



Service Plan 2026-2027



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Our vision for Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service is that we are:

***Swift to Serve,
so Suffolk is a place
where people lead safe
and fulfilling lives.***



Jon Lacey
Chief Fire Officer
Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service



Welcome to our Service Plan 2026-2027 for Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service

Over the past year, we have made real progress as a Service during a time of change, reflection and political uncertainty.

The His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) revisit in October last year recognised improvements in our leadership, communication and willingness to look honestly at our culture, while reminding us there is more to do.

I am proud of how colleagues across the Service have embraced the need for growth in these areas, which is helping us build the foundations of a more open, inclusive and accountable organisation.

Looking ahead to 2026–27, our priorities remain clear. We will continue to strengthen our culture so that everyone feels supported, safe and respected. At the same time, we must keep delivering consistently high-quality services for the public, from preventing risks in homes and workplaces to responding effectively when people need us.

We will remain focused on addressing the HMICFRS inspection actions, not as a tick box exercise, but because they are essential to Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) becoming the trusted, high performing Service we want to be for our staff and our communities.

We continue to work in a challenging financial environment, so being stable, responsible and transparent with our resources remains essential.

We will also be involved in preparing for the transfer of SFRS to the Mayoral Combined County Authority (MCCA). Our aim is a smooth transition that protects our people, strengthens our governance and benefits our communities.

This Service Plan brings all of this together. It sets out how we will deliver the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), respond to inspection outcomes, focus on community needs, and support our people to do their best work. I'm proud of the dedication shown across our Service, and I look forward to continuing this improvement journey with you as we shape the future of SFRS.

As Chief Fire Officer, my commitment to you is that:



We will **work towards a more diverse workforce**



We will **balance Prevention, Protection and Response activity**

to meet statutory duties and best serve our community.



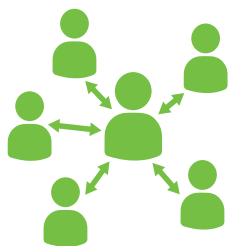
We will **work flexibly** and make the most of new and innovative approaches.

We will **respond positively to the HMICFRS inspections**

and support the national response to the HMICFRS State of the Nation report to drive positive change to our people and our communities.



We will **make and record transparent decisions** based on evidence.



We will **engage with local communities, partners, and representative bodies**, so everyone has an opportunity to influence the future direction of the Fire and Rescue Service. Our community and partners are at the very heart of what the Service is here to provide, so your views are crucial to our success.

We will **continue to listen to staff feedback** and work collaboratively with our colleagues across the Service to ensure that selection, recruitment, development and retention policies, and other key areas, reflect their views and ideas.



We will **provide clear direction and accountability** in all areas of our Service.



We will **celebrate your success** through our performance and assurance framework.



03

Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP)

Our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2023–2027, sets out the main risks facing our county, including those that are current, emerging and expected in the future. It gives us a clear direction so we can plan our work, use our resources wisely and continue to improve community safety.

The CRMP is our long-term plan. It explains our priorities and the outcomes we want to achieve, making sure we focus on the risks that matter most and work in a way that is flexible, efficient and ready to meet new challenges.

Our Service Plan turns these priorities into the practical actions we will take over the coming year. It sets out what we will do, how we will do it and how we will measure our progress. These actions are then reflected in team and station plans, so there is a clear link between the CRMP and the work we carry out every day in our communities.

By planning in this way, and by using the best available risk information, we make sure our time, skills and resources are targeted where they will have the greatest impact and where our communities need us most.

The CRMP has set Suffolk Fire & Rescue Service five strategic priorities to deliver over four years

The CRMP identifies five strategic priorities that guide our activity across prevention, protection, response, organisational resilience and our people.

<p>People</p> 	Review our on-call sustainability
	Recruite and retain non-opertaional support staff
	Continue to grow an inclusive and diverse workforce
<p>Prevention</p> 	Develop our home safety prevention work
	Increased prevention work in rural communities
	Focused prevention work for our hard-to-reach communities

<h3>Protection</h3> 	<p>Develop our work in the built environment</p>
	<p>Support the NFCC in establishing the H&S exec building safety regulator</p>
	<p>Provide advice and guidance on new legislation, ensuring compliance and enforcement of new laws</p>
<h3>Response</h3> 	<p>Implement revised response standards</p>
	<p>Ensure our emergency fleet can mitigate emerging risks</p>
	<p>Use our resources to meet our community needs in partnership with others</p>
<h3>Climate</h3> 	<p>Match our resources to risk</p>
	<p>Transition to a zero-emission fleet</p>
	<p>Support SCC with the delivery of the Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan</p>
	<p>Review our training equipment and firefighting methodology to enable the service to adapt to the effects of climate change</p>



04

How our plans connect – The Golden Thread

At the heart of everything we do is our vision: to be ‘Swift to Serve’, so that Suffolk is a place where people can lead safe and fulfilling lives.

This vision underpins our priorities and is shaped by the risks in our communities.

These risks inform our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), our long-term strategic plan. The CRMP sets out our key priorities and the outcomes we want to achieve, making sure we focus our resources where they will have the greatest impact.

Our Service Plan turns those priorities into the specific actions we will take this year. It provides a clear link between the CRMP and the work carried out across the Service.

From this, departments and fire stations develop their own plans. Department plans show how each area will deliver the CRMP priorities, while Local Risk Management Plans (LRMPs) set out the risk-based activity for each station area, using the Community Risk Data Set, partner information and local knowledge. This ensures our prevention, protection and response work is targeted at the people, places and risks that need us most.

At an individual level, team plans are used to set personal objectives. This means everyone can see how their role contributes to our vision and can take responsibility for delivering a safer Suffolk for our communities.



05

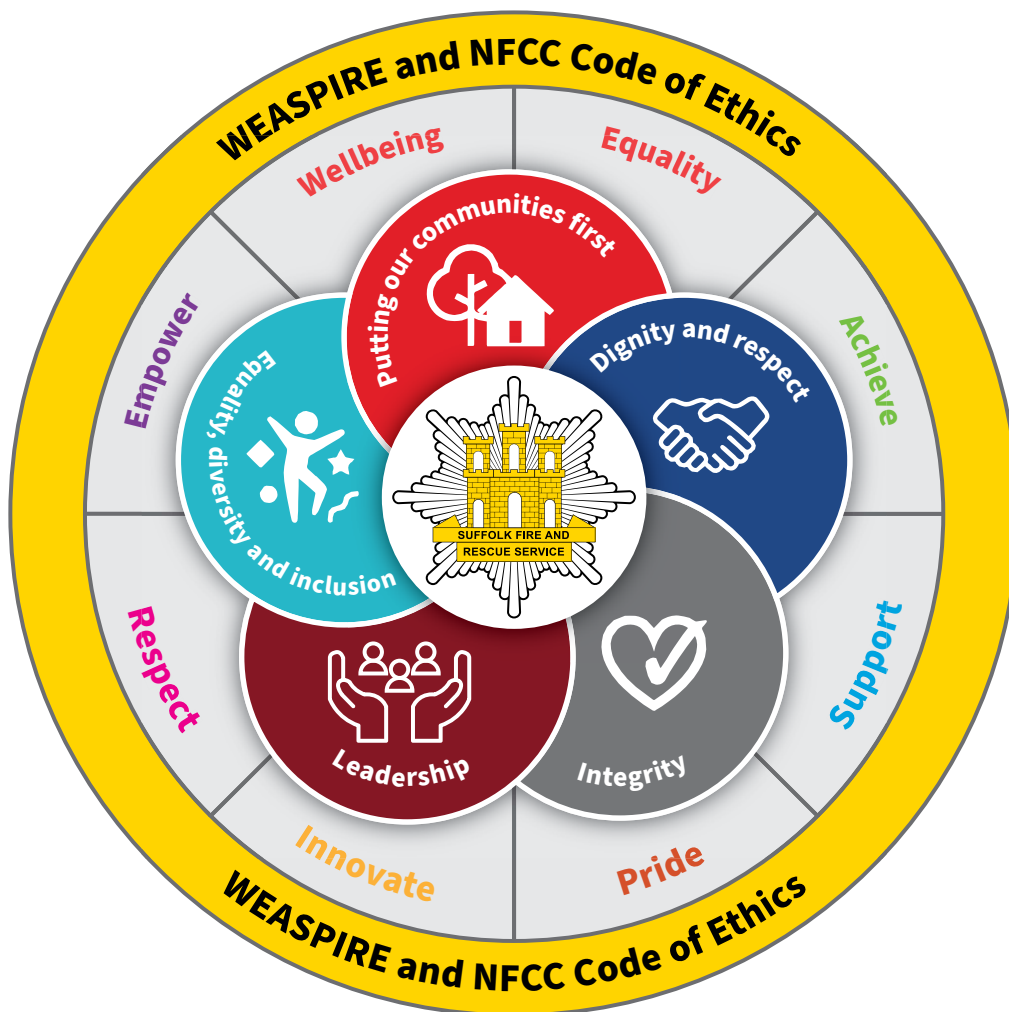
Our culture and behaviours

We are committed to building a positive and inclusive workplace that reflects the communities we serve and supports our people to perform at their best. HMICFRS recognised that, while we have made progress, there is more to do to strengthen trust, leadership and communication across the Service. We are using this feedback to drive meaningful and lasting improvement.

We know that building trust and embedding the right culture will take time. Our priority is to listen to our people and to create an environment where everyone feels respected, supported and heard. We will do this by improving the way we communicate and engage, increasing the visibility of managers and senior leaders, and investing in the development of both our current and future leaders so they have the skills and confidence to lead well.

A strong and supportive culture will help us to innovate, improve performance and take pride in the service we provide to our communities. This is essential to delivering the priorities and outcomes set out in our CRMP.

Our WE ASPIRE values and the NFCC Code of Ethics set the standard for how we work and how we treat each other. They guide our behaviour and decision making and help us to create a consistent, professional and inclusive organisation.



06

Communication and engagement

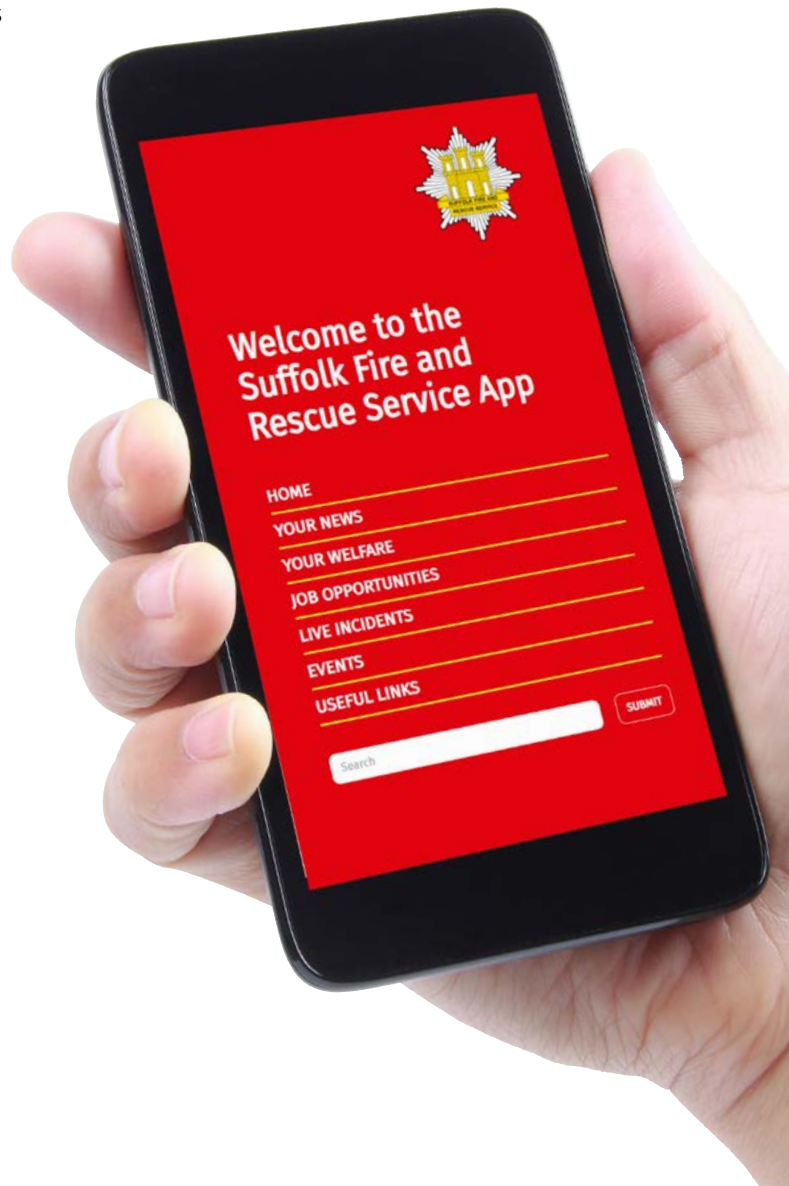
Improving communication and engagement is a key priority for the Service and an important part of our culture and leadership improvement work. Clear, open and consistent communication helps people understand our priorities, feel involved in decisions and see how their feedback is used. This builds trust, strengthens working relationships and supports the delivery of our CRMP.

Our aim is to make sure communication works in all directions; sharing clear information, listening to our people and using what we hear to shape our planning and decision making.

Over the coming year we will:

- Continue to develop the Staff Engagement Group and staff networks, including EDI and Swift groups, so colleagues can share experiences, influence service direction and help shape policies and practice
- Act on findings from staff surveys, supported by focus groups, to understand people’s experiences, job satisfaction and views on culture, leadership and development
- Work closely with our representative bodies to make sure staff views are heard and acted upon
- Promote and make best use of the Fire Service app and other communication channels
- Increase leadership visibility and engagement with teams across the Service

Through this work we will create more opportunities for two-way communication, improve understanding of our plans and make sure our people feel informed, involved and valued.



07

Message from the DCFO



Henry Griffin

*Deputy Chief Fire Officer
Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service*

As Deputy Chief Fire Officer, my role is to turn the direction set by the Chief Fire Officer and Fire Authority into clear, consistent delivery. This year, that means keeping a close focus on risk, driving our priorities forward, and providing strong governance and open performance reporting.

The HMICFRS revisit recognised the steps we have already taken to strengthen leadership, communication and culture. It also reminded us that lasting improvement takes time and consistency. In the year ahead, I will be focused on ensuring the completion of all inspection actions and on making sure colleagues can see and trust the improvements we are delivering together.

We will continue to build a positive, inclusive and values driven culture where people feel able to speak up, contribute and succeed. Strengthening leadership behaviours, embedding the NFCC Code of Ethics and making equality, diversity and inclusion part of everyday practice will remain central to this.

Operationally, we will keep delivering excellent public service by ensuring the right resources are in the right places, improving the consistency of our prevention and response work, and making better use of data to guide decisions.

Preparing for the transition of SFRS into the Mayoral Combined County Authority will also be a major focus. I will work closely with teams to ensure our governance, risk management and operational structures are ready. Our priority is to give staff clarity and stability while strengthening accountability and improving outcomes for our communities.

Across all five areas of focus: People and Resources; Prevention, Protection and Business Support; Response; Organisational Risk and Improvement and Devolution & Transformation, I will work with Area Managers to ensure we remain aligned to the CRMP and deliver on our strategic priorities.

Ultimately, our success will be measured by how well we support our people, how effectively we address areas for improvement, and the positive impact we have on the safety and wellbeing of Suffolk's communities.

08

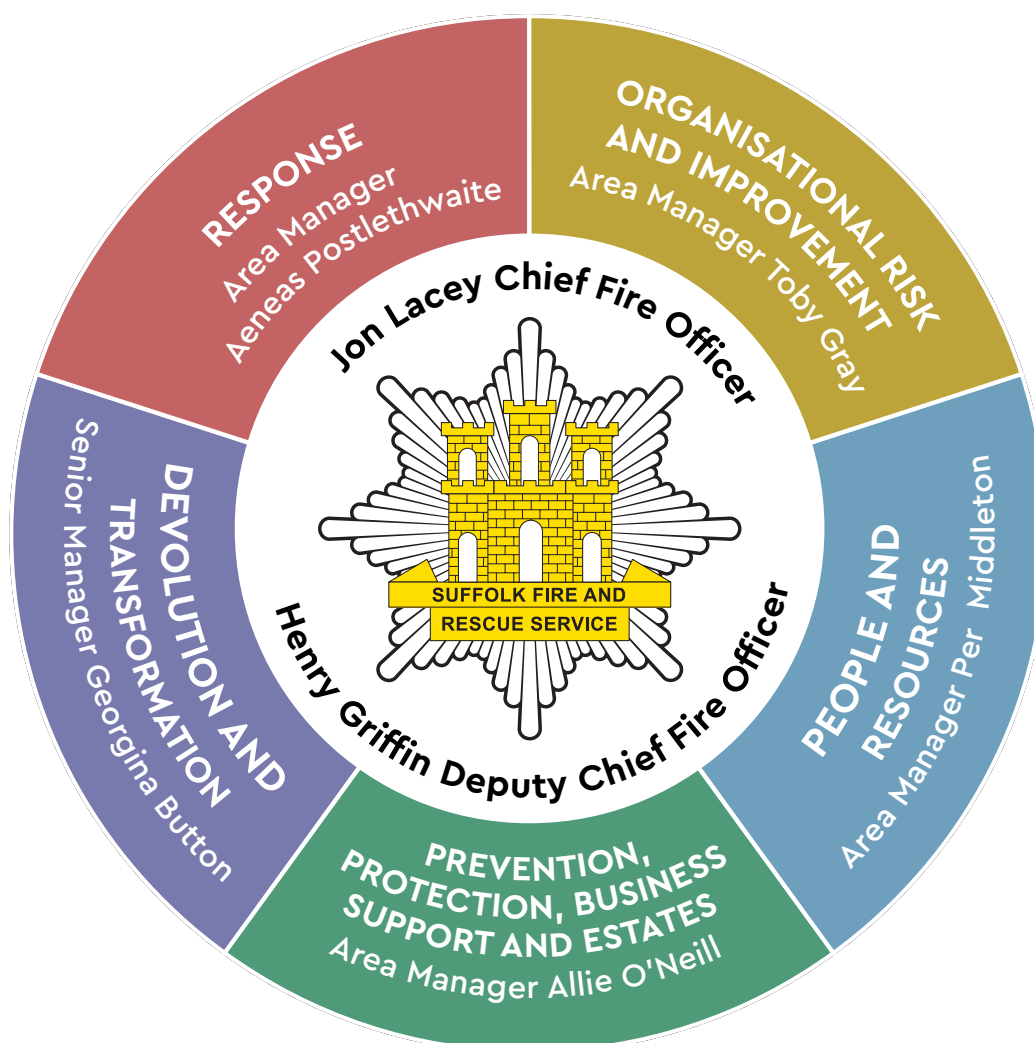
Our strategic structure

The risks we face continue to change, and our Service Plan reflects the strategic direction set out in our CRMP. Our five areas of focus, led by the DCFO and Area Managers, set out the key actions that will guide our work over the coming year.

These priorities are aligned to the CRMP and tailored to make sure we deliver meaningful progress in 2026–27. Their success depends on strong collaboration across all parts of the Service.

We will monitor delivery through our performance assurance framework and Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) so we can track progress, understand our impact and make sure we are achieving results in each of these areas.

The following sections set out how each of these areas will deliver their CRMP priorities during 2026-27.





Our strategic direction and key areas of focus

Each of our five areas of focus has a clear strategic direction and a set of priorities for the coming year. These provide a framework for the teams within each area to develop detailed plans that will support delivery throughout the financial year.

More detailed information is provided in the sections that follow, explaining how each area will deliver these priorities and support the objectives set out in our Community Risk Management Plan.

PEOPLE AND RESOURCES



Strategic direction

Build a positive, inclusive and values-led culture, with the right people, skills and resources to deliver the best service to Suffolk. To achieve this we will:

- Embed HMICFRS improvements relating to culture, leadership and professional standards
- Respond to staff survey and peer review findings to improve trust, communication and engagement
- Strengthen workforce planning, succession planning and targeted recruitment
- Improve on-call recruitment, retention and availability
- Embed meaningful PDRs, clear progression routes and inclusive development
- Improve equality, diversity and inclusion through better data, training and decision making
- Strengthen professional standards and confidential reporting processes
- Modernise fleet, equipment and assets through key replacement and upgrade programmes
- Maintain high-quality operational training and develop capability for current and emerging risks

PREVENTION



Strategic direction

Use data, partnerships and targeted activity to reduce risk and improve safety for the most vulnerable people in Suffolk. To achieve this we will:

- Target home fire safety activity using community risk data and partner information
- Maintain the 24-hour response for people at highest risk
- Improve referral pathways and integrate new prevention systems and technology
- Strengthen safeguarding training, awareness and reporting
- Continue to develop specialist prevention work for people with complex needs
- Expand education and early intervention work, including SPARK (our youth fire safety advice programme), older driver and fire setting initiatives
- Strengthen partnership working with health, social care and other blue light services
- Improve quality assurance, evaluation and performance of prevention activity
- Increase support to rural and seldom-heard communities

PROTECTION



Strategic direction

Keep people and businesses safe by delivering proportionate, risk-based fire protection activity and staying ahead of legislative and environmental change. To achieve this we will:

- Deliver risk-based protection activity across the county
- Strengthen business engagement and explore a Primary Authority approach
- Reduce unwanted fire signals through targeted interventions and policy review
- Implement national learning, including Grenfell Tower Inquiry and Manchester Arena recommendations
- Keep protection staff up to date with changes in legislation and guidance
- Improve systems and technology to support mobile and efficient inspections
- Review and update the Risk Based Intervention Programme
- Support fire investigation activity and monitor performance
- Work with partners on major developments, housing growth and significant infrastructure
- Build expertise in emerging risks such as high-bay storage, solar, battery storage and nuclear-related sites

BUSINESS SUPPORT AND ESTATES



Strategic direction

Provide effective support services, facilities and infrastructure that enable all areas of the Service to operate efficiently and safely. To achieve this we will:

- Strengthen administrative support and coordination across operational and specialist departments
- Improve internal and external communications to ensure clear and consistent information
- Support the new Suffolk Fire Control Room and enhancing cross-service collaboration
- Manage property budgets and delivering a programme of improvements to fire stations and facilities
- Improve welfare facilities, dignity at work and protection from fire contaminants
- Maintain and modernise the estate while supporting sustainability and future service needs

RESPONSE



Strategic direction

Provide an effective, efficient and resilient emergency response that matches resources to risk and supports safer communities. To achieve this we will:

- Review how resources are allocated to meet current and future demand
- Strengthen operational capability through training, development and equipment
- Improve response efficiency and consistency using data and performance insight
- Continue targeted prevention and safeguarding activity through response crews
- Review duty systems to improve resilience and sustainability
- Strengthen water rescue capability
- Maintain regular multi-agency training and exercising with partners
- Develop firefighter skills, competencies and tactical advisor roles
- Continue to improve control room capability and use of new technology
- Prepare for emerging risks including Sizewell C, extreme weather and wider county change
- Support staff wellbeing and critical incident support

ORGANISATIONAL RISK AND IMPROVEMENT

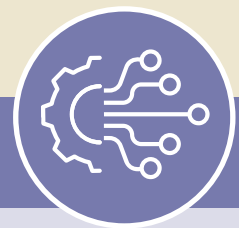


Strategic direction

Support a safe, professional and high-performing service through strong risk management, resilient systems, effective governance and continuous improvement. To achieve this we will:

- Deliver improvement activity through the Service Plan and HMICFRS action plan
- Improve systems and technology to support prevention, protection, response and risk work
- Strengthen performance, governance and project management arrangements
- Develop policy, health and safety, and risk systems to improve compliance and assurance
- Increase the visibility and use of performance data through Power BI and other tools
- Strengthen work with local, regional and national partners
- Support resilience, preparedness and multi-agency planning through the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) and Suffolk Resilience Forum (SRF)
- Improve operational risk information, site assurance, debriefing and organisational learning
- Support nationally significant infrastructure projects such as Sizewell C, Sealink and Lionlink
- Continue implementation of National Operational Guidance and new fire control guidance
- Begin development of the next CRMP for 2027–2031

DEVOLUTION AND TRANSFORMATION



Strategic direction

Support a safe, professional and high-performing service through strong risk management, resilient systems, effective governance and continuous improvement. To achieve this we will:

- Deliver improvement activity through the Service Improvement Plan and HMICFRS action plan
- Improve systems and technology to support prevention, protection, response and risk work
- Strengthen performance, governance and project management arrangements
- Develop policy, health and safety, and risk systems to improve compliance and assurance
- Increase the visibility and use of performance data through Power BI and other tools
- Strengthen work with local, regional and national partners
- Support resilience, preparedness and multi-agency planning through the LRF and SRF
- Improve operational risk information, site assurance, debriefing and organisational learning
- Support nationally significant infrastructure projects such as Sizewell C, Sealink and Lionlink
- Continue implementation of National Operational Guidance and new fire control guidance
- Begin development of the next CRMP for 2027–2031

10



People and Resources

Our vision is to build a positive, values-driven culture that strengthens transparency, trust, and collaboration across the Service.



Per Middleton

*Area Manager,
People and Resources,
Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service*

SFRS is committed to delivering the best possible service to our community. Our people and resources are at the heart of achieving this, and our aim is to be the employer of choice, to attract and keep the most diverse and talented people.

We will continue investing in our people and resources to make long term organisational improvements, underpinned with the solid foundations of positive values and culture.

Our focus is to improve the areas of service identified of concern and in need of improvement from the HMICFRS. We will ensure these changes are embedded by meaningful evaluation, adapting and refining our approach to deliver organisational and cultural transformation.

Our focus will be on the end user for all our objectives, enabling people to feel connected to our plan, so they can see and feel the improvements we are seeking to make.

To support this, we will:

- Continue building on the progress made from the last HMICFRS inspection, providing lasting and meaningful change and embedding the improvements
- Evaluate the impact of bespoke transformational learning delivered to Senior Leaders and other management tiers, with a focus on middle managers and staff at operational levels
- Ensure the Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) process is at the core of all strategic decisions and boards, with an evaluation process to assure they are current and effective
- Evaluate and improve the data and analysis reported into our 'People Board' to inform decisions and actions in the service
- Plan and deliver a structured response to the findings of our staff survey 'Your Voice' and a Peer Review we commissioned into SFRS values and culture, responding to the key themes
- Strengthen and embed Professional Standards to ensure consistency and build greater confidence among our staff
- Proactively engage with our people through staff groups, employee networks, and trade unions, to strengthen transparency, trust, and collaboration across the service
- Use the full benefit of our dedicated SFRS communications officer to improve staff communication and engagement from strategic level to all areas of the service

Workforce planning and development

Our mission is to ensure the right people with the right skills are available across the organisation through inclusive development, meaningful PDRs, and transparent promotion and progression.

The aim of our Workforce Planning and Development team is to ensure we have talented and appropriately trained people in place to continue delivering the best service to the people of Suffolk. To be an effective emergency service, we need the right people, with the right skills to be available at all levels of our organisation.

We will achieve this by investing in our people, and creating an inclusive and supportive culture, where everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Effective workforce planning relies on high-quality data, and we will support our teams to provide this to inform areas of opportunity and risk. We will keep a dedicated focus on highly technical areas such as fire control, fire protection, ICT, fire supplies and technical services (FSATS) and engineering, to ensure a high level of continuity.

We will evaluate the reliability and accuracy of our workforce data, to ensure recruitment, training and financial resources are used in the most effective way, and service delivery is maintained.

Succession planning and staff retention are workforce planning priorities – especially in relation to our On-Call workforce. We understand meaningful engagement is key to this and will seek opportunities for this within significant projects such as the working time directive and secondary contracts, which have the potential for significant impacts.

The workforce planning team will assist managers to forecast and resource their areas of service, supporting priority and hard to recruit areas through targeted recruitment.

All staff have the opportunity to develop, and this requires meaningful conversations and personal development reviews (PDRs). We will further embed the improvements we have made to this process, to ensure it is clear and concise for our managers and all staff can realise the value invested into personal development.

We will seek opportunities to recognise talent within the organisation and increase and retain diversity at all levels. We will achieve this by reviewing our progression guidance to ensure the organisation benefits from the most suitable people, thriving in roles that are suited to their skills, knowledge and talents. We will ensure equitable progression routes wherever that is possible.

A core priority is ensuring the highest possible professional standards for values and culture are demonstrated at all levels of the service. We have recruited two dedicated professional standards officers, who will ensure this is delivered. Their initial focus will be improving the process and response to confidential reporting from our staff, and equipping our managers with knowledge, skills and tools to prevent issues occurring.

We will continue exploring opportunities for positive action to enhance the diversity of our people and reflect more accurately the people of our community.



Actions to support the CRMP include:

1.1 On-call sustainability

On-call recruitment and retention continue to present us with a challenge. Whilst we have improved the data we use to inform where our recruitment needs to be focussed our priority is now to increase availability by recruiting to hours of low availability

We recognise some additional challenges will be presented during the period of this Service Plan, such as the 'Working Time Directive project' and managing secondary contracts. We will ensure those directly impacted can participate and shape this where possible

To support our retention, we continue with our commitment to act on the views of our on-call workforce. This has led to us recruiting 19 on-call staff into our recruitment pool for 2026, ready to be onboarded into our wholetime establishment should future vacancies arise

Feedback from last year identified this helps our staff feel valued and allows us to benefit from the investment in training and development, supported by their service experience

Recognising the most effective way to recruit is with the engagement and support of the operational stations, we will continue using local campaigns targeted to areas in most need

Our campaigns are tailored to the local demographic, and to ensure the best rate of success we empower crews, so they know the process and can support our recruitment team when needed

To continue to improve on-call recruitment and retention for the service we will:

- Build on the improvements made to the recruitment process to help stabilise our On-Call headcount
- Consider further opportunities to recruit our On-Call staff into whole time vacancies in 2026
- Focus our recruitment to increase diversity and female representation through social media presence and taster days
- Proactively engage with On-Call colleagues to include their views on the projects for working time directive

and secondary contracts

- Improve On-Call retention by reporting and reviewing recruitment and leaver data quarterly into the People Board to understand and respond to any trends and themes

To assess the success and impact of the work the team are doing, we will measure:

- Applicant numbers as a direct result of On-Call recruitment campaigns
- Aptitude and occupational health success rates (on-call)
- Leavers within the 12 months of On-Call employment
- Social Media Reach (On-Call campaigns)
- Staff turnover (On-Call)
- Number of On-Call staff on payroll
- Days from application submitted to being operational available



1.2 Recruitment and retention of support staff

All recruitment is progressed through Suffolk Fire and Rescue Recruitment team, and they support recruiting managers from advert of vacancies to the appointment of staff.

We will continue to work closely with the SCC HR Strategic Partner to benefit from this support, guidance and advice for staffing procedures, policy and the succession planning process.

We will imbed improvements in digital systems and software such as Gartner Roster, and digital Establishment Control Forms (ECFs) to build confidence in our data sets, more secure storage and improved methods of accessibility to inform decisions and trends.

The recruitment and leaver data for support staff is now routinely reported into the People Board, and we will review this data to analyse trends and inform improvements for recruitment and retention. We will focus on equity and ensure clear progression and development is in place for our support staff wherever possible.



1.3 Equality Diversity and Inclusion

SFRS values Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and will continue to ensure it is imbedded in our everyday activities. Opportunities will be built into recruitment and progression, and we will continue developing a greater understanding of the benefits across all areas of the service.

Our mission – To embed, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion into every aspect of SFRS.

Our Commitment – To ensure a professional respectful and inclusive working environment that embraces the diversity of the communities we serve.

To achieve our commitment, SFRS will be an employer where everyone, regardless of background, identity or role feels valued, respected and empowered to thrive.

We will continue this journey with the following clear measurable steps, enabling us to create a more inclusive culture, ensure fair opportunities for all and strengthen the trust and confidence of those we serve.

We will:

- Ensure everyone working for SFRS is treated with dignity and respect and that we foster an inclusive and trusting culture
- Recognise, respect, and listen, to the varied needs of our communities and staff, providing reasonable solutions for different needs and requirements
- Value and encourage a better understanding of people’s differences and the things we have in common
- Challenge prejudice and discrimination

In addition to the revised SCC corporate ED&I Objectives, SFRS will deliver the following over the service plan period:

- Deliver, embed and review the improvements needed from HMICFRS report
- Evaluate the impact of all ED&I training over the past 18 months
- Embed the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process with a focus on evaluating changes and impact
- Provide focus and education on inclusive language

- for all staff through training and communications in the fire service news app
- Increase accuracy and confidence in the ED&I data for SFRS workforce by encouraging staff to share their information on Oracle
- Respond to the key themes from our staff survey and peer review conducted in Autumn 2025 to improve our culture, attitudes and understanding of ED&I
- Continue to incorporate ED&I into all recruitment, promotion and development processes
- Use data and analysis at our 'People Board' to inform actions to improve diversity at all levels of SFRS in operational and support roles
- Improve understanding of the EDI working group by promoting its role across the service, expanding membership and working with comms to increase visibility and engagement

How will we know we have achieved this

Our progress against our ED&I objectives will be measured at our quarterly People Board meeting and reported into the Service Leadership Board.

This will be done using the following service measures:

- Data for our workforce under the protected characteristics

- Evaluation data from every Equality Impact Assessment
- Gender data for recruitment, retention, and promotion
- Professional Standards information for grievance, discipline, and investigations
- Confidential Speak-Up data and analysis

Our staff need to feel confident, safe and supported in the workplace and we can only understand if we are making progress in these areas by their lived experiences. We will proactively seek this with meaningful engagement, to ensure we have a true understanding of our culture.

We will provide forums for our staff to raise concerns and shape decisions and build on our staff networks and groups such as SWIFT, Staff Engagement Group, Equality Diversity and Inclusion working group and our Representative Bodies.

During the term of this plan, we will share the key findings of the staff engagement survey and the peer review we commissioned to review our culture and values. This will be a base line for the positive impacts we are seeking to make in ED&I for our staff at all levels of the service.



Fleet and Equipment

Our mission – providing the best vehicles and equipment for service delivery with a focus on productivity, innovation and efficiency

The aim of our fleet and equipment team is to match our resources to the risks in Suffolk, with a fit for purpose, modern, and affordable fleet of specialist vehicles. With staff engagement and dedicated research and development, we will review gaps in our capability which require additional or different equipment and vehicles.

Our fleet and equipment functions are aligned, both managed by our Asset and Commissioning Manager. We will continue to manage the key capital projects for the service, feeding into the project board and ensuring they are planned and delivered in the most effective way.

To continue reducing our carbon footprint and support the Suffolk Climate Emergency, every replacement vehicle is reviewed to realise opportunities to use alternatives such as electric when that is suitable. This will continue to evolve in line with the latest science and technology, to ensure every opportunity is taken to reduce vehicle emissions from our fleet.

We will strengthen our asset management system with the support of technology, to automate processes and provide greater efficiency and control of our resources.

We seek standardisation wherever possible to offer a consistent and reliable set of tools and vehicles for our staff to respond to emergencies. Best value will continue to be sought through every procurement exercise working closely with partners in SCC and exploring frameworks and collaboration to save money.

We will seek to improve the social value of our procurement through using local equipment providers where possible, and commit to re-use, re-purpose, recycle methodology to reduce our wastage. This is entirely in support of the CRMP priority 5, Climate and working toward achieving a carbon neutral fire and rescue service by 2030.

How will we know we are achieving this

Our progress in the key areas of fleet and asset management is measured in the quarterly project management meeting and reported into the Service Leadership Board. The capital used to deliver this is accounted for in our monthly budget meetings and forecast in our 10-year capital plan.

Every project is fully reviewed and evaluated so that learning is captured and incorporated into future projects.

Staff engagement is key with a strong focus on the end user for our fleet and assets. We will continue this during the term of this plan for new equipment and vehicles, and in preparation for changes to Personal Protective Equipment and workwear scheduled for 2027 - 2028.

Some key projects for this years' service plan include:

- Replacement of 11 new front line fire appliances
- Replacement of 16 new operational response cars for our flexi duty officers
- Replacement of 12 new vans to support our county day crew (CDC), fire service stores and technical services team (FSATS), workshops, and operational staff at stations
- Replacement and modernisation of our 2 hydrant maintenance vans
- Upgrade and replace key equipment such as breathing apparatus (BA) boards, BA communications, defibrillators, light weight portable pumps (LPPs), and positive pressure ventilation (PPV) fans
- Starting work on our project to replace our aerial ladder platform (ALP)

Whilst the direction of Local Government Reform and Devolution evolve, we will build on our links with Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service, to support, learn and collaborate when there is an opportunity with a clear mutual benefit for the medium and long term.

Operational Training

Our Mission – To develop and maintain a highly skilled workforce capable of meeting the current and emerging risks within Suffolk, ensuring our communities receive a safe, effective, and resilient service.

We will use workforce planning data, National Operational Learning, and Organisational Assurance feedback, to shape and deliver high-quality operational training that equips our staff with the skills, knowledge and qualifications required for competent and safe performance. Our training facilities and training advisors will continue to provide accessible, inclusive, and modern learning environments that reflect the diverse needs and learning styles of our people.

We will explore opportunities to expand our training provision in response to significant changes within the county, including the Sizewell C nuclear power plant construction project. This will include reviewing, and potentially enhancing, our technical and specialist rescue capabilities, while maintaining excellence in our core training aligned to the Community Risk Management Plan.

To ensure strong operational resilience, we will continue to deliver essential training to supporting robust succession planning across all levels. We will also embed new technologies that improve the recording, monitoring, and assurance of critical competencies.

How We Will Measure Success

Progress will be assessed through a variety of sources, ensuring that our understanding of training effectiveness is comprehensive, balanced and validated.

Quantitative Performance

Objective measures that demonstrate competency, qualification levels, and training throughput, including:

- Number of qualified emergency response drivers
- Number of qualified Incident Commanders
- Number of staff qualified in Breathing Apparatus
- Training attendance, completion, and requalification rates
- Time-to-competence for new staff

Qualitative Assurance and Professional Judgement

Insights that assess the quality, consistency, and impact of training delivery, including:

- Internal audits and quality assurance reviews
- Instructor observations and peer assessments
- Outcomes from post-incident learning reviews
- Evaluation of training inclusivity and accessibility

Workforce Experience and Engagement

Feedback that reflects how training is received, applied, and experienced by staff, including:

- Staff surveys and focus groups
- Post-course evaluations
- Feedback from operational debriefs
- Insights from leadership engagement and station visits

Governance and Reporting

The competency and currency of core skills will be monitored quarterly at the People Board and reported to the Service Leadership Board. This ensures transparent oversight, timely intervention, and continuous improvement across all areas of operational training.



11



Prevention, Protection, Business Support and Estates

“**Our Prevention team is dedicated to achieving the best possible outcomes for all communities across Suffolk.**”



Allie O'Neill
*Area Manager,
Prevention, Protection, Business
Support and Estates,
Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service*

Prevention

Our Prevention team is dedicated to achieving the best possible outcomes for all communities across Suffolk. To do this well, we must understand what people need and direct our resources where they will make the greatest difference. Building strong relationships through meaningful engagement and clear communication helps us gain that understanding. With this insight, we can focus our efforts on reducing the risk of fire and other emergencies in homes, workplaces, on the roads, and in, on, or near water.

We will continue to enhance our home fire safety prevention work. Our approach will continue to be shaped by a Community Risk Data set built from person centred information. By combining data shared by partners with our own risk intelligence, we can identify those most at risk within our communities. We currently have a 24 hour visit pledge for individuals at high risk and will maintain and support this approach.

We have refreshed and will continue to work to enhance our Home Fire Safety Strategy including new Policy and Guidance, Training for SFRS Staff and Partners, and the onboarding of the National Online Home Fire Safety Check which allows us to target the most vulnerable. Our work has led to an increase in the number of visits delivered by SFRS and we will continue to seek ways to enhance our output as appropriate.

The data that we use will integrate with our existing IT systems, and our teams will be equipped with updated devices to support the new process during Home Fire Safety Visits. We will review and enhance the full end to end approach to ensure our targeted work is as effective as possible.

We will ensure our processes remain efficient, adaptable and able to evolve with new technologies, enabling our response crews and practitioners to complete as many meaningful visits as possible. We will make use of new technology to improve the way that we share information with staff and the public, ensuring our communication is timely, accessible and effective.

We will prioritise visits for individuals at the highest risk of injury or death from fire in the home, using data to guide our decisions and evaluate the impact of our interventions. Follow up contact will help us understand behaviour change, and we will monitor incident trends alongside this.

Our specialist practitioners will be trained to national standards aligned with the National Fire Chiefs Council’s Person Centred Framework. They will be equipped to support people with complex social needs who face significant fire risk.

We will continue to look to enhance our skills within the department. We have upskilled through Specialist awareness Training and Support for SFRS Prevention Team on subjects including Dementia, Hoarding, Smoking, Learning Difficulties, Domestic Violence and Emollients and will continue to seek new learning opportunities which we can utilise to enhance our provision to our communities.

We will ensure our processes remain efficient, adaptable and able to evolve with new technologies, enabling our response crews and practitioners to complete as many meaningful visits as possible.

Our work with health and social care partners shows that vulnerable people in rural areas can feel isolated and may be harder to reach. Many partner agencies already provide vital support, including adult social care and community health services.

By improving the referral pathway through the national Safelincs platform, we will complement the information available on our website and link directly into our existing prevention systems. This will allow relevant information to be viewed in one place. The system will automatically generate tasks for specialist prevention or operational teams, who will then upload key outcomes following their visit. This will help us reach those most at risk more quickly, with visits for the highest risk individuals taking place within 24 hours.

We will also strengthen training, awareness and reporting processes for safeguarding, ensuring that people and households identified as needing support are referred to the most appropriate services. Our refreshed and updated Safeguarding Policy, Guidance and Training has enabled more efficient referral management and multi-agency support for those in need. We will continue to monitor

effectiveness and enhance in response to national developments and learning.

Fire setting behaviour presents a significant risk to both life and property. Evidence shows that timely and positive intervention can reduce or even prevent such behaviour.

We will continue to enhance our Fire Safety Intervention (formally Fire Setters) initiative which offers education and support to young people identified by Partner Agencies as having an unhealthy interest in Fire.

Our work in this area will enable us to improve our understanding and impact of this intervention and will assist us to review and refine how we deliver it to ensure maximum effectiveness.

We will work closely with the police, health services and kocal authority partners to share information, identify individuals displaying these behaviours, and take an active role in delivering interventions. We will continually assess the effectiveness and outcomes of this work.

We have introduced a new 'Older Driver' educational campaign offering training and guidance on safe driving for the older members of our communities. We will continue to work with our partners and develop this programme to ensure that we are delivering in the most effective way and reaching individuals who would benefit from this input.

We have launched our SPARK educational initiative which covers fire, road and water safety, anti-social behaviour awareness, dangers of fire setting, dangers of urban exploring and much more, which is delivered in targeted Schools across the county. We will continue to develop this and support through continuous training and involvement of staff.

Our partnership working is an integral and important role is enabling us to deliver our services to the highest standards, reaching people who need our help. We have developed and will continue to enhance our key partnerships with our Blue Light and Health partners. This has provided additional budgetary contributions to our department and provision such as home safety equipment. This ensures that SFRS are able to offer the best equipment available to the most vulnerable people in our communities.

We have introduced a New Quality Assurance and Evaluation models to ensure our Prevention



Activities remain at the highest standards. We continue to look at ways of how we can enhance our department, which in turn enhances the service that we can provide to our communities. We are looking to introduce new posts into the department, such as A new Partnerships and Delivery Manager who supports operational staff with Prevention expertise and works with key partners to build effective referral pathways, with a particular emphasis on reaching rural and seldom hear from communities.

Our commitment to providing the very best for our communities remains fully at the heart of our department and we will ensure that we deliver to the highest possible standard, always looking for ways to improve and enhance the service that we can give to support people within our county

Protection

Our Protection team is committed to ensuring that our work across the county contributes to providing the safest environments for people living and working within Suffolk. In order to achieve this, we undertake to be present and active across Suffolk, delivering our Protection work to ensure that properties covered by the Fire Safety Order are compliant with regulations. We will work within our team to maintain the extremely high levels of competency and will remain up to date with legislation relating to our area of delivery to ensure subject matter expertise which will assist us in helping to make buildings and communities across Suffolk as safe as possible.

We work closely with our colleagues in Response and Prevention alongside partner agencies to be actively visible across the county during everyday work and at our Impact days and business engagement events. which we pioneered within our department. Specific areas are targeted using data, experience and knowledge to impart advice and monitor and advise on buildings and environments, whilst our colleagues in Prevention provide safety advice to communities. We will continue to look for ways of enhancing this work alongside our colleagues to build on the success that these Impact days have delivered to date.

To ensure that we remain able to deliver excellence in all areas, we will look to build our team to include a dedicated business engagement officer. This will enable us to work even closer across our county to provide information and offer support and guidance where needed. We will explore the possibility of providing a Primary Authority scheme within our county which will further support both local and national businesses. We will also pursue the upgrade of our computer systems and enhance technology provision across our departments, such as providing mobile devices to all of our Inspecting Officers to enable audits to be completed remotely with easier system integration.

We are committed to reducing the amount of automatic fire alarms across the county. To deliver this commitment, we use long-term data and monitor and report on activations. In addition, we will work alongside our colleagues to review call handling criteria and the ways that calls are filtered before our fire appliances are mobilised. We will continue to work with our Response crews to conduct a 'first strike' intervention for unwanted fire signals, using especially developed tear-off pads to record the information given to responsible persons and to log our interventions.





We will provide bespoke advice to premises which have a high number of alarm activations and will work closely with our colleagues in Prevention and also Response to ensure that all of these premises are addressed in the most appropriate way, through providing advice, support and guidance to residents of all types of buildings. We will monitor our unwanted fire signal policy to ensure that this is current and still providing guidance that is relevant to our environment and practices.

Fire Protection legislation is evolving following continuous national review and improvement. We will review our own policies accordingly and will ensure that our team are up to date and trained on relevant legislation and recognise and embed any lessons learnt following specific incidents and inquiries. We will implement the Grenfell Tower Inquiry (phase 2) recommendations, those from the Manchester Arena inquiry and any subsequent learning.

We will also continue to support the National Fire Chiefs Council through providing feedback on consultations of guidance documents. We will provide ongoing training and development for staff within our Protection Team. This will ensure that we are able to enforce the requirements of the all legislation, including the

Fire Safety Order 2005, Fire Safety Act 2021, the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022, and the subsidiary legislation that has been released. We will work with our colleagues to promote communications around Fire Safety legislation and NFCC's Fire safety campaigns. We will continuously look at ways of enhancing our delivery such as a Implementing the adoption of the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) form for reporting issues with products that cause, or significantly contribute, to fires starting or the propagation of fire.

Our Fire Protection Officers are actively engaged at local, regional and national levels to ensure we remain aligned with new guidance, sharing best practice with colleagues. In addition, we will continue to engage with responsible persons to guide, inform and educate them on compliance with legislation and maintaining safe environments.

Suffolk's landscape is changing, and our Protection Team will continue to adapt accordingly. Population growth is driving new housing developments, and we will continue to work with partners to ensure fire protection and adequate water supplies are considered at the planning stage. We will continue to work in partnership with district and borough councils on building and significant infrastructure plans to ensure legislation for fire safety is adhered to and offer relevant advice. We will engage with developers early on to ensure that guidance is provided at the planning stage for a building for its fire safety arrangements.

We are also seeing an increase in large storage facilities. We will continue to inspect and advise on building safety, ensuring our operational crews are familiar with emerging risks such as high bay racking.

Industrial scale alternative fuel sites, including solar farms, nuclear power sites and Battery Energy Storage Systems, are being proposed and developed across Suffolk. We will work with the National Fire Chiefs Council to ensure planners receive the most up to date advice and guidance and that responsible persons are aware of their obligations under legislation and building regulations. We will work closely with our water function department on consultation on plans for solar energy and battery energy storage sites. We will continue to visit sites across the county to monitor and advise under our delivery area and will enforce legislation where required. We will continue our investigations of responsible persons who do not comply with legislation and will pursue these cases through court where required.

We have been supporting the Building Safety Regulation (BSR) team and have been committed to working collaboratively with the Health and Safety Executive to ensure that new buildings falling under Building Safety Regulations are designed and constructed to meet the required safety standards. As the role of the BSR evolves we will continue to support both the BSR and their regulating body. We will continue to provide an active role in supporting the regulatory framework and will monitor and react to changes in governance.

We will Review and amend our Risk Based Intervention Programme, in line with NFCC guidance thereby ensuring that buildings with the highest risk are targeted.

We will continue to monitor and support Fire investigations (FI) across the County, providing support to our Fire Investigation officers and monitoring our attendance and FI targets

Business Support

Business support plays a key role in enabling the whole service to operate by coordinating administrative support, communication and information management across departments.

Our Community Risk Management Plan states that “Our people are our most valuable asset in delivering our Service to you.” The Service Business Support Team

sits at the heart of this, ensuring information flows effectively and communication remains strong both within the organisation and with the wider community.

Business Support are essential to the core operation of the whole service, providing essential functions for District teams and specialist departments—including Training, Fire IT, Workshops, Health & Safety, Protection and Prevention. We will work to ensure that the full scope and skills of the department are being utilised to their full potential.

We will work with our new Fire Control to support their functions and provide bespoke support and services to ensure full and effective functionality of this new department.

Business Support are essential in ensuring synergy across departments, providing functions and co-ordinating communications, we will look to enhance this provision further with service departments to ensure cohesion and enhance effectiveness and efficiency.

We monitor Fire Investigation (FI) attendance and will link with the Wellbeing Team to ensure that FI officer are included in post incident wellness management.

We will look to enhance our communications strategy and delivery, bringing this together in one department, ensuring consistent messaging and joined up and enhanced inward and outward facing communications. This will enable us to provide essential and clear information to the people of Suffolk, especially in relation to our Operational, Prevention and Protection activity.



Property and Estates Management

Suffolk is a large and diverse county and this is reflected in our Fire Service property estate. Our estate consists of our full time and on-call operational Fire Stations, a Training Centre, Fleet workshops, Stores and Supplies departments and our Fire Control and Resource Management Centre. In addition to housing our Fire Engines and Firefighters, Our Fire Stations are utilised by many departments across the Service, to include, Risk and Resilience, Prevention, Protection, The Project Team and Performance and Improvement team. Our district offices and staff are all based out of our district stations.

Managing the property stock is complex and diverse as the estate consists of corporate owned property and PFI buildings. We will continue to work closely with the council departments and contractors to ensure that our buildings are maintained to the highest standard and provide the facilities required for all departments to function effectively. In line with increasing government expectations as we move into the end phase of our PFI contracts, we will closely work with the MHCLG and dedicated government departments, attending the expected meetings and meeting the expected timescales and increase in communication. We will seek to support this increased workload through exploring additional support through SCC and also MHCLG itself.

As we look towards devolution and a new governance model, we will support the transition of property across to the new body whilst ensuring that all of our services can continue to function effectively during this transition.

We will continue to monitor and manage our property budgets, including the capital programme that supports essential improvements across our estate. This will allow us to maintain and upgrade our fire stations, training facilities and other buildings so they remain safe, effective and fit for purpose.

During this year we will begin a property improvement programme, which will include five key projects focused on improving facilities across our stations. These projects will prioritise better welfare arrangements for our staff, improvements to working environments and measures to reduce exposure to contaminants from the products of fire.

We will also review our estate to identify further opportunities to modernise buildings and improve facilities where needed. This will help ensure our fire stations continue to support operational delivery while providing appropriate standards of welfare, dignity at work and protection for our staff.

We will support Fire and Rescue Service departments to provide the resources required at our functional buildings to ensure full functionality of all departments, including supporting IT and other departments with necessary upgrades.

We aim to invest wisely to meet climate commitments and ensure best value from our property budget. We will look for ways to support decarbonisation and are working closely with our colleagues to ensure that we support the development of the electric vehicle charging network across our properties

We will review all operational premises against national best practice for fire stations, including welfare facilities and the management of fire contaminants.



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Response

Our teams in Response are at the heart of our communities across the county, providing a swift, efficient, compassionate and professional emergency service to the people of Suffolk.



Aeneas Postlethwaite
*Area Manager,
 Response,
 Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service*

Working closely with colleagues throughout SFRS, we remain committed to reducing fires and other emergencies through targeted initiatives.

For 2026 to 2027 we will continue to review how our resources are allocated, including the number of fire engines and specialist vehicles sent to incidents, to ensure we are ready for future demands and emerging risks. We will continue to strengthen our operational capability through training, development and the provision of appropriate operational resources.

Our teams continue to build on the positive feedback from our HMICFRS 2025 report, where the close and effective working with our Prevention team was highlighted, this positive relationship saw an increase of 489 safer home visits carried out by our response crews. This is a 30% increase on the previous year. We will continue to work closely with our Prevention and Protection teams to ensure that community and business safety is enhanced across the county through our fire safety and preventative work. We will continue to promote safety through fire prevention and safeguarding initiatives, using data and partnerships to focus on those most at risk.

We will also continue to improve our response capability, supporting continuous improvement through the reallocation of resources where necessary to deliver an effective and efficient service across the county.

Collaboration with our Fire and Rescue Service teams, partner agencies and other organisations remain

central to our mission. We will continue to work closely with our colleagues in Norfolk to understand the impact of devolution and, where appropriate, streamline processes to support any future transition. This partnership will help ensure both Services are well placed to adapt to change while maintaining high standards of delivery.

We will also continue to review the impact of the Sizewell C project on our communities. As a key stakeholder, we will engage proactively to ensure that risks are understood and managed, and that our Service remains prepared for the evolving needs of the area.

Our new Control Room provides a strong foundation for the future. We will continue to develop our staff and make full use of the state-of-the-art technologies we have introduced into Suffolk. This will support our commitment to continually review and match our resources to risk, ensuring our operational response remains efficient, effective and resilient. These improvements will ensure we are best placed to answer all types of emergency calls and respond effectively to extreme weather events, which can have a significant impact on our staff and our local communities.

Our priorities through to 2026 to ensure an effective and efficient emergency response include:

- Ensuring the right resources are in the right places to meet current and future demands

- Strengthening water rescue capability to improve safety and response times
- Reviewing duty systems to ensure sustainability and resilience by aligning resources with risk.
- Targeting prevention activity at high risk communities using our Local Risk Management Plans
- Monitoring and reporting on response activity to drive improvement, celebrate achievements and address areas requiring development
- Maintaining regular training and exercises with Suffolk based emergency responders, agencies and neighbouring fire services to support a coordinated response

To support these aims, we will:

- Develop firefighters’ skills and competencies, ensuring the right people with the right skills are in the right locations, including a review of our Tactical Advisor roles
- Use data and intelligence to enhance performance, reflecting HMICFRS findings that commend our data driven prevention work but highlight inconsistencies in response efficiency
- Prioritise prevention and fire safety by working closely with Prevention and Protection teams to deliver high-quality, focused activity
- Continue to monitor the effectiveness of our duty systems and enhance and review these where necessary and appropriate

Driving Improvements and Adapting to Risk

Our aspiration is always for our crews to be as effective and efficient as possible. We support this aspiration alongside our colleagues to ensure that firefighting equipment is up to date, enabling safe and effective performance while delivering to the highest standards. We regularly review our policies and procedures to ensure they reflect current best practice and align with modern operational standards.

We will continue to support staff wellbeing through our critical incident process, which offers robust support for those involved in challenging situations. We will continue to work alongside partners such as the Firefighters Charity to ensure that our staff have access to the highest levels of support.

We remain committed to fostering a positive, inclusive culture across all Response teams. In line with our CRMP and recent HMICFRS findings, we will continue to promote understanding, respect and inclusivity within our workforce and in our engagement with communities. This includes strengthening staff awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion, supporting an environment where all colleagues feel valued, and ensuring our services are accessible and responsive to the diverse needs of Suffolk’s communities.

We will continue to analyse performance and emerging risks, regularly reviewing ways to use our resources and



ensuring that our firefighters are trained to the highest standards. We remain committed to delivering efficiency and effectiveness without compromising public safety. Our current HMICFRS report highlights areas for improvement in our effectiveness, and we continue to address these through engagement with our teams and through delivery of our HMICFRS action plan.

To support the CRMP, a number of significant activities will be delivered across Response teams, working with other departments to deliver agreed objectives.

Response standards

Our response standards, introduced following our current CRMP consultation, form a key part of our performance measures, which are reported publicly and to SCC. We regularly monitor and report on our performance, including response times, to ensure that we deliver the best possible service to our communities.

We are always looking to improve effectiveness and are working with colleagues across the Service to embed new and improved IT systems. We are utilising our upgraded systems to provide up to date risk information for firefighters and to optimise our weight of response in line with future demands. Regular scrutiny of our performance ensures that areas for improvement are highlighted and developed, enhancing response times and sharing best practice across our teams and fire stations.

Review of our emergency fleet and equipment

We continue to introduce new firefighting equipment across all stations to ensure that our firefighters can respond safely and effectively. Working with our Equipment and Workshop teams, we regularly trial and procure new and replacement equipment. We work alongside colleagues to provide feedback to ensure that the equipment is effective in enabling us to deliver our front line response.

Collaboration with partners

As Category One responders under the Civil Contingencies Act, we work closely with partners, national resilience teams and the Suffolk Resilience Forum. A programme of exercises ensures crews maintain competencies and awareness of risks, such as those at Sizewell, our ports and other high risk areas within the county. We continue to implement the suggestions in our HMICFRS report and are constantly seeking ways of improving our information sharing with Tier One responders through system upgrades and enhanced training. We will continue to identify and support those at higher risk by working with our Prevention and Protection teams and external agencies.

Commitment to scrutiny and improvement

We are committed to transparency and accountability, regularly scrutinising our performance to drive continuous improvement. Through delivery of the HMICFRS action plan, the introduction of new equipment, updated policies and enhanced staff wellbeing support, we continue to ensure that SFRS remains adaptable, effective and efficient. Our focus on data driven decision making, collaboration and innovation will help create a safer, more resilient Suffolk for all our communities.



13



Organisational Risk and Improvement

“My ambition for the future is that we enhance those relationships with our partners to ensure that the service, at every level understands the key role they play in delivering improved outcomes.”



Toby Gray
*Area Manager,
 Organisational Risk
 and Improvement,
 Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service*

The role and function of Organisational Risk & Improvement is to ensure we keep our organisation, staff and communities safe through the use and implementation of modern and resilient systems, the development of robust risk assessment methodology and creating policy and process aligned to national and regional best practice. We continue to focus on utilising risk and performance data to improve ways of working across all service areas, building greater transparency in our performance and ensuring SFRS looks for continual improvement. Building strong relationships with internal and external partners means we can plan for and react to a broad range of emergencies; this continues to be a focus and priority for Organisational Risk and Improvement.

My ambition for the future is that we enhance those relationships with our partners to ensure that the service, at every level understands the key role they play in delivering improved outcomes. To continue to deliver resilient and future proofed technologies that supports activity in the most efficient and effective manner possible, ensuring staff feel engaged and able to deliver value and efficiency in their daily activity across Prevention, Protection, Risk and Response.

The focus of the team in Organisational Risk and Improvement through to March 2027 is to support the activities of a safe, professional, effective and efficient Service. We will focus on improvement activities as set out in the Service Improvement Plan, a plan developed by the service, for the service and our communities following HMICFRS (His Majesty’s Inspectorate of

Constabularies, Fire & Rescue Services) Report published in February 2025. This builds on the improvements delivered by our collective teams and reflected in the Inspectorates revisit undertaken in October 2025 . We will continue to deliver activity identified within the Community Risk Management Plan utilising our governance structure and Project Management Office to support effective delivery of these key activities in a controlled and measured way.

We will focus on how we reach and work with our partners and community and how this is measured and represented through our performance and assurance framework. The Organisational Risk and Improvement Team will work with stakeholders across the service to develop efficient policy, process and systems.

The key areas of focus for this planning period are:

- Deliver improvements in systems and technology to support safe and effective delivery of response, prevention, protection and risk inspection activity
- Plan for, and respond to the changing political and financial landscape here in Suffolk
- Deliver a robust Policy and Risk Assessment framework that utilises technology to support compliance
- Support the delivery of the HMICFRS Actions plans
- Supporting and contributing to the National Fire Chiefs Council

- Maintaining and enhancing our “Over the Border” arrangements
- Being alert to new and emerging technologies
- A focus on data and demand to drive the pace and nature of the work
- Being alert to new and emerging local and national risks
- Support the service to improve the use and visibility of National Resilience Assurance Team assets on a local and national level
- Embed the new Suffolk Fire Control function here in county and work with mobilising partners to extend resilience through collaboration
- We will deliver new Fire specific IT solutions and infrastructure inline with our ICT Roadmap to echo this approach of improvement, effective efficiency. Working with you to identify the needs and outcomes required within the agreed IT principles aligned to SCC’s Technology Strategy Comms Deck 2022 Revision v1.2.pdf
- We will utilise PowerBi and our data teams to ensure real-time performance data is available internally and externally to improve our transparency in our performance and understanding of what can be done to build further improvements and efficiencies

We will do this while continuing to develop efficient ways of working with the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) and SRF on a local level, and national bodies such as the NFCC, the National Resilience Assurance Team, the Home Office, the HSE and others.

Our team commitment

- Service performance. We will continue to embed our governance structure, ensuring staff at every level understand the role each of us play in driving and delivering improvement
- We will develop our Health & Safety and Policy Database to improve the safety, efficiency, and effectiveness of staff across SFRS
- We will continue to develop our Project and Programme methodology and support that will see implementation improvements across the Service and will ensure transparent oversight in how these are resourced, delivered and how we measure the benefits these have delivered

Working with staff

The team commitments we have made rely on a focus of making Suffolk Fire & Rescue Service the best place to work and Suffolk the best place to live. With this in mind, the Organisational Risk & Improvement team across every department has, and will continue to, work with colleagues, stakeholders and partners to deliver improvements and change, be that in technology, procedures or simply advice on National Best practice and we work with every Head of Service (Green and Grey book) to ensure continual improvement.



Risk & Resilience

The aim of the Risk and Resilience team is to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of our staff before, during and after incidents through the development and provision of Risk Assessed processes and operational risk information and guidance information to staff. Ensuring we are horizon scanning at a local and national level linking in with the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) and Suffolk Resilience Forum (SRF) to ensure we fulfil our statutory duty and support a joint approach to preparedness and response to multi agency emergencies. The Organisation Assurance team will facilitate, and support formal debriefs to inform organisational learning and shape the development of practices and equipment, taking advantage of the new Suffolk Fire Control function to implement learning and operational change seamlessly and swiftly.

We will continue to work with NSIP (Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project) team in SCC and external partners to support the progress of these key infrastructure projects, ensuring SFRS identified risks and concerns feature in onsite and offsite plans and mitigations meet the needs of the service and our communities. Projects such as Sizewell C, Lionlink and Sealink etc.

Health, Safety & Wellbeing

My Health, Safety and Wellbeing team ensure staff activity is supported by suitable and sufficient risk assessments that ensure hazards and risks are mitigated in line with the Health and Safety at Work Act.



We will develop our Health & Safety and Policy Database that will improve the safety, efficiency, and effectiveness of staff across SFRS.

We will embed a culture of Health and Wellbeing across the service allowing staff to fulfil their functions in a safe and effective manner. We have embedded



the national best practice fitness standards that ensures staff are fit for the role they are required to undertake. This is underpinned by a network of staff support that provides guidance and signposting to the many varied wellbeing support functions available the SFRS, SCC and external partners aligned to our wellbeing strategy. We will further embed this culture of fitness and wellbeing through the support offered by our dedicated fitness advisor who will be supporting staff through their fitness journey.

Operational and Organisational Risk

The aim of the team is to ensure SFRS staff at every level undertake training and exercising at those high-risk sites and premises across the county as well as ensuring Operational Risk information and plans are tested and debriefed. SFRS will learn from and contribute to National and Joint operational learning (NOL and JOL) shared with the sector by the National Fire Chief Council, we will implement, and exercise operational changes based on this shared learning.

A key role for the teams is monitoring and adapting to the changing risk profile of Suffolk and our surrounding area, ensuring SFRS participates in COMAH Licencing exercises and supports NSIP projects such as Sizewell C, Lionlink, Sealink and others to ensure appropriate risk awareness and operational response.

We will continue to review how we monitor and support stations and staff through focused station audits and assurance. We will review how we capture, learn and implement change from these and operational audits and incident debriefs to ensure that staff feel valued and empowered to work in a safe environment, sharing this learning beyond SFRS through the Local Resilience Forum and the NFCCs National Operational Learning and Joint Operational Learning platforms.

Actions to support the CRMP include:

There are a number of significant activities that the team will deliver across these departments, these include the H,S&W database review and refresh, a policy database refresh utilising new technology platforms to improve audit and compliance and how these link in with the adoption and implementation of National Operational Guidance (NOG). The adoption and implementation of PORIS (Provision of Operational Risk Information System) across our Operational Risk Inspection Programme to standardise the frequency of site inspection across Suffolk by staff, all of which contribute to the delivery of our current CRMP.

We will also look to develop a new CRMP for 2027-2031 that will look to account for the changing risk landscape across our county, and the wider national risk picture. We will use the growing data sources to inform this plan and ensuring we feature the annual review into our annual activity to ensure alignment with the Fire Standard for CRMP review. Sizewell C will feature in greater detail in this new CRMP as we are seeing already how this is impacting SFRS and our communities across Suffolk.

National Operational Guidance

The aim of the National Operational Guidance (NOG) is to standardise how Fire services respond to and deal with incidents from when the emergency call is received to how crews resolved it. The NOG implementation team, who form part of the Policy team, will work with colleagues in Training, Learning and Development and Response to develop Training material and Procedures that align with National Guidance to deliver improved regional alignment and improved effectiveness and resilience across the region which is further enhanced by the new Suffolk Fire Control room function. This

approach will see efficiencies in service delivery and procurement. The NOG implementation team represent an efficient and effective way of delivering regional standardisation. We have and will continue to bring together representatives from our regional FRS partners to centrally agree an approach which reduces the development demands on any single service. The team share best practice and lessons learned from the national implementation as well as looking at those systems used to support Learning and Development to further improve regional alignment. The focus for the coming year will be to evaluate, produce and deliver the ongoing release of new Fire Control Guidance being developed by the NFCC following learning from tragic events in London and Manchester.

Performance, Improvement and Programme Management

The Performance, Improvement and Programme Management team is to build on the project management governance structure established over the past year and implement learning gained from the delivery of key projects. This will ensure the service continue to deliver cost effective and efficient projects and programmes through robust governance and document management that ensures sound decision-making and project resourcing resulting in effective and achievable change management.



We will continue refine and consolidate our action plans allowing Suffolk Fire & Rescue Service to record how the findings of national incidents such as Grenfell Tower, Manchester Arena and the cultural review of Fire and Rescue Services impacts SFRS and how recommendations are being managed and implemented. We will continue to develop this to ensure we look to implement improvements in systems, process and technology to continually improve. We will share the progress being made with our staff and the community we serve in a clear and consistent manner. Refining this approach will ensure that we are able to focus our limited resource and capacity on the highest risks across Suffolk to deliver maximum improvement opportunities for our staff and the communities of Suffolk.

Performance Team

My aspiration for the Performance Team has been to build a suite of Performance Measures that provide transparency in how we deliver our service to the community. We will continue to evolve these high-level measures to report and demonstrate how effective we are in our delivery. Alongside these high-level measures we continue to develop wider Service Measures (department and team measure). These are being used to help identify areas for improvement and recognise and share good practice and further improve and develop ways of working to improve efficiencies and reduce duplication and workload. We will continue to explore the opportunities offered by automation and how we can use this to further improve how we access and interpret data. The development of these Service Measures continues as our information and technology infrastructure evolves as part of the ICT Roadmap aided by the introduction and Go-Live of the new Suffolk Fire Control room and its associated technology and infrastructure.

Examples of some Service Measures that the team has and are developing are:

- The Number of Accidents or Near Misses reported
- Risk Assessment and Policy database status
- Service Fitness status
- The Number of Formal debriefs undertaken
- Internal and Cross boarder exercises

Service Measures inform directorate and departmental awareness of key areas that present a challenge and as such an area of focus to address and improve, or reflect good practice and allow the service to celebrate this and use this in other departmental areas as appropriate.

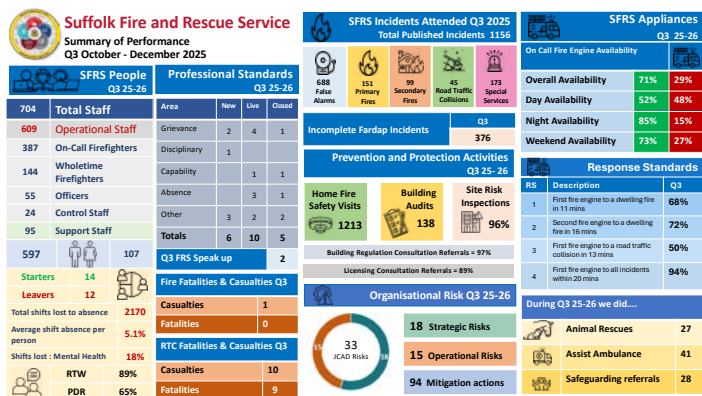
Responding to national reviews and action plans

The Performance and Improvement team have developed action plans that allow Suffolk Fire & Rescue Service to record how the findings of national incidents such as Grenfell, Manchester Arena and the cultural review impacts SFRS and how those recommendations are being managed and implemented. Work will continue through 26/27 to ensure staff at every level understand the plans and how these are being tracked and importantly, the role we all play in their delivery. Progress will be published for our communities to see.

Our approach to continuous improvement

His Majesty's Inspectorate HMICFRS inspection of SFRS in 2024 and the subsequent report published in February 2025, sees us utilising this action tracker approach to monitor progress against our HMICFRS improvement plans.

We continue to focus on delivering against our Cause of Concern (CoC) and Areas for Improvement (AFI) ensuring that appropriate resources are allocated and that activity is prioritised on delivery of our CoC action plan. We will continue to track the progress we are making against both the CoC and AFIs, but also areas that we have recognised internally where we could be better. Our improvement journey is being supported by additional funding that has allowed us to introduce resource into



key areas of the service to support the improvement and development activity required.

We will continue to work with partners and third parties to ensure we commission specialist systems and support when and where required.

We will embed the assurance and governance relating to how we formally close these CoC and AFIs prior to submitting them to HMICFRS. We are committed to, and will continue, engaging with the HMICFRS Monitoring Portal, ensuring progress against our actions is recorded centrally and informs HMICFRS of our improvement journey.

We will continue to review published reports from other services and take on board learning from these through 2026 into our next inspection in 2027.

We have introduced the Continuous Improvement Meeting (CIM) which provides a mechanism for departments to raise issues, track progress and share successes, ensuring these are tracked through the Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP). This meeting sees representation from across the service and provides an escalation route through our governance structure into the Programme Board which is the gateway to delivery of outcomes and through robust and agile project management.

Programme Management Office

SCC and SFRS have invested in this space as we recognise that whilst we have sound governance and project methodology the capacity to monitor, support and develop both staff and project process requires resource. The PMO now has a dedicated project manager and project support team who are implementing a refreshed approach to how we track our programme of works and ensure that our priorities are being met. This has seen a reshape of the Board and how we report on workstreams. This approach is identifying pinch points and successes allowing the PMO and leadership team to modulate activity and focus to ensure we meet our project brief and desired outcomes, whilst ensuring capacity across the service monitored so that staff feel supported in delivery and change management.



Fire ICT

My aspiration for the Fire ICT team through 2026 is to consolidate the delivery of Suffolk Control room mobilising interfaces and associated technology and infrastructure to expand resilience and cyber security aligned to the National Fire Standard to ensure our staff and communities receive the most efficient and effective response in Prevention, Protection and Response.

We will continue to explore opportunities with our regional partners, through aligned ways of working, shared expertise and procurement to deliver economies of scale where they may be available. Digital transformation across fire systems and interfaces will continue to be in line with agreed key principles of.

- Utilisation of up-to-date futureproofed technology
- Utilising tried and tested technology and systems
- Off the shelf product procurement wherever possible
- Cloud based to enhance resilience
- Full end to end support through robust contract management
- User support through training and technological support
- Remote working hardware for Prevention, Protection

and Response and other teams where necessary

At any given time, Fire ICT oversee a rolling programme of upgrades and improvement works. These will be delivered in line with principles set out on previous page and comply with new procurement regulations. This programme of works will further improve staff and community safety, contribute to improved response standards within the communities we serve in support of CRMP priority focus 4.1 Emergency Response Standards.

- Establish and continually evolve our roadmap to make better use of suppliers with the skills we need to cater for demand
- Reduce our delivery capability for things that can readily be sourced from the marketplace
- Deploy our resources based on product lifecycles and flows
- Reduce our reliance on on-premise technology where appropriate
- Empowering our users to deal with most queries and support requests at the first point of contact
- Leverage Technology as an enabler of transformation
- Integrating our services with our partners, providing common approaches where possible
- Joint commissioning and delivery with our partners where appropriate
- Embed consistent service management, contract management, and supplier management standards and reporting mechanisms across all Product Teams to enable us to monitor and improve our service provision on a continuous basis

We will work with staff to deliver greater end user functionality and training whilst improving data visualisation integration opportunities through PowerBi and the use of Service Measure data. We will work with suppliers to enhance functionality and integrations that help staff access the news, updates, training and documents they need to their job. Developing new ways of keeping each of our 35 fire stations in touch with news from Headquarters and the wider SCC network.

Fire ICT has a user and infrastructure roadmap of projects and maintenance in place, which considers SCC's Corporate Strategic Objectives of:

Providing value for money for the Suffolk taxpayer by

- Redesigning services and processes to drive productivity and value for money
- Investing in technology and using the internet and innovation to improve communication, services and efficiency

We will deliver, amongst other elements of the ICT Roadmap, a new premises management software solutions and the supporting hardware that support teams in the delivery of site-specific risk management, Prevention and Protection activity that streamline work activities, reduce the need for data handling and improve the effectiveness of activity of our staff undertaken at the frontline.



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Devolution and Transformation

My role as Devolution and Transformation Lead is to ensure the Service has a clear and robust programme to enable the transition of the Service into the Mayoral Combined County Authority.



Georgina Button
*Devolution and
Transformation Lead
Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service*

Alongside this, I will also lead other transformation projects to support the leadership team and deliver priorities set out in the Service Plan.

This work is dependent on legislation known as the 'statutory instrument' and adapting to the outcome of local elections, taking place in May. I am determined we complete the first phase of our work, the Discovery phase, whilst these decisions are made.

It is important we identify and present risks, challenges, and opportunities, and be ready to make data-led decisions while continuing to champion the future needs of the Service.

To support the planning and delivery of Devolution, we will:

- Shape and deliver the Devolution programme to ensure that as a minimum we are "safe and legal" from day one
- Develop a critical path timeline to 2028
- Lead transformation programmes and change delivery
- Plan for organisational readiness and capability.
- Build and strengthen relationships with those who influence change and those impacted by change
- Identify risks and issues to enable data-led and evidence-based decision making
- Demonstrate good governance and accountability.
- Champion the needs of the service
- Engage with staff through timely and consistent communication





HMICFRS inspection and Continuous Improvement Plan

SFRS was inspected by HMICFRS in September 2024, with the report published in February 2025. The inspection identified one Cause of Concern relating to culture and values, with five associated recommendations, and a further 23 Areas for Improvement across our service delivery.

In response, we developed a comprehensive action plan to address all of the recommendations. This was shaped in consultation with colleagues from across the Service, including the Staff Engagement Group, representative bodies, managers and senior leaders, to ensure it reflects the views and experiences of our workforce.

Delivery of this plan is monitored through our performance framework and governance arrangements so that progress is visible, accountable and sustained over time. Updates on our HMICFRS action plan are submitted through the HMICFRS online portal and are also published on our website to ensure transparency.

HMICFRS revisited the Service in October 2025 to review the Cause of Concern. The inspectorate recognised that work was underway and that steady progress was being made. They also acknowledged that improving culture takes time and that the impact of this work will not yet have been felt at every level of the organisation.

To support visibility across the Service, a copy of the Continuous Improvement Plan is available in read-only format on the Performance and Improvement page on SharePoint. This is updated monthly following the Continuous Improvement Meeting (CIM) so staff can track progress against the agreed actions.

Over the coming year we will maintain this momentum, continue to deliver the agreed actions and build on the improvements already made. Our aim is to create a Service where our people feel valued, supported and proud to work, while providing the highest standard of service to our communities.



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Programme and project delivery

We deliver change and improvement through a structured programme and project approach. This ensures the work needed to meet our CRMP priorities, HMICFRS recommendations and wider service improvements is clearly planned, resourced and monitored.

Our Programme Management Board (PMB) approves and oversees all programmes of work. This helps us manage the capacity of workstreams across the Service, ensure the right activity is prioritised and that resources are used effectively.

Each programme and project has a defined scope, an accountable lead and clear outcomes. Progress is reported through our governance structure so that risks, issues and achievements are visible and timely decisions can be made.

We use lessons learned to continually develop our approach to project management. Our processes and documentation are regularly reviewed so they remain practical and proportionate, supporting teams to deliver both small and large pieces of work. This creates a consistent and evolving way of working that encourages innovation, supports continuous improvement and keeps our activity aligned to the CRMP.



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Governance and decision making

Our governance framework helps us make clear, timely decisions and ensures we are focused on the right priorities. It gives us a consistent way to monitor performance, manage risk and oversee improvement work so we can deliver our CRMP and provide the best possible service to our communities.

The Performance Assurance Framework (PAF) brings together information on performance, people, finance, risk and programmes. This gives managers and senior leaders a clear picture of how we are doing, where action is needed and where we are making progress.

We work through a four-tier governance structure. Each level has the authority to make decisions within its role, with anything outside that delegated level escalated to the next tier. This means decisions are made at the right place and at the right time, while still providing clear oversight.

Tier 1 – Service Leadership Board (SLB)

The SLB sets the overall direction for the Service. It provides strategic oversight, makes final decisions when required and gives assurance to the Fire Authority that we are delivering our priorities.



Tier 2 – Assurance boards

These boards make sure the right work is being delivered in each functional area and that there is clear accountability for progress. Through the People, Performance and Programme boards they also keep a Service-wide view, making sure our activity is joined up and on track.



Tier 3 – Continuous Improvement Meeting (CIM)

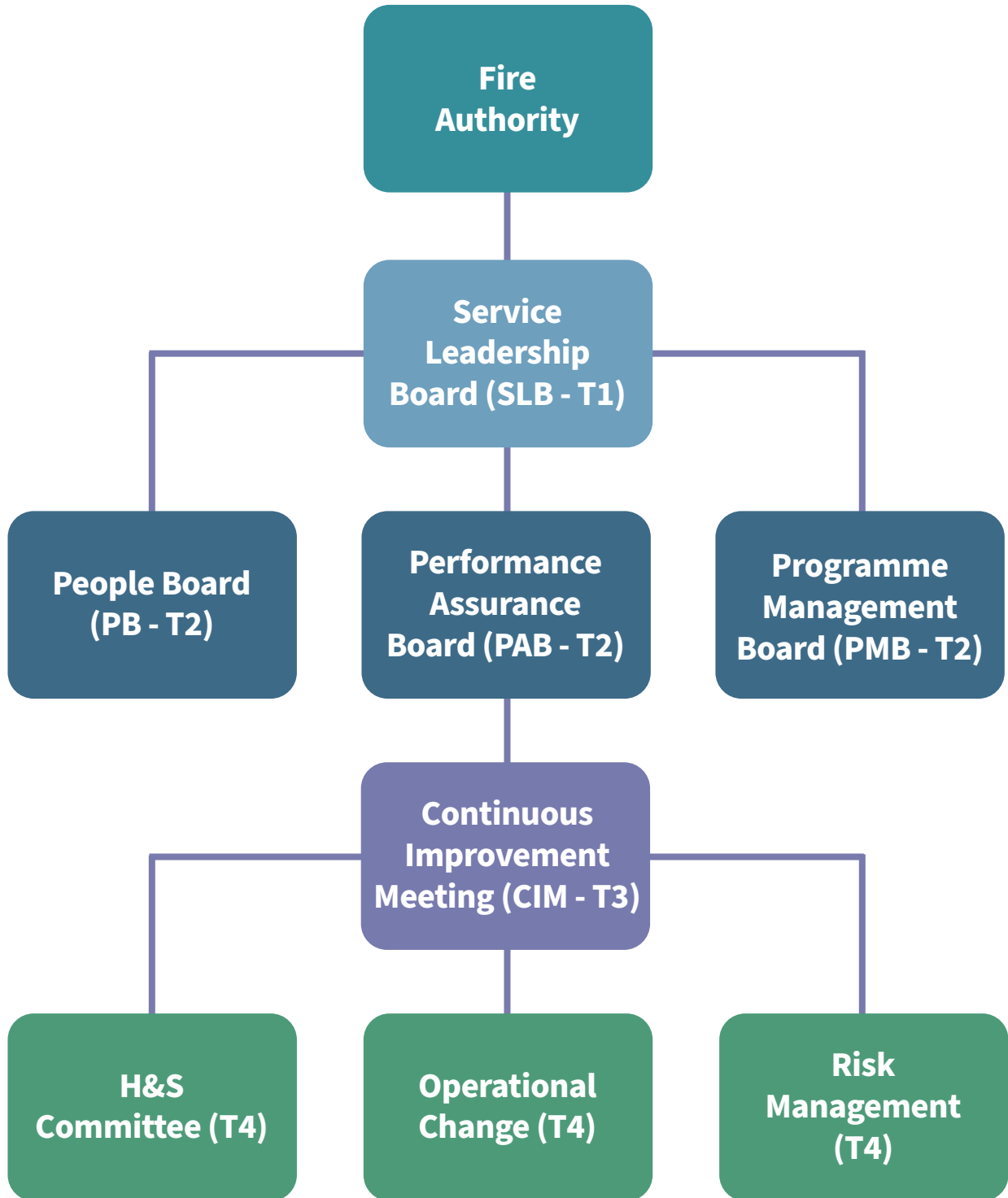
The CIM focuses on turning plans into action. It monitors workstreams, tracks delivery and makes sure improvement activity is progressing as expected.



Tier 4 – Operational delivery

This is where the work happens day to day. Plans are delivered in departments, teams and stations, and performance and progress are fed back through the governance structure.

Governance Flow chart



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Risk Management

Suffolk fire and rescue service maintains a structured approach to risk management to ensure potential issues are identified, understood and addressed at the appropriate level.

Risks are recorded in the JCAD Risk Management System, which supports our strategic priorities, statutory responsibilities and our ability to deliver safe and effective services. We operate a continuous cycle of risk review, ensuring risks remain current and that effective mitigation actions are in place.

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Performance Assurance

To make sure we deliver high-quality services, use our resources well and continue to improve, we have a range of assurance processes in place.

Our annual Statement of Assurance (SoA) confirms to SCC, government, our partners and our communities that we are meeting the requirements of the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England. It summarises our performance across Prevention, Protection, Response, People, and Organisational Risk and Improvement, and confirms that our governance, financial and operational arrangements are effective.

Our Productivity and Efficiency Plan sets out how we will improve productivity and deliver efficiencies in the year ahead, in line with NFCC and Local Government Association expectations.

We also receive independent assurance from HMICFRS, who inspect the Service approximately every two years. Their recommendations are built into our Service Plan and monitored through our governance structure.

The Fire Standards provide a national benchmark for how we work and help us continually improve our services.

We report quarterly to the Cabinet Member Improvement Assurance Board, providing updates on performance and our progress against HMICFRS actions. This gives external oversight and constructive challenge.

Together, these arrangements ensure we are safe, effective, well managed and focused on continuous improvement.

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Performance Measures

We use a set of 16 strategic performance measures to understand how effectively we are delivering our priorities and improving community safety. These measures give an overall picture of how the Service is performing and are reported to the Fire Authority and published for the public.

Our performance is reviewed throughout the year and the measures are updated annually so they remain relevant and aligned to our CRMP.

Staff can view the latest performance information at any time through our Power BI dashboards, which present data in a clear and accessible way. We also publish a quarterly performance summary on the SCC website so our communities can see how we are performing.

Our ambition is to make even more of our data publicly available to further support openness and transparency.

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Service measures

Service measures sit beneath our strategic performance measures and give teams a more detailed view of how we are doing.

They help teams spot trends, understand issues and identify where improvement is needed, and each one supports one or more of our performance measures.

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Evaluation

Evaluation helps us understand whether the work we deliver is achieving the outcomes we intended and where improvements may be needed. It forms an important part of how we measure success and supports our commitment to continuous improvement.

Across the Service, teams use the Fire Standards framework, applying the three lines of defence methodology to review their activity and ensure appropriate oversight and assurance. This approach helps us understand what is working well, where risks may exist and where further improvement is needed. Evaluation will also be informed by feedback from our staff and representative groups, including the Staff Engagement Group, EDI Working Group and other representative bodies. Helping us understand the lived experiences of our workforce and shape improvements across the Service.

Programmes and projects follow structured evaluation processes, including lessons learned and post-project reviews, so that learning can be captured and applied to future work.

Other areas of the Service also use evaluation to review how activities and initiatives are being delivered and whether they are achieving the intended outcomes for our communities.

At an organisational level, we will also review our performance measures to ensure they remain relevant, meaningful and aligned with the priorities set out in the CRMP. This review will take place during 2026–27, with updated measures considered for implementation in Quarter 4.

Through this approach, we ensure learning is captured, progress is understood and improvements are embedded across the Service. By regularly reviewing our work and adapting where needed, we strengthen our ability to deliver the priorities set out in our CRMP. This also supports a culture where our people are encouraged to reflect, learn and improve how we deliver our services, helping us provide the best possible outcomes for the communities of Suffolk



