



Fire and Rescue Annual Report 2023-2024



Helping you to be safe and feel safe in North Yorkshire and York

BE SAFE

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This report highlights how North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service (NYFRS) has progressed each of the outcomes under the five Fire and Rescue Plan priorities during 2003-24 and meets the requirements of the Fire and Rescue Statement. It confirms the adequacy of arrangements and effective management of financial, governance and operational matters, as well as overall adherence to the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England.

Foreword

Welcome to my Fire and Rescue Annual Report 2023-24 which reflects on my final year as North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.

The circumstances upon which I assumed office were challenging and trust and confidence in the role of Commissioner was low given the nature of the previous postholder's departure, and during the last inspection, His Majesty's



Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service (HMICFRS) raised two serious causes of concern in respect of North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service. However, I stood up to the challenge and I am immensely proud of the achievements under my leadership during my time as your Commissioner. I am grateful to my office who have worked tirelessly on behalf of the public to drive forward my Fire and Rescue Plan and ensure extensive scrutiny in support of North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service on their journey of improvement.

The progress that North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service has made over the past twelve months is phenomenal, and to have HMICFRS lift both causes of concern within a year was great news. I am extremely pleased about the progress that was made in such a short space of time, and I want to thank the Chief Fire Officer, Jonathan Dyson, his Strategic Leadership Team and every Firefighter and member of staff who helped make this happen.

Many of the proposals I consulted you about in the Summer of 2022 to make best use of Fire and Rescue resources have been implemented. The Service has delivered upon their promises to the public, including; improving prevention and protection work, changing response resource in the York area (Huntington station changed to On-call only), better management of attendance to Automatic Fire Alarms and enhancing response to water rescues with the introduction of a specialist unit in Craven. The On-call Futures Programme is generating improvements for our On-call Firefighters including a streamlined recruitment process and recognition for workplaces who release staff as On-call Firefighters to attend emergencies.

In February this year, I approved a proposal to make the four, multi-agency Public Safety Officer roles in Craven substantive. Independent evaluations show that these Officers improve community safety and prevent harm by promoting fire safety and health and wellbeing, as well as solving local anti-social behaviour concerns. I have ensured a commitment from both North Yorkshire Police and North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service to explore the potential to extend this scheme beyond Craven.

The Chief Fire Officer and I are fully committed to creating an inclusive workplace and workforce and much progress has been made. The Core Code of Ethics is being embedded, setting high standards of professionalism and behaviour for all staff and Firefighters. The Service has responded positively to HMICFRS's national Values and Culture Report having addressed all 19 recommendations for Chief Fire Officers over the last 12 months. It has been a challenging and lengthy process, but I have ensured that all essential works to our Fire Stations, to make them fit for a diverse workforce, have now been completed.

This Annual Report, which also serves as the Fire and Rescue Statement within the meaning of Paragraph 5 of Schedule A2 to the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, provides a good understanding of how the Service has delivered during the period April 2023-March 2024 against the outcomes set out my Fire and Rescue Plan as well as the Service's Risk and Resource Model 2022-25.

Finally, I want to thank the residents of York and North Yorkshire for their support and for always engaging with me openly and honestly during my time as Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. I believe I have laid more than solid foundations for the newly elected Mayor to build upon.

Zoë Metcalfe

Former North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

Vision, Values, Principles and Priorities

we <u>care</u>

Our principles:

The four C.A.R.E. Principles set out what I believe is an exemplary fire and rescue service for our county based on what the public has told me.

Caring about the vulnerable

'Vulnerability' comes in many different forms and has many different impacts. Whether due to age, disability, financial circumstances, education, exploitation, mental health, or isolation, it is vital we understand what makes people vulnerable and in need of our services, and work to prevent that vulnerability emerging or turning into harm.

Ambitious collaboration

Collaboration is more than just about partnership work. It is about actively seeking to join up services, close gaps and improve outcomes, working together to overcome our core problems. It is about creating a unified, personcentred experience of interaction with public services. It seeks to increase our contribution to broader society in our area by applying our skills, insight, and experience to wider issues.

Realising our potential

How we realise the potential of our people and organisation to deliver the best possible services to our communities, is integral to achieving our ambition. We need to have the right people, with the right training, information, skills, and equipment, in the right place, at the right time. For this to work we need to have the right culture.

Enhancing our service for the Public

In all of this we must put the public that we serve first. Public services are services for the Public and we must do everything that we can to enhance their experience when they interact with us. We must be accessible and engaged, present where we are needed most, and able to provide the care asked of us.

Mission and Vision:

To keep people safe and feeling safe to deliver an exemplary fire and rescue service.

Our values:

Our values and culture - Making a positive difference for the Public, every day. With: Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty, and Leadership.

Our Priorities:

The Fire and Rescue Plan considers what is achievable for NYFRS in working towards achieving the ambition set through the C.A.R.E. principles and sets outcomes that progress will be assessed against. This is the focus of this Annual Report.

- 1. Actively engage with all communities to identify need and risk and to reassure.
- 2. Work jointly as a trusted partner to prevent harm and damage, intervene early and solve problems
- 3. Deliver the "Right People, Right Support" every time
- 4. Maximise efficiency to make the most effective use of all available resources
- 5. Enhance positive culture, openness, integrity, and public trust

Fire and Rescue Plan 2022-25 – Annual Progress Update Against Priorities

Priority 1

Actively engage with all communities to identify need and risk and to reassure

Outcome 1a

Public confidence and satisfaction in North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service has increased.

In January 2023 we launched the Public Trust and Confidence survey so public feedback could inform how we shape our Fire Service. Unfortunately, not enough people completed the survey to be representative of our communities or to allow meaningful analysis. This is not unique to North Yorkshire, the Government Trust survey <u>Trust in government, UK - Office for National Statistics</u> (ons.gov.uk) for 2023 gathered just over 1,000 responses. As a result, we have worked hard to improve future responses by redesigning and relaunching the survey to make it simpler. The **Your Service, Your Say** surveys for both the Police and Fire services are ready for the newly elected Mayor to launch. This is crucial so we can understand how residents feel about the two emergency services.

By the end of the financial year 2023-24, the Office for Policing, Fire, Crime and Commissioning (OPFCC) Complaints and Recognition Team had received 12 new complaints and 61 compliments. This compares very positively to the previous year and represents a **48% decrease in complaints and a 45% increase in compliments**. Whilst the number of complaints received remains low, themes across all complaints are identified and analysed to learn lessons and reduce the likelihood of it happening again. Themes are reported to the NYFRS' monthly Tactical Leadership Team meetings and newly established Appropriate Authorities Meeting between the Officer of Police, Fire, Crime and Commissioning (OPFCC) and NYFRS. The reason for a complaint was most often because people were unhappy with an employee's conduct (4). Compliments were generally to thank crews for attendance at an incident (24).

In September 2023 the Commissioner and Chief Fire Officer of NYFRS pledged their **commitment to the Charter for Families Bereaved through Public Tragedy**. The Charter was created in 2017 by the former Bishop of Liverpool, the Right Reverend James Jones, to ensure the pain and suffering of families affected by the Hillsborough tragedy is not repeated. The Charter makes a public commitment to ensure that those affected by a major tragedy or incident are always treated with care and compassion, by being open and transparent and by placing public interest above Service reputation.

"I am proud to pledge our commitment to the Bereaved Families Charter. I am dedicated to ensuring that we are a people centred service embedded at the heart of the community."

> Chief Fire Officer, Jonathan Dyson

Outcome 1b North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service has a holistic understanding of risk in our communities.

On behalf of NYFRS, Operational Research in Health Limited (ORH) have undertaken a **review of future community risk and response modelling**, building upon the work to produce the last Community Risk Profile (CRP). This will help provide the right resources in the right places at the right times and has been used to develop a new Response Strategy. Which will inform the next iteration of the Risk and Resource Model (RRM).

The CRP is being refreshed using recently published **approaches** developed by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) in collaboration with ORH **to enhance understanding of local risk**. These evidence-based methodologies have been developed on the back of a wide-ranging national study that identified the risk factors that underpin the likelihood and consequence of residential fires and road traffic collisions.

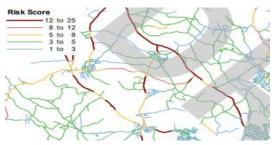
For **dwelling fires**, each Lower Super Output Area across York and North Yorkshire (areas comprising of between 400 and 1,200 households) is given a risk score from 1 'very low' to 5 'very high' using a range of data sources including locations and property types of past dwelling fires.

For **road traffic collisions**, sections of the road network are risk scored from 1 'very low' to 5 'very high' using a wide range of information and data including past collision and injury statistics per kilometre of road.

Dwelling Fire Rate by Lower Super Output Area York and North Yorkshire

Likelihood Category	Dwelling Fires per 1,000 people per year
5 - Very High	1.02
4 - High	0.64
3 - Medium	0.52
2 - Low	0.35
1 - Very Low	0.25

Road Traffic Collision Risk – Example



A software program called 'Mosaic', uses a household data from the census and consumer/lifestyle surveys for example, to group together individuals who are likely to share similar demographics, lifestyles, and behaviours into 15 summary groups. It can be used together with past incident and risk information held by the Service, to identify households that are most at risk of a fire. NYFRS has now procured the software to use **Mosaic to help target fire safety activity and messages to communities and households that are at greater risk** of a fire in the home. This will help ensure that resources are directed to where they would make the most difference in saving lives, reducing injury, and protecting property; an approach that has been successfully implemented by other fire and rescue services across the country.

Priority 2

Work jointly as a trusted partner to prevent harm and damage, intervene early and solve problems

Outcome 2a

North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service is recognised as a leading partner in driving a wholesystem approach to preventing vulnerability.

The Public Safety Service (PSS) pilot with four Public Safety Officers (PSOs) has now **moved to business as usual**. Each PSO covers a small geographical area within Craven, working across the Fire and Rescue Service, Police, and Health Partners to develop in depth knowledge of their community. Their main role is to **assess community vulnerability and undertake prevention activity** for the three services simultaneously.



Three independent evaluations have established that the PSS helps to improve visibility, trust and confidence in public services, tackle vulnerability quickly and effectively, and save lives. This Service has been highlighted as promising practice by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and is now included in the positive practice portal on the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) website. To find out more about the NFCC's positive portal, follow this link <u>Positive Practice - NFCC</u>.

At the Executive Board on 30 January 2024, the Commissioner supported the proposal to move the Craven PSS from a pilot project to business as usual for both services. Three PSOs and a Lead PSO would become permanent roles with the associated costs split equally between North Yorkshire Police (NYP), and NYFRS.

The Commissioner agreed with the intention of both services to strengthen the PSS brand and **explore co-funding opportunities with additional partners**, to facilitate further expansion of the Public Safety Service beyond Craven.

To support delivery of the York and North Yorkshire Road Safety Partnership's Safer Roads Strategy 2021-26<u>Safer Roads Strategy</u>, the Commissioner approved £300k of funding in 2022. £100k was allocated each year, for three years. With the option of carrying over any annual underspend to the following year.

Approval was given to use part of this funding to pilot the introduction of a **new Road Safety Partnership Coordinator**, working on behalf of the Partnership to focus on the prevention of incidents on our roads. The new Coordinator started in August 2023 and has already developed strong relationships with all road safety partners to enhance the delivery of



engagement, education and enforcement opportunities as well as acting as a link to the OPFCC on community concerns relating to road safety.

The Coordinator has created a **new Facebook page for the Road Safety Partnership** reaching 16.8k people and attracting 158 followers within the first couple of months of its launch in March 2024. This provides an excellent platform to promote road safety messages and promote the activities of the Partnership. <u>Facebook Page - York and North Yorkshire Road Safety Partnership</u>.

A notable achievement for the Coordinator has been the **development of Key Stage 1 and 4 road safety lesson packages** which have been quality assured and verified to use on the national StayWise website (an educational road safety library informed by the UK's emergency services). A link to the Key Stage 4 lesson package can be found here <u>Road Safety - KS4 Drivers and</u> <u>Passengers | StayWise</u>. These lessons have been designed for new drivers, pre-drivers and those who may be starting to travel as passengers in their friends' vehicles. The content focuses on the 'fatal five' which are the offences that are more likely to result in a fatal collision, namely: speeding, driving without a seatbelt, using a mobile phone or a hand-held device whilst driving and driving under the influence of drugs and alcohol.

NYFRS's **FireBike** is a fantastic engagement tool which enables conversations with the motorcycle community to reduce injuries on our roads.. Last year, part of the Commissioner's road safety fund was used to **purchase two Fire Bikes** (one new and one replacement bike) and better protective clothing to increase the safety of the riders. Last year, FireBike was deployed 32 times, slightly lower than expected due to the Fire Bike being off the run, awaiting replacement. The FireBike team is now well established with six regular riders volunteering their time. Going forward, one if not both of the bikes will be on the road every weekend either at planned or targeted events across the county, calling at known meeting points.

Outcome 2b

The prevention of vulnerability and fire protection services are the core elements of North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service's operating model.

Preventing fires and other emergencies are at the heart of the NYFRS RRM The ambition is to prevent emergencies from happening in the first place through increased education, advice, and support. Last year NYFRS recorded 9822 prevention activities to promote fire, road and water safety, which equated to 617 days work. NYFRS also completed 3680 Home Fire Safety Visits and 304 detector fittings, between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024. NYFRS' efforts to complete Home Fire Safety Visits increased by 7% when compared with the previous year.

The Prevention team has undertaken an **evaluation of the quality of Home Fire Safety Visits** to identify improvements to this service offered to the public. At the end of 2023, a trial survey was undertaken with 31 customers one month and three months after a Home Fire Safety Visit. Positively, 100% of customers were satisfied with the visit and around two-thirds (67%) were still following all fire safety advice three months after the visit,

There has been significant investment to permanently **increase the number of roles in the prevention department**, including the recruitment of a Head of Early Intervention and Prevention and the introduction of specialist roles to strengthen safeguarding practices, partnership working and work with children and schools. NYFRS has a statutory responsibility to protect workplaces and premises to which the public have access. The Protection team provide information, guidance and advice to businesses and other employers to prevent fires happening in the first instance and to reduce the impact should they occur. There is also a duty to enforce compliance with fire safety law.

There has been **significant investment to upskill supervisory managers in protection roles** to acquire a Level 3 Certificate in Fire Safety, so they can undertake building safety inspections in low and medium risk premises. All On-call supervisory managers and newly recruited wholetime Firefighters now can upskill to Level 2 Fire Safety, to build an understanding of fire safety management and the specific roles and responsibilities related to fire safety in the workplace.

When the NYFRS was last inspected, HMICFRS said the risk-based building inspection programme needed to include proportionate activity to reduce risk. Over the past 12 months, NYFRS has worked to address this and has made changes to its audit inspection programme to **prioritise visits to premises rated as high risk as well as buildings that have never been inspected** to gain a clear picture of building risk across the Service area. Specialist protection staff visited all 136 high/very high-risk premises due for inspection this year and responded to 99.9% of the 2097 planning/licence/building regulations application consultations within the stipulated timeframes.

Last year NYFRS completed 5694 protection jobs which equates to 397 days of targeted activity. Whilst this represents an 8% decrease in activity compared to the previous year, the reduction was anticipated in line with the refined inspection programme. NYFRS continues to undertake a high level of **protection activity which compares very favourably to other similar fire and rescue services**.

The internal auditors carried out a review of the action plan developed by NYFRS to address the gaps identified against the **recommendations in the Phase 1 Grenfell Tower Inquiry** and the monitoring of the action plan. Across York and North Yorkshire there are 26 high-rise residential buildings that meet the criteria defined in the <u>Building Safety Act 2022</u> of over 18m in height or at least 7 storeys, and containing at least two residential units. The review noted that NYFRS had responded quickly to implement the learning from the Grenfell Tower tragedy with local changes made in advance of the Phase 1 Grenfell Inquiry. These changes strengthened incident command, firefighting in high-rise incidents and fire safety training. An action plan and robust internal governance arrangements including a Grenfell Working Group are in place to respond to the recommendations. The review positively concluded that the Commissioner could take **substantial assurance** that the controls upon which NYFRS relies to manage this area are suitably designed, consistently applied and effective. The Audit Report can be found here: <u>Audit of Grenfell Action Plan</u>.

Priority 3

Outcome 3a

North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service has resource and response models that maximise productivity in communities and the efficiency and effectiveness of the response to emergencies.

The Community Risk Management Plan, known locally as the RRM 2022-25 sets out the risk in our county and city, and the services and resources provided by NYFRS to prevent and respond to emergencies.

Following a three-month public consultation, the Commissioner made the decision to approve all the Chief Fire Officer's change proposals with any efficiencies from the changes being re-invested into vital Service areas. Full details on the Commissioner's decisions can be found in the Decision Notice published here DN 16/2022 – Risk and Resource Model 2022-25

The Commissioner and Office seeks regular Service updates on the implementation and impact of the proposals. Progress over the last 12 months is summarised in the table below.

Proposals consulted upon

- Improving our prevention and protection work Permanently increase the specialist staff in our prevention and protection departments and increase prevention and protection activities across NYFRS.
- 2. Managing attendance to Automatic Fire Alarms

Reduce response to low-risk Automatic Fire Alarms (AFAs) which are often unwanted fire signals (an alarm activated by something other than a fire).

3. Response resource in the York area Change Huntington to an On-call fire station to rebalance the emergency response resource with the risk that exists in the York area.

Implementation update 2023-24

The changes at Huntington Fire station have allowed investment into prevention and protection teams creating additional specialist, permanent prevention and protection roles.

At the start of the financial year the attendance policy was changed to reduce attendance to unwanted automatic fire alarms. Crews have also increased the level of advice and education to building owners to reduce unnecessary attendance. Positively, there has been a 20% reduction in AFAs attended at commercial and retail properties compared to the previous year. Work is ongoing to finalise a charge for repeat, unnecessary callouts.

This change was implemented in November 2023. Positive staff engagement with Huntington's wholetime Firefighters led to their successful redeployment to alternative locations. The On-call fire engine has support from other stations to bolster its availability and a successful recruitment campaign in the local area has increased the number of On-call Firefighter recruits. There has been no notable increase in response times to incidents in the Huntington area post the change.

The Aerial Ladder Platform has been relocated to Acomb fire station.

 Response resource in Harrogate and Scarborough Replace the Tactical Response fire engines with the usual B-type fire engines crewed during the time when emergencies are most likely to happen. 	This change will take place at Harrogate first and, on completion of a full review of the implementation, be extended to Scarborough. Managers are engaging with staff and the Fire Brigade Union to design an option which meets the Commissioner's Decision Notice and provides a workable crewing model for the second fire engine at Harrogate fire station. This length of this engagement period will delay the implementation of this proposal.
Other Service Changes	Implementation update 2023-24
 Specialist water rescue resource capability in Craven 	A new specialist water rescue capability based at Skipton Fire Station went live in October 2023, to improve the response to water incidents in the West and South of the County. This asset contains 15 trained On-call Firefighters and specialist water rescue equipment.
2. Introduction of emergency response principles	The response principles reinforce commitment to mobilising resources with the correct <i>strength</i> , at <i>speed</i> , and <i>safely</i> . Response times across fire, road and water incidents are being monitored against the principles and have been reported through the Commissioner's Online Public Meetings.
3. Introduction of alternative duty systems	The Service Improvement Team are in discussion with staff and representative bodies about the possibility of introducing a self- rostering duty system. Self-rostering is already in place at Northallerton and Richmond fire stations.

Gathering and documenting **lessons learned** is a fundamental part of business change. It is a reflective process undertaken mainly by those that have been directly responsible for a project's delivery. A Lessons Learned document has been produced after reviewing the process for developing and implementing the RRM proposals and the CRP which underpinned this. The purpose of this report is to document positive and negative learning, so that it can **used to improve the planning process for the next RRM**.

Planning for the next RRM is now underway, commencing with a refresh of the NYFRS CRP .

SPOTLIGHT – Delivering the Right Support - Independent Road Victim Advocate (IRVA) Service for York and North Yorkshire

The Independent Road Victim Advocate is a county wide service commissioned through the OPFCC, working closely with NYP, providing support (face to face where practicable) to victims of road traffic incidents including those affected by a bereavement or serious injury.

At the start of the financial year, £18,358.50 was awarded to continue the vital service provided by the Independent Road Victim Advocate for our county. Brake was selected to extend the service from a part-time to full-time Advocate for York and North Yorkshire. The two-year contract commenced in December 2023 and is worth £47,948 in Year 1 and £48,204 in Year 2.

Over 2023-24, the Independent Road Victim Advocate Service helped 98 individuals across 77 cases:

- > 59 of these cases related to a road death.
- > 14 of these cases related to a serious injury.
- > 3 individuals were provided with support after witnessing a fatal collision.

Outcome 3b

North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service has developed a blueprint for, and has begun implementing, a new On-call model.

In July 2023, the **Station Manager for the On-Call Futures Programme commenced** in this newly established three-year post.

The On-Call Futures Programme is divided into **seven workstreams** and will improve the picture for On-call staff, supporting current staff in their roles and encouraging people to join up. For each workstream, the Station Manager is working up a range of proposals to improve the On-call Model in NYFRS.

- 1: Incentives and bonuses
- 2: Employer recognition
- 3: Fitness equipment

- 5: Utilising On-call for resilience
- 6: Skills based approach to crewing fire engines
- 7: Information Technology review
- 4: On-call station footprints for recruitment

The On-call Futures Station Manager has engaged extensively with On-call crews personally and through local managers so Firefighters can feed back their thoughts on his proposals under these workstreams as they are developed.

Significant progress has been made over the last year across the workstreams, including but not limited to:

- The FireWatch App has been introduced to make it easier for Firefighters to book available for duty. Weekly availability forms no longer need to be submitted, reducing the administrative burden.
- Several employer recognition activities have been developed to thank employers who release On-call Firefighters to attend incidents. These include workplace plaques, Christmas cards,

annual workplace visits from senior managers and specific recognition of times of exceptional demand/release of staff.

- Mosaic data is being used to better understand our communities where On-call staff are drawn from to ensure as many potential recruits are reached as possible and to widen the diversity of applicants.
- Reformed recruitment pathways ensure applicants are taken through the process efficiently. There has been an increase in the number of applicants for some locations which has led to the introduction of waiting lists.
- Targeted recruitment campaigns have successfully recruited to areas such as Huntington. Over the last year there have been 44 new joiners to the On-call.

In 2023, a **Mentoring Academy was introduced** to match up to 20 talented On-call Firefighters with mentors from across NYFRS, NYP and the OPFCC. Mentoring helps mentees work toward taking the next step in their career, assists personal development as well as providing advice on how to navigate any challenges.

SPOTLIGHT – Commissioner Visits to On-call Stations

Over the last 12 months, the Commissioner and OPFCC staff visited the vast majority of On-call and volunteer fire stations across the area, to talk to crews about **their experience of being an On-call Firefighter at NYFRS**.

Discussions covered what was working well, what could be improved and the challenges staff face with themes fed back to the NYFRS' Strategic Leadership Team to consider as part of the On-call Futures Programme and improvement proposals.



The lack of employer recognition was raised by most stations, one of the workstreams in the Oncall Futures Programme. In December 2023, for the first time in many years, the Commissioner and Chief Fire Officer sent joint Christmas cards to all employers who release staff to be On-call Firefighters, thanking them for their support.

Priority 4

Maximise efficiency to make the most effective use of all available resources

Outcome 4a

North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service is increasing its effectiveness and efficiency through transformation.

Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) must produce and publish annual efficiency plans that should now also include their plans for increasing productivity. The first **comprehensive Productivity and Efficiency Plan** was developed in 2023-24. The Commissioner and the Public can see both the progress made to date and the plans that NYFRS has in place to increase efficiency and productivity be reading the second Productivity and Efficiency Plan for 2024-25. This sets out the ongoing financial challenges and illustrates the recent transformation savings that have been delivered by NYFRS. The 2024-25 Plan can be viewed here <u>Productivity and Efficiency Plan 2024-25</u>.

NYFRS has developed and embarked on an **ambitious programme of change** comprising of improvement projects that span all areas of Service business including digital and data, continuous improvement and sustainability, culture, equality, diversity and inclusion, people and visible leadership and collaboration.

The **Breathing Apparatus replacement project** is one of these improvement projects and reflects significant **investment in people, safety, and technology**. The £1.7m investment will provide modern, state of the art respiratory protective equipment for Firefighters including new breathing apparatus sets, telemetry systems and enhanced communications which will improve Firefighter health, safety, and welfare. The supplier contract has been awarded and project implementation will commence during the next financial year.



Outcome 4b

North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service has better data to understand and improve itself.

Internal **Tactical performance dashboards** have been developed. This is a significant step forward, allowing managers to access performance information in one place, making it easier to see where work needs to be focused and prioritised with clear lines of accountability and responsibility. The new dashboards provide insight into high performing watches and stations which enable support mechanisms to be put in place across NYFRS. The dashboards enable managers to monitor progress against the new station plan targets and will also include information on staff qualifications, incidents attended, and crewing levels. Subsequently, this will allow for greater discussion and context through the governance model via NYFRS Delivery Performance Group and the Commissioner's Online Public Meetings.

The NYFRS dashboards are being supplemented by regular **"reality testing" to ensure a qualitative assessment of performance** as well as a quantitative recording of activity. This will be in the form of case file audits, watch performance audits and operational assurance at incidents.

NYFRS is developing an **outcome-based accountability model** and appreciates that it must monitor outputs which we know positively impact and improve outcomes in communities. Performance measures are better aligned to ensure that key activities such as monitoring performance against the response principles, maintaining the risk-based building inspection programme and meeting timescales for high priority home fire safety visit referrals improve.

Outcome 5a

Public trust in North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service is maintained.

In July 2023, the Home Office amended the 'Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 ('the Exceptions Order') to include all Fire and Rescue Authority employees. This meant that **all Fire and Rescue staff would need to undertake a new level of criminal record check** via the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and at a higher level for those undertaking trusted frontline roles dealing directly with members of the public. Increased levels of checks help managers to assess and mitigate risks, safeguard their colleagues and the public, and uphold high standards of professional integrity. They help ensure that only the right people can join or stay in the fire and rescue service.

The Commissioner sought regular progress updates from NYFRS to ensure background checks were being completed within a reasonable time frame. By **31 March 2024, 530 employees had either completed or were going through the process with 162 cases outstanding.** By August 2024, all employees will have been processed (or will be within the process) to receive a DBS and which is a significant achievement.

In March 2023, HMICFRS published a report into the values and culture of all 44 fire and rescue services in England. The report found that **bullying**, **harassment**, **and discrimination are**, **to varying degrees**, **still problems in all services**. The Chief Fire Officer and Commissioner are united in their focus to review NYFRS against the report's findings and address the recommendations as quickly and robustly as possible. A mature process for managing, tracking, and reporting progress against these recommendations is in place with regular updates provided at the Commissioner's Online Public Meetings. It is a significant Service achievement to have fully addressed **eighteen of the nineteen recommendations for Chief Fire Officers** over the last 12 months. One of the recommendations, to introduce 360 degree feedback across the Service is too costly to introduce but a local solution to embed this aspect within staff Performance Development Reviews has been implemented.

To accelerate understanding of the cultural change needed within NYFRS and the positive aspects of NYFRS culture, the Chief Fire Officer entered a collaboration with Huddersfield University to **develop a cultural framework for change and improvement**. The 'Framework for Change Project' work started during 2023-24. It will draw out the lived experiences of staff, giving staff the opportunity to voice their views and shape how NYFRS moves forward as an organisation. A behavioural and leadership charter will be produced, alongside an understanding of ethical health and where NYFRS needs to improve, with a toolkit to deliver the proposed change. This will form the basis of NYFRS cultural change journey over the coming years. Staff, stakeholders, and the University will steer the response and final product however, the Strategic Leadership Team will be responsible for implementing the change via the toolkit.

In 2023, the OPFCC and Service enhanced their governance arrangements with the **introduction of a joint Appropriate Authorities Meeting**. The 'Appropriate Authorities' are defined as the

organisation(s)/office holders with responsibility for standards, complaints, conduct, discipline, and public feedback in respect of NYFRS. These meetings help identify trends and concerns across public complaints and internal grievances and disciplinaries.

Launched in 2021, the national Core Code of Ethics sets out five ethical principles, which provide a basis for promoting good behaviour and challenging inappropriate behaviour. NYFRS staff consultation in December 2023 evidenced overwhelming support for just the Core Code of Ethics as the standalone ethical principles (instead of having both NYFRS Values and Core Code of Ethics).

In April 2024 NYFRS officially relaunched the Core Code of Ethics and removed the existing service values. This will reduce confusion and ensure that they become embedded, embodied and at the heart of day-to-day activity.



Putting our communities first

We put the interests of the public, the community, and service users first.

Integrity

We act with integrity including being open, honest, and consistent in everything that we do.



Dignity and respect

We treat people with dignity and respect, making decisions objectively based on evidence, without discrimination or bias.

Leadership

We are all positive role models, always demonstrating flexible and resilient leadership.

We are all accountable for everything we do and challenge all behaviour that falls short of the highest standards.



Equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI)

We continually recognise and promote the value of FDL both within the FRS and the wider communities in which we serve.

We stand against all forms of discrimination, create equal opportunities, promote equality, foster good relations, and celebrate difference.

Outcome 5b

Inclusivity, diversity, and equality are at the heart of North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service's organisational culture and service delivery.

NYFRS completed a review of its entire equality diversity and Inclusion governance and staff network structure, resulting in a new Strategic and Tactical Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Board, with revised terms of reference and attendees, focussing on delivery and assurance, not reassurance. The terms of reference includes a gap analysis and assurance of progress against the National Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, the London Fire Brigade Culture Review and NYFRS' Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy, encompassing one overarching plan.

Face to face equality, diversity and inclusion training is now mandatory for all staff with a suite of Vlogs available on NYFRS intranet to aid understanding and start open conversations. Pearl Catchers.....

NYFRS has an aging estate which has proved challenging to adapt. However, over the last few years a programme of improvement works has been delivered to ensure that stations are more suitable for a diverse workforce and provide better facilities and access to all. Progress updates on completion of the works has been sought regularly by the Commissioner at her Executive Board and all essential improvements to the estate were made by March 2024.

Outcome 5c

North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service is an employer of choice with a clear people focus that develops leadership, integrity, and inclusivity.

Launched in 2023, The Chief Fire Officer's Strategic Framework defines the purpose and intent: *"To reduce risk and vulnerability as a progressive, people centred Service, embedded at the heart of the community."* The new Framework focuses on three key components of NYFRS purpose: **Progress, People and Community** to ensure it continues to make sustainable progress at pace, whilst focusing on developing, supporting, and leading change, to make communities safer, though resourcing to risk. Five pillars enable NYFRS to flex and meet the changing needs of the Service and our community. These are:

- Digital and Data
- Continuous Improvement and sustainability
- Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture (Public Confidence)
- People and Inclusive Leadership
- Collaboration

Delivery of the Strategic Framework will fulfil a range of Service commitments; to deliver effective emergency response and training, reduce risk and vulnerability and enhance community resilience, drive service improvement and assurance, develop our people and create a pro-inclusion culture through values-based leadership and enable efficient collaboration, planning and communication.

The Framework aligns to the Fire and Rescue Plan, RRM and the National Fire Chief Council's: Fit for the Future strategy.

The **Leadership Hub** was launched in December 2023. It is a place to **support individuals in their professional development and enhance leadership abilities and skills**, no matter where staff are on their leadership journey. The leadership hub has been developed on a shared platform that is open to NYFRS, NYP and OPFCC colleagues.



The Leadership Hub is for everyone, whether staff want to create a personal development plan, understand themselves as a leader or access tools and resources. The Hub provides 'inspiration' and 'quick links' to spark interest as well as an Inspiration Library.

An internal **Coaching and Mentoring Academy** has been developed and First Line Leader training has now been delivered to all Middle and Supervisory Managers to support leadership development.

In December 2022, 42% of the 140 managerial posts from Crew Manager upwards were temporary. **Strengths Based Assessment promotion centres have been undertaken for all roles** from Deputy Chief Fire Officer to Firefighter in 18 months which has reduced the number of temporary managerial posts to 11% and represents an enormous joint enableNY/NYFRS effort and success story. Promotion boards and recruitment activity for the next 18 months has been planned to ensure NYFRS does not regress to a reactive temporary structure again.

SPOTLIGHT – Introduction of an Independent Reporting Line

The HMICFRS Culture and Values Report recommended that Chief Fire Officers provide staff with access to an independent reporting line that can be used as a



confidential way for staff to raise concerns outside their own service.

In 2023, the independent reporting line, 'FRS Speak Up' powered by CrimeStoppers went live. It provides an additional route for staff to pass on any information about wrongdoing to an independent team. The line can be used to report, for example:

- Discrimination, victimisation, and harassment (on gender, sexual orientation, disability etc.)
- Misogyny and violence against women and girls
- Health and safety breaches
- Fraud and corruption
- Poor or unsafe working practices

The introduction of the independent reporting line demonstrates commitment and progress towards embedding an inclusive, trusting, and positive culture.

Governance, Assurance and Scrutiny

The Commissioner, in their capacity as the Fire and Rescue Authority, is assured of adequate arrangements for the effective management of financial (see section on 'Funding and Spending'), governance and operational matters, as well as overall adherence to the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England.

Assurance Framework

In March 2023 we launched a new assurance framework. To ensure that we make a positive difference to the public, every day it is important to continually monitor and assess delivery of outcomes against the priorities which are set out in the Police and Crime Plan, and the Fire and Rescue Plan.

Whilst the Office of The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (OPFCC) regularly seeks assurance from the services, we will also scrutinise them to ensure that we can effectively and formally evidence that positive progress and outcomes are being achieved.

We continue to monitor the Police and Fire and Rescue Service in a range of ways which are detailed below.

Online Public Meetings	Bi-monthly, Five per year for each service (Break in August and December). At this meeting the Chief Constable is held to account in their delivery of the Police and Crime Plan and the Chief Fire Officer is held to account in their delivery of the Fire and Rescue Plan. Police complaints are monitored, and lessons learnt. Fire and Rescue complaints are monitored, and lessons learnt.
Executive Board (Monthly)	Monthly formal governance meeting between the commissioner, Chief Constable/Chief Fire Officer to ensure proper governance of the services and the OPFCC. This takes place through open, constructive debate of their respective statutory duties and the efficiency and effectiveness of their delivery against the Police and Crime Plan and Fire and Rescue Plan.
Chief Catchups	Closed informal briefings which enable dialogue and discussion monthly. This is an opportunity for the Commissioner to discuss elements of the Police and Crime Plan delivery, and the Fire and Rescue Plan delivery based on themes and receive updates on current issues and operational matters.
Independent audit committee	The Audit Committee provides independent scrutiny on the adequacy of the corporate governance and risk management arrangements in place. It advises the North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority according to good governance principles and proper practices.
Joint independent audit committee	The Joint Independent Audit Committee (JIAC) provides independent scrutiny on the adequacy of the corporate governance and risk management arrangements in place. It jointly advises the Commissioner and Chief Constable according to good governance principles and proper practices.
Scrutiny Panels	Scrutiny Panels allow members of the Public to hold North Yorkshire Police to account via review of incidents, policing powers and tactics. Panel observations, feedback and recommendations facilitate continuous learning, improvement of police services and identification of best practice.

Community Review Group	The Community Review Groups will assess and provide feedback on areas which the scrutiny panels review. This includes identifying good practice and areas for learning, making referrals and recommendations.	
Independent Ethics advisory board	Under development with an Independent Chair. The Panel will provide independent and effective challenge and assurance around integrity, standards and ethics of decision-making in policing and fire.	
Independent custody visitors	Independent Custody Visitors are members of the local community who visit police stations unannounced to check on the welfare of people in police custody.	
Violence against women and girls' strategic governance board.	6-monthly Joint Violence Against Women and Girls Strategic Governance Board meetings, chaired by the Commissioner to monitor overall progress against our joint violence against women and girls' strategic objectives and provide greater transparency and accountability to increase public confidence in how we are improving the overall safety of women and girls.	
Introduced in 2023-24 NYFRS Appropriate Authorities Meeting	Quarterly meetings introduced from April 2023, alternately chaired by the OPFCC's Monitoring Officer and Deputy Chief Fire Officer to discuss, and review standards, complaints, conduct, discipline, and public feedback in respect of North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service.	
Frequent interactions	Informal interactions between the services and OPFCC staff. This enables and encourages spontaneous face-to-face discussions between Chief Officers, Senior OPFCC staff, who may receive: • Updates on significant issues • Notification of significant/critical incidents OPFCC staff will also conduct site visits across York and North Yorkshire.	
Complemented by	 Bespoke briefings from Chief Constable/Chief Fire Officer on significant or sensitive issues. Senior OPFCC staff attending key meetings within the services (e.g., HMICFRS* Governance Board, Gold Groups, Risk and Assurance Boards, Performance boards, etc.) OPFCC staff conducting further checks and audits. Routine liaison between Senior OPFCC staff Senior Staff/Officers. Feedback from Independent Custody Visitors and Appropriate Adults. Regular meetings with Public Bodies and Inspectorates (e.g., HMICFRS). Independent review of complaints. 	

To underpin improvements in the services, so that they can be the best they can at protecting us and keeping us safe and feeling safe, we will utilise the frameworks set out by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) to support our scrutiny. For example, we will use questions that HMICFRS use to establish how the services are performing and improving outcomes.

We will evaluate what the public tell us through our engagement activities and through information we receive into our office. At our Delivery and Assurance Board we will regularly assess our performance against our own OPFCC Delivery Plan which can be found here: <u>Organisational Activity Plan 2024/25</u>.

Additionally, the Commissioner carries out several consultations with the Public and partners throughout the year. We will review reports from external inspections such as HMICFRS and monitor the services delivery against any action plans developed because of these inspections.

Last year's fire and rescue Online Public Meetings (OPMs) assurance presentations included, effectiveness of the Service's Prevention and Protection activities, services to rural communities, and workforce planning. The meetings also consider fire and rescue performance data, allowing the Commissioner to assess performance against public priorities. The OPM presentations can be found here: <u>Online Public Meetings</u>.

Complaints and Recognition

On 1 April 2021, the Complaints and Recognition Team (CRT) within the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner became the main contact for all Fire and Rescue related complaints and compliments. By the end of the financial year, the Commissioner's CRT had received 12 new complaints and 61 compliments. The themes of all complaints are identified and analysed to



ensure organisational learning and any topical issues are raised at the Commissioner's Online Public Meetings.

The Independent Audit Committee

The Committee proactively supports the Commissioner and Chief Fire Officer in ensuring the right governance and control mechanisms are in place to support a well-run fire and rescue service. The Committee reviews and scrutinises the adequacy and effectiveness of risk management, internal audit and control and corporate governance arrangements of the Fire and Rescue Service, as well as reviewing financial management and reporting.

Governance and decision-making arrangements continue to be regarded as fit for purpose in accordance with the governance framework. The Commissioner's draft Annual Governance Statement can be found at: <u>Annual Governance Statement 2023-24</u>. There are several issues of a significant nature that need to be urgently addressed during 2024/25, along with several areas that require continued focus to ensure that they do not become significant issues in future years.

A light touch, desktop review of the current Corporate Governance Framework by Statutory Officers in March 2024, confirmed that it was fit for purpose to remain in place up until governance transfer on 6 May 2024, at which point it would be superseded by the Combined Authority Constitution. The current Framework can be found on the Commissioner's website <u>Corporate Governance</u> <u>Framework</u>.

In August 2023, the OPFCC provided a seminar for members of North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service's Strategic Leadership Team, to raise awareness of governance arrangements. The seminar was well received by members.

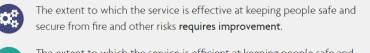
Operational Assurance

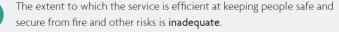
The Commissioner, as Fire Authority must outline the way in which the authority and its fire and rescue service has had regard to the National Framework and the local Integrated Risk Management Plan (known locally as the RRM) over the last year. This is called operational assurance and an assurance statement has been provided by the Chief Fire Officer - <u>Statement of Operational Assurance 2023-24</u> [link to be provided].

HMICFRS - Inspection of North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service

National assessments including His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) reports are used to assess performance of the Service compared to other services.

In February 2023, the Commissioner welcomed the latest assessment by HMICFRS of NYFRS's effectiveness, efficiency and how it looks after its people. The report is an independent and rigorous assessment which the Commissioner can use to ensure NYFRS becomes an exemplary service. The full inspection report can be found at <u>NYFRS: HMICFRS Inspection Report-2021-22</u>.





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

Following the HMICFRS inspection, two Causes of Concern (CoC) were identified. HMICFRS wanted assurance that NYFRS:

- makes sure it has the right workforce skills and capabilities it needs.
- has robust processes in place to ensure transformation activities provide efficiency and effectiveness.

In September 2023, the Inspectorate returned to NYFRS to make sure it had made satisfactory progress to address both causes of concern. The improvements made by NYFRS were such that both concerns could be removed.

A robust action plan is in place and commitment from the Chief Fire Officer to address all areas of improvement. Progress is reported to the Commissioner's Online Public Meetings. Going forward, the Mayor will continue to hold NYFRS to account for delivery, in readiness for the next full inspection in January 2025.

Check and challenge sessions are now in place through NYFRS HMICFRS specific meetings, attended by OPFCC staff to help provide scrutiny of preparedness ahead of the next inspection in January 2025. Questions are framed using the characteristics of 'Good' and allow the Senior Responsible Owners to articulate evidence in meeting these characteristics and progress made since the last inspection. The intention is to make sure that all areas of the organisation can explain and evidence the journey of improvement.

Performance

The OPFCC and NYFRS are committed to providing a high-quality service to the public. You can review NYFRS' performance in several ways:

- Office of the Policing, Fire, Crime and Commissioning: We publish NYFRS's performance report dashboard on the OPFCC website located here: <u>Performance Dashboards</u>
- Online Public Meetings: The Commissioner holds regular online public meetings where you can ask questions about NYFRS's performance. These meetings are held every other month and are streamed live on the Commissioner's website: <u>Remit of the Online Public Meetings</u>
- North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service: publishes details of all incidents attended over a 24hour period on its website. The incident details are updated daily and can be found here: <u>Incidents information</u>
- Home Office Website: Information collected by the Home Office from Fire and Rescue Services across England and Wales, covers fires, false alarms and other incidents attended by fire crews. The statistics include the numbers of incidents, fires, fatalities and casualties as well as information on response times to fires. This information can be accessed here: <u>Home Office</u> <u>fire and rescue statistics</u>
- His Majesty's Inspectorate for Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS): HMICFRS is an independent body that inspects fire and rescue services in England and Wales. HMICFRS publishes reports on each fire and rescue service that assess their performance in several areas, including effectiveness, efficiency and how NYFRS looks after its people. Further details about the inspections can be viewed here: <u>HMICFRS Fire Service Inspections</u>

Funding and Spending

Funding Breakdown 2023/24	Actual £000s	%*
Core Grant	(9,497)	23%
Precept (including Collection Surplus)	(25,253)	61%
Grants (Ringfenced)	(5,243)	13%
Non Grant Income (including project income)	(1,328)	3%
Total Funding	(41,320)	100%
	Actual	0/*
Expenditure Breakdown 2023/24	£000s	%*
Salary Costs (including NI and Pensions)	29,285	71%
Injury and Medical Pensions	1,095	3%
Other non salary employee costs	670	2%
Premises costs	2,572	6%
Supplies and Services	3,714	9%
Transport costs (including fuel)	1,036	3%
Financial costs	1,930	5%
PFI	1,782	4%
Budgeted transfers from reserves	(682)	-2%
Total expenditure	41,402	100%
Overspend funded from Reserves	82	0%

* Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100%

Financial Position

2023-24 was another challenging year from a financial perspective, for many obvious reasons including:

- Interest rates that increased to 5.25%,
- Inflation that continued to increase costs beyond budgeted levels; and
- Pay awards that were subsequently higher than budget too.

Given these challenges, plus additional challenges that naturally occur in running a business that spends over £40m per year, most additional costs were able to be contained within the original budget, except for £82k which is reported as an overspend for the year.

The vast majority (almost 70%) of the funding available to NYFRS is spent on employment costs (i.e., Pay, National Insurance, and Pensions). The 2023-24 pay budgets included a 5% pay award during 2023-24. However, given the significant increases in inflation that are referred to above, the pay award for staff at the lower end of the pay scale were higher than this and added some recurring pressure into the financial plans.

2023-24 saw the start of the process to implement the changes agreed, as part of the public consultation, on the way that North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service would deliver its services going forward. The efficiencies from the first part of this change programme are due to be fully realised during 2024-25, with others planned to be implemented in subsequent years.

2023-24 will be the last year that North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority has a standalone set of Financial Accounts. The Fire and Rescue Authority will become part of the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority from the 7th May 2024 and therefore the annual Statement of Accounts will cover a period from the 1st April 2023 up until the 6th May 2024.

Given this longer timeframe, these accounts have only just begun to be prepared but will be posted on the website when complete, along with the auditor's annual report on the following link: <u>Annual</u> <u>Statement of Accounts to 31 March 2024</u>

Fire and rescue precept

Most of the funding comes via the local precept, the amount people pay through their council tax for their fire and rescue services. Between December 2023 and January 2024, the Commissioner consulted on setting the fire and rescue precept and received over 2600 responses from the public. The majority (54%) supported an increase of at least £5 (6.2%). Unfortunately, despite the Commissioner and Chief Fire Officer campaigning for £5 precept flexibility to provide the opportunity to invest into North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service, the Government set an upper limit of 2.99%. This equates to an increase of £2.41 for an average Band D property bringing the total fire and rescue precept for 2024-25 to £83.02.

Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Community Risk Profile (CRP)	This is an assessment of risk across York and North Yorkshire by NYFRS.
Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), known locally as the Risk and Resource Model (RRM)	The RRM is a Service plan that sets out how resources, such as fire engines and people, will be used, to address and reduce the risk identified in the Community Risk Profile and the likelihood of emergency events occurring.
National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC)	This body has as a unique role in representing fire and rescue services at a national level and, as the professional voice of the fire and rescue service
Brake	National road safety charity that cares for road victims and campaigns for safer roads for all.
Breathing Apparatus Telemetry	Telemetry is an automatic, electronic system to allow the precise monitoring of how much breathable air each Firefighter using Breathing Apparatus has remaining.
On-call Firefighters	On-call Firefighters are trained Firefighters who, rather than being based at a fire station, provide on- call cover from home and/or their place of work. They respond to a pager/alerter.
Wholetime Firefighters	Wholetime Firefighters are contracted to work in the fire service as their primary employment serving at wholetime (24 hr) fire stations.

 York & North Yorkshire Office for Policing, Fire, Crime and Commissioning Part of the Contacts 	
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Helping you to be safe and feel safe in York and North Yorkshire