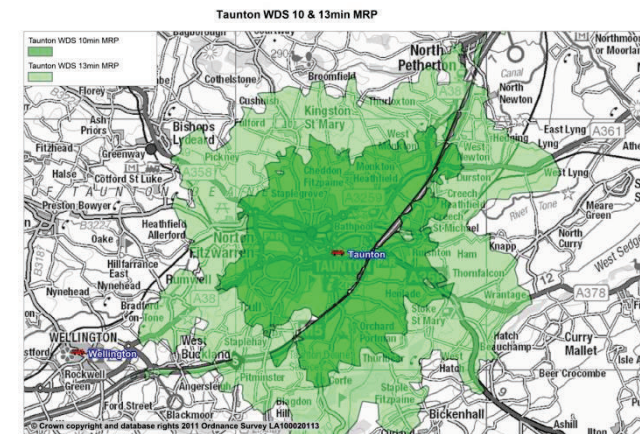
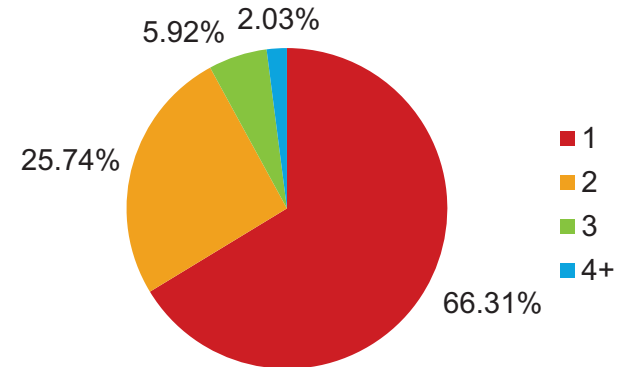
### Effects of change

Currently we aim to have our first fire engine at the scene of an emergency within 10 minutes and our second fire engine there within 13 minutes. The first map opposite gives an idea of the current areas that can be covered by our vehicles in 10 and 13 minutes by the wholetime crews based at Taunton. The size of these areas varies depending on traffic and weather conditions for example

The proposal has no impact on the number of households reached by the first fire engine in ten minutes. This means that the 30,186 households<sup>1</sup> that can currently be reached within ten minutes will continue to be reached.

For the 13 minute zone, because the second wholetime crew is replaced with On Call firefighters, the area that can be covered by the second fire engine is reduced. wholetime firefighters can cover a greater area than that covered by On Call firefighters because On Call response times include the time it takes for firefighters to

**Number of Fire Engines Sent to Emergency Incidents (2011/12)**



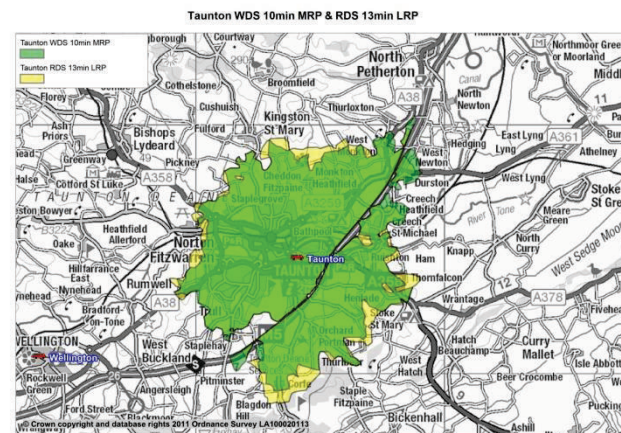
<sup>1</sup> Estimates taken from 2001 Census / Mosaic

travel from their homes or workplaces to their stations once their alerters have gone off (up to 5minutes delay).

The impact of this reduction in coverage is lessened by the introduction of an LRP to the station which increases the range of the On Call crew. By no longer permanently crewing a wholtime fire engine at Taunton, and also replacing one of the existing MRPs with a smaller vehicle, the number of households we could reach within 13 minutes of receiving an emergency call would drop by a total of 2,691 (from 33,923 to 31,232). This is shown graphically on the map opposite.

Of the 2,691 households affected by the change, only 82 are classified as high risk. Prevention activity, including home fire safety visits would target these as special cases, while general prevention and protection work would continue to further reduce risk as well.

The proposal to increase the amount of prevention activity, by investing an additional £450,000, supports this proposal by helping to provide additional fire safety to those households affected.



### Benefits

- Improved firefighter safety as firefighters would be gaining more operational experience.
- Reduced costs
- Improved community safety from the increased area covered in the response times when the smaller fire engine is provided
- Improved community safety as firefighters released from the wholtime crews would provide additional flexibility to provide cover at stations where we struggle to provide a crew for the fire engine.

### Risks

- Fires happen in high risk dwellings before we have visited them with targeted fire prevention services
- Not all high risk dwellings are identified for receiving targeted prevention services
- Emergency incidents increase and we cannot match our resources to the new risk
- Delays in providing a smaller fire engine affects the size of the response zones.

**Engagement activity:** public and staff

**Proposal 10: Change the crewing arrangements of the second fire appliance at Torquay from whole time to 'on call'.**

**Note: Many Torquay firefighters already operate as 'on call' fire fighters on the station.**

**Current arrangement**

Torquay fire station currently has three crewed fire engines. Two of these are crewed by Whole-time Firefighters (Four watches of Firefighters that crew their stations 24 hours a day) and one is crewed by On Call Firefighters (Firefighters that respond to the station only when there is an emergency call).

All three fire engines are Medium Rescue Pumps (MRPs), the large fire engines generally seen around Devon and Somerset at the moment

**New arrangement and proposed change**

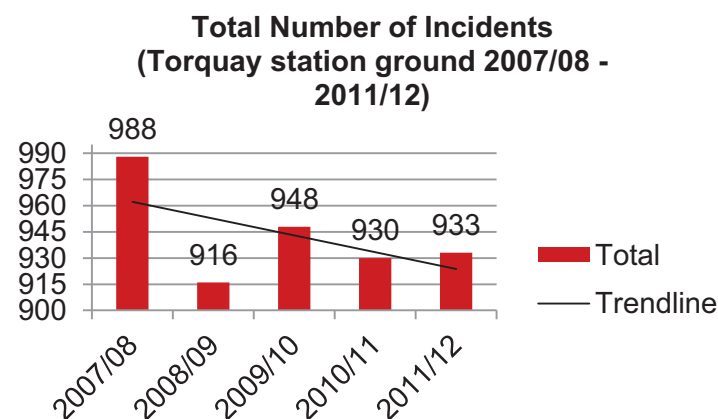
Torquay fire station would still have three fire engines. One fire engine would be crewed by Whole-time firefighters and the other two would be crewed by On Call Firefighters (note activity levels for the third fire engine is low) as appropriate.

Two of these fire engines would be large fire engines (MRP) and the other would be a smaller sized fire engine: a Light Rescue Pump (LRP). It is envisaged that the third fire engine would remain at the fire station to be used only when demand required additional emergency resources.

Some wholetime firefighters affected at the Torquay station may be offered on call contracts or new, flexible contracts that would provide improved efficiency, increased fire cover in rural areas and promote community safety as appropriate. We would seek to avoid compulsory redundancies wherever possible.

**Context**

The number of emergency incidents attended on Torquay station ground has decreased over the last 5 years, see graph opposite. A direct comparison of 2007/08 with 2011/12 gives a total reduction in the number of incidents attended of 5.57%.





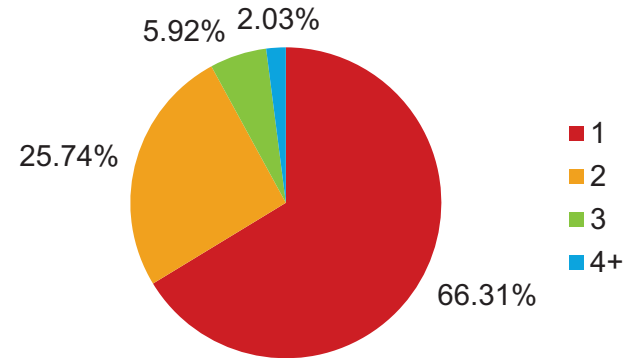
In the three years between 2009/10 and 2011/12, there were 96 emergency incidents within the area covered by Torquay fire station, (3.41% of the total incidents attended by the station in the same period) that required three or more fire engines.

The situation is not much different across the service. The pie chart below shows the number of fire engines sent to all incidents attended by the Service in 2011/12. Only 5.92% (920) of the 15,535 emergency incidents we attended needed three fire engines, and 315 (2.03%) required four or more fire engines.

92.05% (14,300) of incidents required only one or two fire engines.

This outlines the very low requirement for three fire engines to be mobilised but we do not plan to remove the fire engine at this stage.

**Number of Fire Engines Sent to Emergency Incidents (2011/12)**

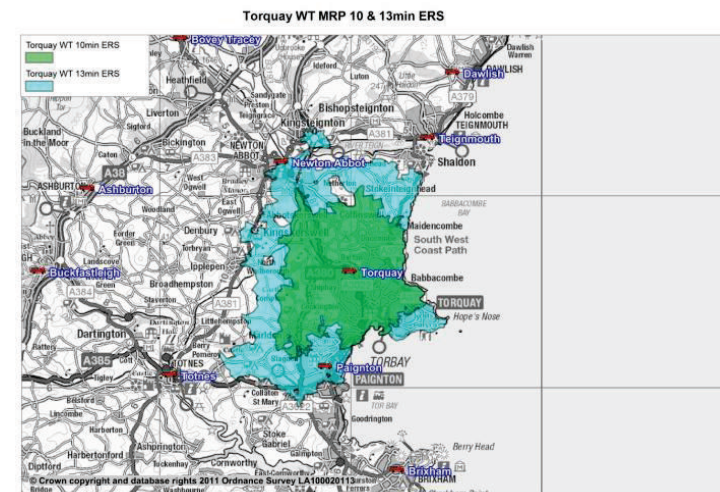


### Effects of change

Currently we aim to have our first fire engine at the scene of an emergency within 10 minutes and our second fire engine there within 13 minutes. The first map opposite gives an idea of the current areas that can be covered by our vehicles in 10 and 13 minutes by the wholetime crews based at Torquay. The size of these areas varies depending on traffic and weather conditions for example

The proposal has no impact on the number of households reached by the first fire engine in ten minutes. This means that the 34,482 households<sup>2</sup> that can currently be reached will continue to be reached within ten minutes.

By no longer permanently crewing a wholetime fire engine at Torquay, and also replacing one of the existing MRPs with a smaller vehicle, the number of households we could reach within 13 minutes of receiving an emergency call would drop by a total of 62 (from 57,750 to 57,688). This is shown graphically on the map on the next page.



<sup>2</sup> Estimates taken from 2001 Census / Mosaic

For the 13 minute zone, because the second wholetime crew is replaced with On Call Firefighters, the area that can be covered by the second fire engine is reduced. Wholetime Firefighters can cover a greater area than that covered by On Call Firefighters because On Call response times include the time it takes for Firefighters to travel from their homes or workplaces to their stations once their alerters have gone off (up to 5minutes delay).

The impact of this reduction in coverage is lessened by the introduction of an LRP to the station which increases the range of the On Call crew. By no longer permanently crewing a wholetime fire engine at Torquay, and also replacing one of the existing MRPs with a smaller vehicle, the number of households we could reach within 13 minutes of receiving an emergency call would drop by a total of 62 (from 57,750 to 57,688).

Of the 62 households affected by the change, none are classified as high risk.

Prevention activity, including home fire safety visits, and protection work such as fire safety audits of businesses would continue to further reduce risk.

The proposal to increase the amount of prevention activity by investing an additional £450,000 supports this proposal by helping to provide additional fire safety to those households affected.

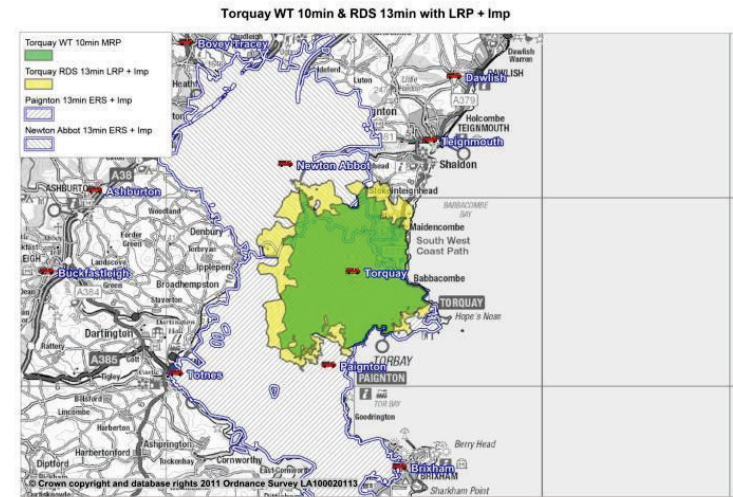
**Benefits**

- Improved firefighter safety as firefighters would be gaining more operational experience.
- Reduced costs
- Improved community safety from the increased area covered in the response times when the smaller fire engine is provided
- Improved community safety as firefighters released from the wholetime crews would provide additional flexibility to provide cover at stations where we struggle to provide a crew for the fire engine.

**Risks**

- Fires happen in high risk dwellings before we have visited them with targeted fire prevention services
- Not all high risk dwellings are identified for receiving targeted prevention services
- Emergency incidents increase and we cannot match our resources to the new risk
- Delays in providing a smaller fire engine affects the size of the response zones.

**Engagement activity:** public and staff



**Proposal 11: Change the crewing arrangement of the fire engine at Ilfracombe from day crewed (whole time day time only) to 'on call'.**

**Current arrangement**

Ilfracombe currently has two fire engines. One is crewed by On Call firefighters who respond to the station only when there is an emergency call. The other is crewed by wholetime firefighters during the day only (between 09:00 and 17:00hrs) and On Call firefighters at night. Both fire engines are Medium Rescue Pumps (MRPs), the large fire engines generally seen around Devon and Somerset at the moment

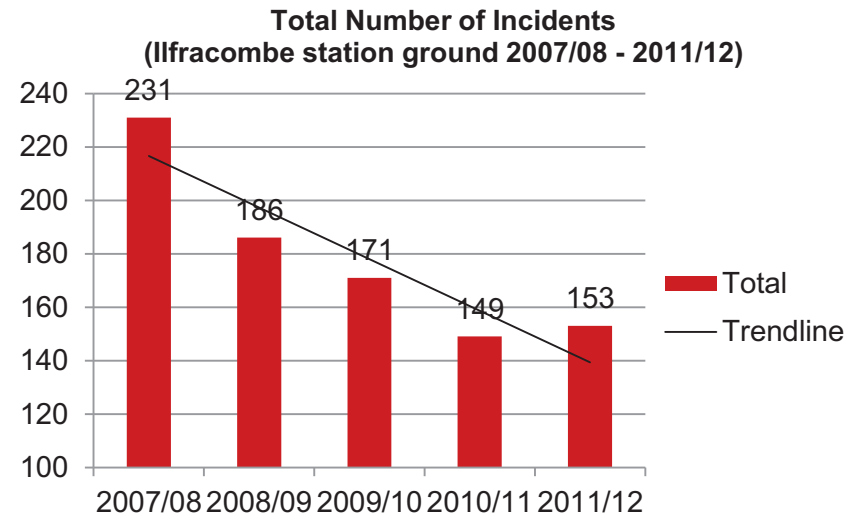
**New arrangement and proposed change**

Ilfracombe would still have two fire engines. One fire engine would be a large fire engine (MRP). The other would be a smaller sized fire engine: a Light Rescue Pump (LRP). The station would not have any wholetime firefighters. The number of On Call firefighters would stay the same.

**Context**

The number of emergency incidents attended on Ilfracombe station ground has decreased over the last 5 years, see graph opposite. A direct comparison of 2007/08 with 2011/12 gives a total reduction in the number of incidents attended of 33.77%.

We feel that, for this level of activity, either on the station or across the Service, having a wholetime crew at Ilfracombe during the day is unnecessary, and that the benefits of making these changes, combined with changes to the way we carry out prevention and protection work, outweigh the risks and will continue to keep the public safe.



## Effects of change

The area that can be covered by wholetime firefighters is greater than that covered by On Call firefighters because On Call response times include the time it takes for firefighters to travel from their homes or workplaces to their stations once their alerters have gone off.

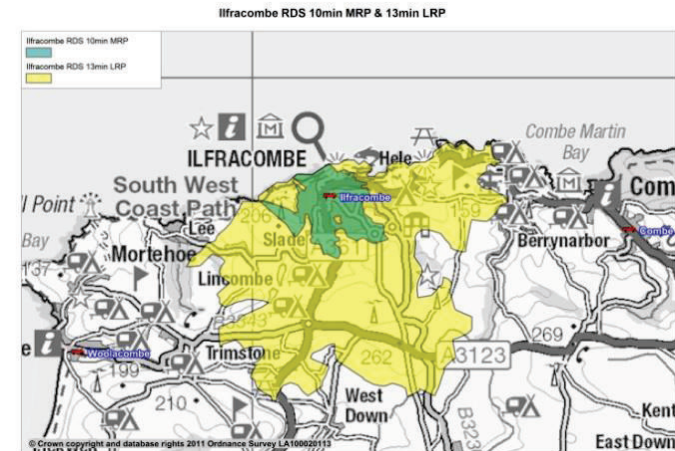
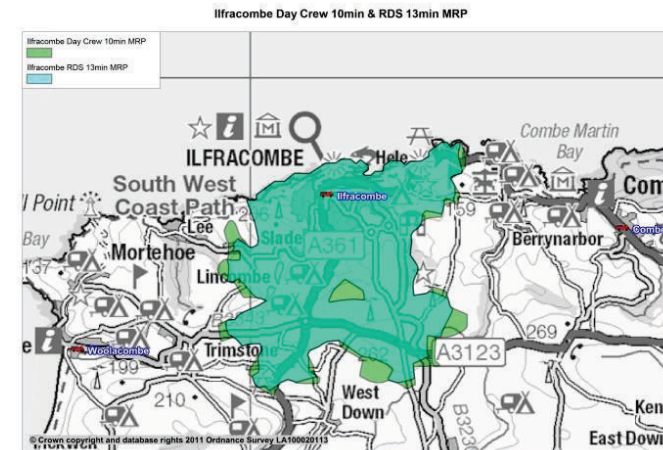
Currently we aim to have our first fire engine at the scene of an emergency within 10 minutes and our second fire engine there within 13 minutes. This response area is shown in the map opposite.

This change is also linked with the introduction of the smaller fire engine as part of our new way of working we call 'integrated approach'. With the introduction of a smaller fire engine at Ilfracombe the number of households covered in the 13 minute response time would increase by a total of 51 (from 4,977 to 5,028).

By removing the wholetime day crew from Ilfracombe the number of households covered by 10 minute zone would decrease, between 9 o'clock am and 5 o'clock pm, by 1,854 (from 5,220 to 3,366). Of the 1,854 households affected by the reduction, 126 are classified as high risk.

The proposal to increase the amount of prevention activity by investing an additional £450,000 supports this proposal by helping to provide additional fire safety to those households affected.

The wholetime firefighters affected at Ilfracombe station (as they work day shifts only) would be reallocated to undertake community safety work or provide additional support to On Call fire stations where we may often have a shortage of crew. We would seek to avoid compulsory redundancies wherever possible.



**Benefits**

- Improved firefighter safety as firefighters would be gaining more operational experience.
- Reduced costs
- Improved community safety from the increased area covered in the response times when the smaller fire engine is provided
- Improved community safety as firefighters released from the wholtime crews would provide additional flexibility to provide cover at stations where we struggle to provide a crew for the fire engine.

**Risks**

- Fires happen in high risk dwellings before we have visited them with targeted fire prevention services
- Not all high risk dwellings are identified for receiving targeted prevention services
- Emergency incidents increase and we cannot match our resources to the new risk
- Delays in providing a smaller fire engine affects the size of the response zones.

**Engagement activity:** public and staff

## Frequently asked questions.

### WILL LIVES BE PUT AT RISK?

Our thorough research shows that through the Integrated Approach we can actually reduce the risk to life. All our proposed changes are informed by risk and local circumstances. The way we operate today means we are unable to crew some fire engines which has led to delays in responding to some emergencies. As a result of our proposals we will have the right fire engines available when we need them, 100% of the time at our key stations, thereby reducing the risk of a delay in our response. Our emphasis on helping you prevent a fire occurring in the first place or having your early warning system such as a smoke alarm will help save lives in your community.

### WHAT ABOUT FIREFIGHTER SAFETY?

We are committed to maintaining and improving fire-fighter safety. All firefighters are trained to make decisions based on the resources they have available to them and if they need more resources, whatever is needed will be sent. Our “tiered response” will ensure that fire fighters have the equipment they need and are trained and experienced to meet the challenges that they face. We have already invested additional resources to improve fire-fighter safety, have won awards at the

highest level this year for the way we undertake health and safety and have reduced accidents to our staff (approx. 35%). We remain committed to protecting the public and our staff. We have a strong track record in improving the safety of our staff and we aim to continue this approach.

### WILL STAFF BE MADE REDUNDANT?

To ensure we can operate in a more cost effective way, we will need to operate with fewer firefighters. We are clear that we will seek to avoid making compulsory redundancies where we can. In working to achieve the reduction in staff numbers required, we are limited by the number of staff who leave through normal turnover each year. By offering staff new contracts, increasing flexibility from our whole time staff and increased reliability from our on call staff, we will get a better service. We hope to get sufficient staff volunteering and in doing so, we will be less likely to need to change the existing shift system.

### WHAT ARE ‘ON CALL’ AND ‘WHOLETIME’ FIREFIGHTERS?

On call (Retained) - Most of the fire stations in the smaller towns and villages are crewed by retained firefighters. These are men and women who have other jobs or are homemakers but carry an alerter and take on their fire-fighting role when an incident occurs. This type of crewing arrangement is very efficient as apart from an annual

retaining fee and paying for training time, firefighters are called in as and when needed. This system is worked in all areas except for Plymouth.

Wholetime – In our cities and larger towns we have fire engines that are permanently crewed with firefighters working on a system of two day shifts, two night shifts and four days off, working an average of 42 hour per week. For most whole time stations there are four watches of seven firefighters so that with leave, course attendance and other absences there are always five available to attend incidents. This means we need 28 whole time firefighters to send out a fire engine with five people As such, this arrangement is expensive but does provide an immediate response to be provided.

### **WHAT ABOUT BACK OFFICE SAVINGS?**

Savings from the back office or support functions remain a core part of our plans. To date we are saving approximately £1.9million on-going annual savings from our base budget. We will save a further £1m from base budget in 2013/14 and plan on saving a further £1.5m over the next four years through process improvement, investment in technology and effective budget management.

### **HOW WILL WE SHOW IMPROVEMENT?**

We will publish our performance on our website and you will be able to see the availability and performance of your local fire station. You can also find the Local Community Plan for your area on our website. We report on how effectively we are performing against our 11 measures to the Fire Authority Audit and Performance Committee every quarter. These performance reports are available for you to download on our website. You will also be able to find a yearly summary of our performance in our Annual Report. This is also available on our website.

### **HAVE WE CONSIDERED ANY ALTERNATIVES?**

In developing the proposal we also considered and discounted the following:

1. Increase council tax to meet the budget shortfall. The predicted budget shortfall over a four year period to 2016/17 is in the region of £11.m. If we were to fund this shortfall through council tax it would require an increase in council tax precept of 24% over the next four years. To do this we would have to hold a public referendum, the expense of which is cost prohibitive for an Authority of our size (estimates for holding a referendum are broad but it may cost in the region of £1m for this Authority). This approach has been discounted because of cost to the council tax payer and it is unrealistic to expect support for a 24% increase.

2. Make cuts to levels of service provision. An alternative would be to make cuts in the service that are not informed by an intelligence based approach. By taking this type of approach we could still reduce the level of budget by a similar amount to that achieved by our proposal. As an example we could remove six wholetime pumps and do nothing else. The impact of such approaches have been modelled and whilst similar savings are achieved the impact is that community risk is increased, which is in contrast to the proposals in this plan.



## Having your say

The key change we would like your opinion on is the Integrated Approach concept.

We would also like your thoughts on the following proposed changes that would help us achieve the concept:

- Change the crewing of three fire engines in Plymouth to 'on call' rather than whole time
- Crew the aerial ladder platform at Crownhill fire station in Plymouth with 'on call' staff
- Change the crewing arrangements of the second fire appliance at Taunton from whole time to 'on call'
- Change the crewing arrangements of the second fire appliance at Torquay from whole time to 'on call'
- Change the crewing arrangement of the day crewed (wholetime day time only) fire engine at Ilfracombe to 'on call'

Full details of this proposal, an online survey and supporting documents, can be found at:

[www.dsfire.gov.uk/consultation](http://www.dsfire.gov.uk/consultation)

Alternatively a paper copy of the consultation document can be requested via the Consultation Officer in the following ways:

**Telephone:** 01392 872354

**Post:** Consultation Officer  
DSFRS Headquarters  
Clyst St George  
Exeter  
Devon  
EX3 0NW

**Fax:** 01392 872300  
(Marked for the attention of the Consultation Officer)

**Email:** ConsultationOfficer@dsfire.gov.uk

**Twitter:** @DSFireUpdates

**Facebook:** Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service

We would also welcome your comments, through any of the channels listed above, on the whole of the Draft Corporate Plan.

The consultation period commences on 28 January 2013 and will end on 22 April 2013.

## Members

### Devon County Council

Cllr Caroline Chugg  
Tel: (01271) 815820  
Email: caroline.chugg@devon.gov.uk

Cllr Andrew Eastman  
Tel: (01237) 474550  
Email: andrew.eastman@devon.gov.uk

Cllr Olwen Foggin  
Tel: (01392) 660430  
Email: olwen.foggin@devon.gov.uk

Cllr Mrs Anne Fry  
Tel: (01626) 368054  
Email: anne.fry@devon.gov.uk

Cllr George Gribble (Vice Chairman)  
Tel: (01626) 832764  
Email: george.gribble@devon.gov.uk

Cllr Bernard Hughes OBE  
Tel: (01395) 272580  
Email: bernard.hughes@devon.gov.uk

Cllr Jim Knight  
Tel: (01297) 792084  
Email: jim.knight@devon.gov.uk

Cllr Ray Radford  
Tel: (01884) 820000

Email: ray.radford@devon.gov.uk

Cllr Sara Randall Johnson

Tel: (01404) 822524

Email: sara.randalljohnson@devon.gov.uk

Cllr Dennis Smith

Tel: (01803) 812653

Email: dennis.smith@devon.gov.uk

Cllr Nick Way

Tel: (01363) 777903

Email: nick.way@devon.gov.uk

### Somerset County Council

Cllr Cathy Bakewell MBE

Tel: 07711 938753

Email: cmbakewell@somerset.gov.uk

Cllr. Ann Bown

Tel: (01278) 451886

Email: aebown@somerset.gov.uk

Cllr Peter Burridge-Clayton

(01278) 780130

Email: pburridgeclayton@somerset.gov.uk

Tel:

Cllr John Dyke

Tel: (01460) 77233

Email: jdyke @somerset.gov.uk

Cllr Mark Healey (Chairman)

Tel: (01278) 685368

Email: mhealey@somerset.gov.uk

Cllr Alvin Horsfall

Tel: 07765 579879

Email: ajhorsfall@somerset.gov.uk

Cllr John Woodman

Tel: (01278) 794268

Email: jwoodman@somerset.gov.uk

Cllr Derek Yeomans

Tel: (01458) 251549

Email: dnyeomans@somerset.gov.uk

### **Plymouth City Council**

Cllr Ian Gordon

Tel: (01752) 331431

Email: ian.gordon@plymouth.gov.uk

Cllr Martin Leaves

Tel: (01752) 518765

Email: martin.leaves@plymouth.gov.uk

Cllr John Smith

Tel: 07779 349147

Email: john.smith@plymouth.gov.uk

### **Torbay Council**

Cllr Stephen Brooksbank

Tel: 07553 064138

Email: stephen.brooksbank@torbay.gov.uk

Cllr Derek Mills

Tel: (01803) 843412

Email: derek.mills@torbay.gov.uk

### **Independent Members of Standards Committee**

David Watson

Tel: (01752) 670207

Email: david@compton-it.co.uk

