



AVON
FIRE & RESCUE

www.avonfire.gov.uk



Our Service Plan

Incorporating our Integrated
Risk Management Plan

2023-2026



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**Working together
to make our
Communities
Safer and make
our Service
Stronger.**



Our Service Plan is developed using insight, understanding and the direct views of our local communities. It acknowledges the potential future we face, as well as our commitment to reviewing and improving the services we provide to those we serve.

This Service Plan identifies and explores the risks, challenges and opportunities to us as a fire and rescue service and to our local communities; including any potential fire and rescue-related risks to people, environment, infrastructure, or property.

It includes any new and emerging risks we face, within the Avon Fire & Rescue Service (AF&RS) area, regionally and nationally. Some of our identified risks include fires, road traffic collisions, rescues and special service emergencies, fires in tall buildings, community health and wellbeing, planned developments and a changing climate.

Any foreseen challenges and opportunities have also been outlined. These challenges help us in considering solutions to lessen the potential impact of change. Any opportunities have provided us with a chance to improve the way we work for the benefit of our communities and our staff.

We are fortunate to have highly trained, dedicated and passionate individuals working throughout the Service, who will help deliver the programme of work outlined in this plan. Similarly, we work closely with valued partners and our communities to deliver a Service we're proud of.

As a fire and rescue service, ultimately, we are committed to being there when you need us most, working hard to achieve our vision of providing the highest standard and best value service to our communities.

Cllr Brenda Massey
Chair of Avon Fire Authority

Simon Shilton
Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive,
Avon Fire & Rescue Service



Our Vision

To provide the highest standard and best value Service to the community.

We will work closely with and help make our diverse communities safer and healthier; while ensuring our Service is a great place to work, where everyone feels valued and can achieve their full potential.



Our Mission

To improve public safety through Prevention, Protection, Response and Resilience.

Making our communities safer, by being there when we are needed, identifying and reducing risks and improving the quality of life for local people; our staff working together as one to ensure a high-quality, value for money Service which meets the needs of the people we serve.



Our Values

- Respectful
- Honest
- Courageous
- Ambitious
- Inclusive
- Transparent

Guided by the standards of behaviour captured in our values, we will support our staff to embrace challenges, recognise achievements and live out our values in Making our Communities Safer and exceeding expectations. The public expect their emergency services to be there when they need us, but also role model the very best standards of behaviour. When we make decisions and work together, our values are the things we keep in mind every time. They are important to us and non-negotiable.

[Our Values and Behaviour Framework is aligned to the Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services >](#)



OUR SERVICE

Avon Fire & Rescue Service delivers a wide range of fire, rescue and community safety services across our geographic area.

Avon Fire Authority, whilst complying with the Local Government Act 1999, ensures the Service is continuously improving the way it complies with its duties; economically, efficiently and effectively. It is a locally accountable body made up of 21 Elected Members from the unitary authorities of Bath and North East Somerset (BANES), Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire, as well as the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner.

In order to reduce the risk in our communities, we will ensure there are sufficient levels of staff and equipment available to provide an emergency response 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, as well as undertaking essential Prevention and Protection activity.

Acts of Parliament outline requirements for every fire and rescue service in England. In addition to this, the Home Office publishes the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England which provides guidance and priorities for fire and rescue services. As a public service, there are statutory, regulatory and compliance requirements from premises and procurement activities to ensuring cyber security accreditation and the health and safety of our staff.

Mandatory functions and powers (things we must do)



The promotion of fire safety; preparation for fire-fighting; protecting people and property from fires; rescuing people from road traffic collisions and responding to other emergencies such as terrorist attacks.

Regulatory functions and powers (other ways to protect the public)



We are responsible for undertaking fire safety inspections and audits, and on occasion we conduct prosecutions.

Discretionary functions (things we choose to do)



These are services we provide over and above those laid down in law. This includes activities like planning for and delivering rescues from water, the rescue of animals and responding to floods, as well as certain education packages such as home and water safety advice to those most at risk in our communities. Our Service goes above and beyond legislative duties to put the interests of our local communities first in respect of wider public safety; being a role model in what we do, how we interact, and our approach to diversity and inclusion.

Our key responsibilities are contained within;



- Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004
- Civil Contingencies Act 2004
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- The Fire and Rescue Services (Emergencies) (England) Order 2007
- Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018
- Fire Safety Act 2021
- Building Safety Act 2022.



Our area has a residential population of more than one million people living in over 480,000 homes, over an area of 512 square miles. Understanding our diverse population helps us deliver services tailored to their needs.

Analysis of our population can be found in our Strategic Assessment and Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion and Equality (DICE) Strategy.



Population 1.17m and growing 51% Female, 49% Male¹

2.3% of the population is unemployed²

The largest population group is 20-24 year olds¹

One of the top 10 busiest airports in the UK, handling up to 10 million passengers per year³

4 universities with over 79,000 students⁴

Bristol is one of the top ten most visited cities in the UK⁵

Handles 26% of the South West's economy and has the highest growth of GDP per capita outside of London⁶

90% of the population is white, 9% Ethnic Minorities¹

39% Christian, 48% No religion, 3% Muslim¹

15% of homes are rented social housing and 64% owned outright¹

102 languages spoken across the area¹

88% Identify as Heterosexual, 2% as Bisexual, 1.7% as Gay or Lesbian, 93.56% of the population identify as the same sex that they were registered as at birth, 0.19% as Transgender, 0.13% as Non-Binary¹

We welcomed that LGBTQ+ population statistics were included in the Census for the first time in 2021, to help enrich our ongoing understanding of our communities and how best to meet their needs.

We recognise that the communities we serve are diverse and are keen to ensure Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion and Equality is embedded in our organisational culture and at the heart of decision-making.

1. Office of National Statistics – 2021 Census
2. Office of National Statistics – National Employment and Labour Market Statistics 21/22
3. Civil Aviation Authority – Airport Statistics 2018-21
4. UWE, Bristol University, Bath University and Bath Spa University – Student Population Webpages
5. Summary from Visit Britain, Original data from Office of National Statistics – Leisure and Tourism
6. Office of National Statistics Report on GDP Published Feb. 2020. (Latest Release)



OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

Delivering against our Service Plan



Dignity & Respect Policy launched

We all have the right to be treated with consideration, dignity and respect in work. The new policy makes clear our expectations as a Service and the responsibilities that we all have in creating a respectful and dignified working environment for everyone.

Its purpose is to promote and support a positive and inclusive culture, with a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and harassment.



Redevelopment of Avonmouth Fire Station

The two and a half year long redevelopment of Avonmouth Fire Station was completed in September 2022. The pre-existing station at the site on St Andrew's Road, Avonmouth had stood proudly for over 60 years.

Given the extensive history of the Service in the area, and the high volume of incidents attended by the crew, it was imperative that any redevelopment was done to a high standard.



Making progress towards achieving Net Zero by 2030 target

In 2022 we hit our target, reducing emissions by an amazing 20.8% since 2019/20. The Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme enabled AF&RS to fund five more solar photovoltaic (PV) arrays, three Air Source Heat Pumps and three battery storage systems, as well as installing energy efficiency measures such as cavity wall insulation, LED lighting and double glazing in many stations. There are now 25 electric vehicles in our fleet with Electric Vehicle Charge-points installed across AF&RS sites.



Success at the National Festival of Rescue

AF&RS took part in the United Kingdom Rescue Organisation (UKRO) National Festival of Rescue. After a lot of hard work our crews were awarded:

- 1st: Helm, Water Rescue Challenge**
- 2nd: Urban Search and Rescue**
- 3rd: HGV Extrication**

Our Technical Rope Rescue Team also took part in their first national challenge, and took 6th place - an outstanding achievement by all.



OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

Delivering against our Service Plan



Celebrating Black History

AF&RS unveiled artwork featured on our wrapped fire engine. The design created by award-winning contemporary digital illustrator Parys Gardener opens a dialogue on the importance of representing your local community and celebrates what it means to be a firefighter today.

” **“This project represents the next step on our journey towards a better future for the organisation and provides a fantastic backdrop of the work that we’re continuing to do. The artwork that has been produced is excellent and has already sparked important conversations both within the organisation and within the community.”** CFO Simon Shilton



Digitising the Incident Ground – Drones

The drone and drone team have been directly responsible for saving life within the first six months of use. They have helped locate missing individuals, been used to mitigate large grass fires during periods of drought and at major incidents to assist with situational awareness and multi-agency briefings

Footage from the drone can be live streamed directly to our Service Control and other Service locations with cutting edge technology. The drone is also used in collaboration with the Royal National Lifeboat Institution and other agencies, as well as neighbouring Fire and Rescue Services. Operationally, the drone was deployed and flown over 60 times in a six-month period in 2022, helping to resolve incidents more safely and efficiently.



Avon Data Warehouse launched

The Avon Data Warehouse (ADW) collates incident and building information to analyse and compare key data trends. This information helps determine the category of risk a premises is awarded which feeds into our Risk Based Inspection Programme. Combined with audit history, our Business Fire Safety Managers use this information to prioritise the premises with higher risk scores.



Summer safety sessions a big hit

AF&RS opened up a number of their fire stations to children for a series of summer safety sessions. Children in Key Stages 1 and 2, alongside their parents/carers, were invited to Weston-Super-Mare, Yate, Southmead, Patchway and Kingswood stations to learn more about fire safety and staying safe in and around the water, plus taking part in a fitness challenge with AF&RS mascot, Fido the Fire Dog.

During the sessions, attendees were also given the opportunity to see a fire engine up close with firefighters answering questions on the equipment they use at a fire or incident.



AWARDS AND NOMINATIONS

We are proud of the hard work, dedication, and achievements of all our staff. In 2022, many individuals and projects received additional recognition.

Excellence in Fire & Emergency Awards

Most Influential Ethnic Minority Individual
in Fire

Richard Stokes, DICE

Regen Green Energy Awards 2022

Clean Energy Scheme of the Year

Bristol Dementia Action Alliance

Bronze Award for Dementia Awareness
**Vulnerable Adults Team, Prevention
and Protection**

Asian Fire Services Association

Certificate of Merit, Charitable Activity

Louisa Roger, Corporate Communications

Asian Fire Services Association

Certificate of Merit, Champion of Equality
& Diversity

Richard Stokes, DICE

UK National GO Awards

Finalist, Best Procurement Delivery Award

AF&RS Procurement Team

BusinessGreen Leaders Awards 2022

Renewable Energy Project of the Year

AF&RS and Solarsense

Stepping Up Programme

Outstanding contribution

Bristol City Council AF&RS

Stepping Up Programme

Rising Star Award 2022

Richard Stokes, DICE

The MJ Achievement Awards 2022

Commended

Leadership in Responding to Climate Emergency



OUR PERFORMANCE

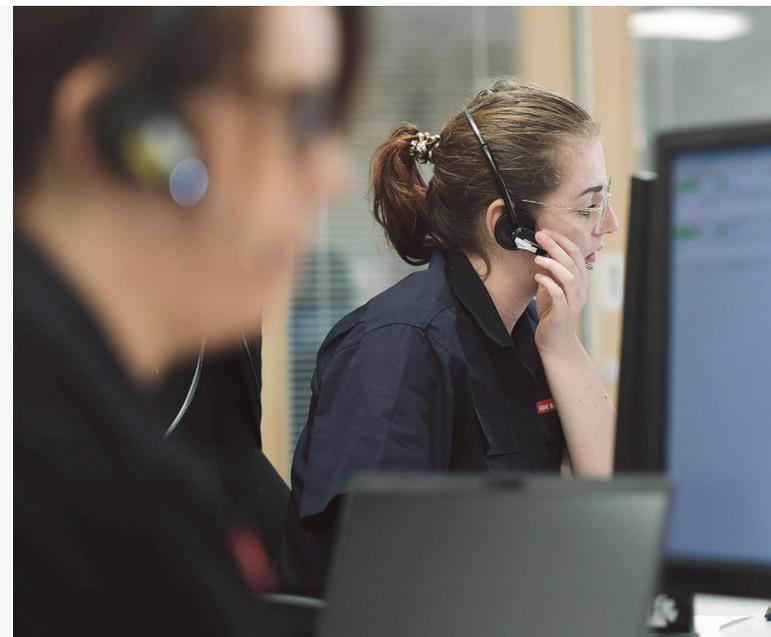
AF&RS continues to make excellent progress in reducing risk in our community by reducing the number and impact of incidents attended.

We have met the reduction targets for all of our incident indicators and have improved on last year's results. Each incident that is prevented represents a reduction of risk in our community.

We are committed to doing all that we can to make our community safer and our Service stronger. We continue to analyse our data to show us what additional interventions and initiatives we can take.

AF&RS measure response using a risk-based approach, ensuring that we respond quickest to incidents with the most risk. For each of our three response categories, we set a target based upon the average time from when we alert our appliances to when they arrive on scene, and we are pleased that we have met the target in each category.

Full information regarding our performance can be found in our [Performance Report 2021/22](#) >



Calls for assistance answered within seven seconds

Target
94%

Actual
95.4%

20,979

Number of 999 calls received

10,223

Number of incidents attended as emergency

Data taken from 2021/22 Performance Report



SERVICE PLANNING

Our Service Plan is a combination of two distinct elements; Integrated Risk Management Planning and Business Planning.

This plan meets our requirement under the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England to produce what it calls an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).

To make our communities safer, the IRMP enables fire and rescue services to use resources in the most effective way to save lives, improve public safety and reduce emergency incidents.

To make our Service stronger we need a plan which sets our goals and methods for delivering a better Service.

To ensure we identify all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks, challenges, and opportunities, we complete an annual planning cycle:



1. Define scope

Under the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, the IRMP is seeking to:

- identify and assess all foreseeable fire and rescue related community risks;
- put in place appropriate Prevention, Protection, and Response measures to reduce those risks;
- set out a Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP) to enforce the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005;
- produce an easily accessible and publicly available IRMP;
- prioritise the need to develop and maintain a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse.

The Service Plan is seeking to:

- secure continuous improvement in the way in which our functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

2. Identification

To identify Hazards, Challenges and Opportunities the Service undertakes several work streams:

- Strategic Assessment, which identifies changes in our community and business environments.
- The Operational Baseline Report, which utilises local data intelligence to analyse and forecast patterns, trends and emerging risks and demands.
- The Community Risk Report 2022, which assesses Fire and Rescue related risks to our communities, both immediate and on the horizon.
- Workshops and engagements, with senior leaders, teams, and subject leads to gain insight from across the Service.

3. Analysis

Using the outcomes from our identification phase we determine the risks posed by our hazards, possible solutions to the challenges, and the potential benefits to our communities and for the Service from the opportunities.

This is achieved by undertaking:

- Risk Assessments for all identified hazards incorporating findings from:
 - Strategic Assessment
 - The Baseline Report
 - National Operational Guidance
 - National and Community Risk Registers
- Risk modelling
- Workload modelling

4. Decision-making, consultation and engagement

All of our analysis is presented to Avon Fire Authority, our Service Leadership Board and Statutory Officers. They set out their proposals for the strategic intent and subsequent plans for delivering, and balancing the risks, challenges and opportunities against the vision, mission, values and our available budgets.

By consulting with our community, staff, and partners on these proposals, we can ensure transparency within our planning process, adjust plans where necessary, and raise awareness of our work. After a review of our consultation feedback, we will set the actions our Service will take over the next three years.

5. Evaluation

We regularly evaluate the actions we have set in this plan to ensure the efficiency, effectiveness, and positive impacts of decisions we make.





“We strive for efficiency and safer ways of working, making continual improvements to realise benefits from the Service’s investments, resources and technology, to deliver better outcomes for our staff and communities.”

Simon Shilton,
Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive

Chief Fire Officer’s Service Management Statement

I have spent time reflecting on the past 12 months and while we have faced many challenges, the continued commitment from the passionate and dedicated colleagues I work alongside every day, to keep our Service strong and our communities safe, never ceases to amaze me.

I am extremely proud of what has been achieved this past year. Avonmouth has a new fire station, staff hosted charity events and raised money for those suffering in the war in Ukraine, and we celebrated Pride and Black history, by wrapping our trucks and continuing our journey in working to improve representation of our communities.

I am passionate about leading our Service into a position where all staff feel valued, trusted and respected. There is no place for discrimination, harassment and bullying. We are already making significant changes to ensure everyone treats one another with dignity and respect, and for those behaviours that sit outside of that, we will take a zero-tolerance approach.

The Service has been awarded for extraordinary contribution to the transition to net zero energy and for championing diversity. We have delivered hundreds of hours of prevention work, responded to many challenging incidents and undertaken protection activity particularly in high-rise buildings across Bristol, to keep our communities safe.

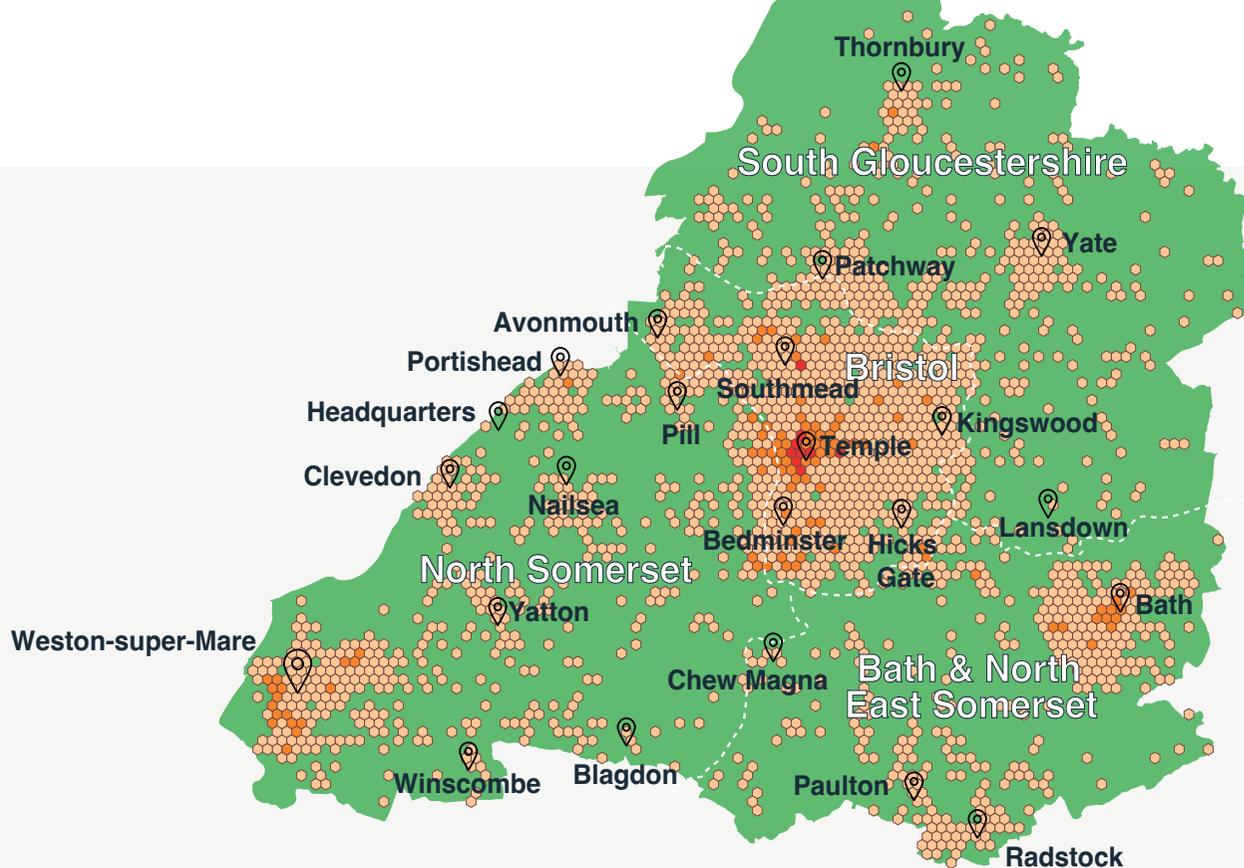
In the ever-changing role of the fire and rescue service, our focus remains on optimising productivity. This includes undertaking work which evaluates the operational working day, matching our resources to risk. We are also implementing modern business practices, to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of our business processes and looking at the digitisation of the Service more widely.

It’s also important we’re aware of our legislative responsibilities and governance arrangements, working in collaboration with partners to deliver against these. This includes the reference to governance models for fire and rescue services, as cited in the Government’s Fire Reform White Paper. Similarly, the introduction of the Building Safety Act 2022 overhauls existing regulations and focuses on effective oversight on how residential buildings should be made safe and maintained.

The Service is not immune to financial pressure and increasing demand for public services, as we continue to deliver the ambitious plans set out in this Service Plan. The Fire Authority’s approval of an increase in the fire part of the council tax, will help mitigate some of the increased costs we are facing as a Service.

Working together we can continue Making our Communities safer and Making our Service Stronger.

Using our incident data and our definition of risk we can visualise where the greatest risk is within our Service area; then overlay the locations of our assets to show how we strategically place our resources to meet the risk profile.



Our Strategic Assessment presents changes within our community and business environments and our Operational Baseline Report utilises local data intelligence to analyse and forecast patterns, trends and emerging risks and demands. So, while we have a good understanding of the demands placed upon us and our available assets, its important this is shared with the local communities we serve.

To further inform our process of understanding risk, we have defined our activity into ‘risk’ or ‘demand’, so that we can prioritise and match our resources to ‘risk’.

These risks are split into high, medium and low risk:

High risk incidents – known risk to life or property, classed as ‘emergency: critical’.

Medium risk incidents – don’t pose an immediate risk to life or property, but without intervention could potentially develop to a high risk situation, classed as ‘emergency: non-critical’.

Low risk incidents – pose a low risk to life or property, but still require an attendance by the fire service, classed as ‘non-emergency’.



In 2022/23, the Service responded to 18,313 incidents¹, 6,754 were high risk, 11,520 were medium risk and 39 were low risk.

We have outlined our strategic objectives across seven key areas: Prevention, Protection, Response, Resilience, Investing in our Service, Investing in our Staff and Transformation. Within these objectives we've included the resources available, matched to address the identified risks covered by these areas.

Working hard to achieve our ambitious plans is a team of dedicated, professional and skilled members of staff. Simultaneously, programmes are embedded across the Service to ensure the provision of holistic health and wellbeing support, effective maintenance of premises, vehicles and equipment and sound financial management.

Incidents responded to

18,313



High risk incidents

36.9%



Medium risk incidents

62.9%



Low risk incidents

0.20%



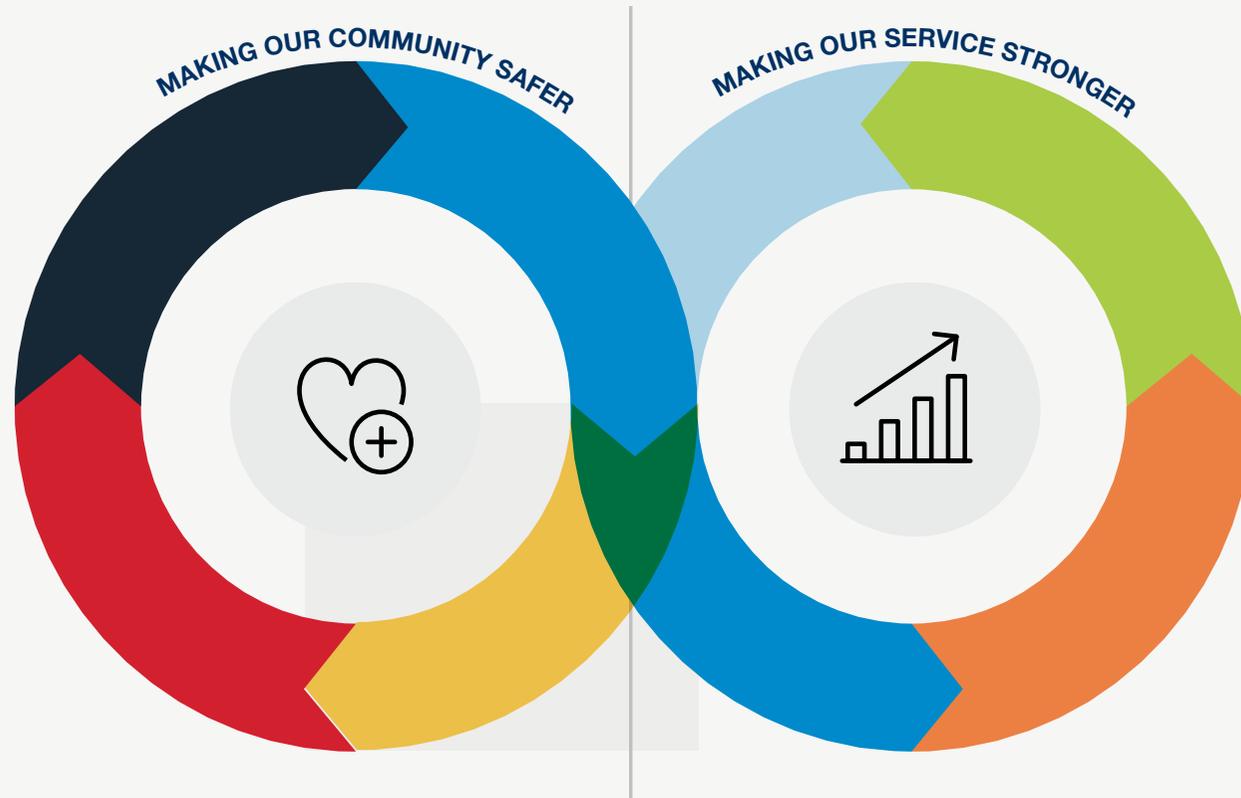
¹ 2022/2023 Year to date as of 13/02/2023.



OUR FOCUS

As a Service we have two strategic priorities which will focus our work activity for 2023-2026, these are Making our Communities Safer and Making our Service Stronger.

In order to achieve these strategic priorities, we have identified seven key objectives which are:



Working together and collaboratively on each individual objective, we will be Making our Communities Safer and Making our Service Stronger.

- PREVENTION
- PROTECTION
- RESPONSE
- RESILIENCE
- IMPROVING OUR SERVICE
- INVESTING IN OUR STAFF
- TRANSFORMATION



OUR FOCUS

PREVENTION

Prevention is at the heart of what we do. We want to ensure the local community is as safe as possible by working with vulnerable adults within the community and those most at risk of fire, as well as children and young people.

We are passionate about enabling every child and young person to thrive and we will help adults live longer and healthier lives by improving their safety, health and wellbeing.

Our core business activities:

- **Education packages** – we will deliver over 600 key stage packages per year on existing and emerging risks to all young people.
- **Fire Safety interventions** – we will work with local authorities, agencies and schools to deliver Fire Safety Interventions where young people are involved in deliberate fire setting.
- **Develop partnerships** – we work with partner agencies to identify those most at risk and who are vulnerable across our communities.
- **Support vulnerable people** – we develop interventions and provide assistive technology to vulnerable people in the community.

Our strategic actions for Prevention include:

- **Service wide targeted interventions** – we will ensure a holistic approach to prevention, so our focus and activity is targeted to those most at risk.
- **Community Health and Wellbeing** – we will understand the impact that community health and wellbeing has on local support services.
- **Safeguarding** – we will embed safeguarding across all areas of our Service provision.



Home Fire Safety visits targeting the most vulnerable in our communities and making every contact count.

Target visits **6000** per year

We anticipate over 1,000 onward referrals, providing training to all managers at relevant agencies.

Referrals **1000** per year

552

Vulnerable Adults Manager

001

Children and Young People Manager

001

Dedicated prevention staff at various locations across the Service

016

Station-based establishment of Wholetime and On Call staff who support the delivery of Prevention work



OUR FOCUS

PROTECTION

We have a statutory duty as part of our role under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and Building Safety Act 2022 to work with the business community under Protection, to prevent fire from occurring across our business community.

The Service uses a Risk Based Inspection Programme to prioritise audit and inspection work towards the premises which present the highest risk to life. We will also provide support as part of our role with the Building Safety Regulator.

Our core business activities:

- **Prosecutions** – we undertake prosecutions for fire safety failings, where appropriate, following the public interest and evidential tests.
- **Enforce legislation** – we enforce fire safety legislation where necessary following issues of non-compliance.
- **Primary Authority partnerships** – we provide assured advice to support compliance to our Primary Authority partners.
- **Safety Advisory Group members** – we support the work of the safety advisory group by being active members across all authority areas.

Our strategic actions for Protection include:

- **Enhancing our business fire safety provisions** – we will broaden our protection activity to ensure our business fire safety function continues to meet current and emerging risks. We will remain agile to the outcomes of reviews, reports and inquiries, such as the Grenfell Report, to ensure that recommendations are considered and adopted where necessary, and we continue to invest in fire safety resources.



We anticipate approving over 300 licensing applications, working closely with local authority licensing teams



Approved per year
300

We anticipate delivering over 700 Fire Safety Audits, focusing on the very high-risk premises.



Fire Safety Audits per year
700

001

Business Fire Safety Manager

001

Business Fire Safety Team Leader

21.5

Inspecting Officers located at Bath, Bristol, Patchway, Weston-super-Mare and Yate



OUR FOCUS
RESPONSE

This is our ability to respond and resolve fire and rescue emergencies that affect our communities 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for the purposes of saving life, property and the environment.

Our core business activities:

- Take emergency and non-emergency calls and deploy fire service resources – we anticipate handling over 20,500 emergency 999 calls.
- Save lives and property by responding to emergency incidents – we anticipate attending over 10,000 emergency incidents.
- Liaise with and support other agencies – we work with key stakeholders to ensure a coordinated approach to managing risk.

Our strategic actions for Response include:

- Enhancing medical response – we will explore and consider new ways of working to assist with medical emergencies within the community.
- Extreme weather – we will enhance our readiness and preparedness for extreme weather events.
- Standards of cover review – we will take a holistic approach to the impact of large-scale building developments on our future response provision.



Control staff, working from our control room near Bath

039

Tactical and strategic commanders

032

021

fire stations with an overall establishment of:

Frontline fire engines, including four rescue vehicles

034

Wholetime firefighters

376

On Call firefighters

176



All figures correct at time of production 13/02/2023



OUR FOCUS

RESILIENCE

Avon Fire & Rescue Service is required as a Category 1 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act to ensure it is a resilient organisation.

We must be able to anticipate, plan, prepare and respond to the changing environment that we face.

Our core business activities:

- **Business continuity** – we prepare, test and exercise our Business Continuity plans.
- **Risk modelling** – we model the risks to our community.
- **Integrated Risk Management Plan** – we identify, assess and formulate plans to mitigate all foreseeable fire and rescue service-related risks.
- **Operational guidance and procedures** – we produce, manage and test guidance and procedures for our operational staff.
- **Local Resilience Forum** – we engage with and contribute to the Local Resilience Forum.
- **Operational learning** – we coordinate operational debrief and monitoring to ensure learning and development of our operational response functions.
- **Reserve capacity** – we provide a capability during periods of staff shortages to ensure we can always provide cover to our communities.

- **National Resilience** – we support national arrangements with dedicated teams and specialists in Urban Search and Rescue, High Volume Pumping, Mass Decontamination and Hazardous Detection, Identification and Monitoring (HDIM) capabilities - all of which can be utilised on a locally or nationally.

Our strategic actions for Resilience include:

- **Community Risk Profile Software** – we will introduce new software that will help us to better understand the risk within our communities; for both people and businesses.
- **Workforce Planning** – we will ensure the Service is sufficiently resourced and has the tools and capability to deliver our services. We aim to attract and retain skills within the workforce and recognise the changing need for more flexible working. We will promote career opportunities, the Direct Entry scheme and our DICE (Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion Equality) objectives.



Operational Assurance
Guidance staff

005

Operational Risk, Business
Continuity staff

003

Frontline National
Resilience assets

011

Operational Assurance
Learning staff

006

Integrated Risk Management
Planning staff

002



OUR FOCUS

IMPROVING OUR SERVICE

We continually seek more efficient and safe ways of working and facilitate continual improvement to realise the benefits from Service investments, resources and technology, to deliver better outcomes for our staff and communities.



Our core business activities:

- **Assets** – we provide appropriate IT to our staff, fit for purpose buildings, equipment and vehicles to respond to the needs of our community, and continue to develop our approach to environmental issues.
- **Collaboration** – we work together with other people and organisations to achieve the benefits of working together, improving public safety.
- **Assurance** – we maintain effective governance arrangements, deliver an integrated approach to corporate planning, and monitor and report on the Corporate Risk Register.
- **Procurement and Finance** – we manage and monitor compliance with procurement, as well as oversee the management of financial reporting.
- **Communications** – we deliver external and internal communication, supporting community events and campaign planning.
- **Performance** – we monitor, analyse and report on our corporate performance.

Our strategic actions include:

- **Optimising (Operational) Productivity** – we will ensure we continually explore opportunities that exist to be effective and efficient in our Service provision.

- **Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion and Equality (DICE) and Accessibility** – we will continue to demonstrate our commitment to an inclusive workforce where everyone is valued and are able to reach their potential. This includes encouraging diversity at all levels in the organisation during recruitment, promotion, development and direct entry processes. Ensuring a culture which adheres to Fire Standards and the Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services in England.
- **Environmental, Ecological and Ethical Leadership** – having declared a climate and ecological emergency, we will strive to demonstrate environmental, ecological and ethical leadership in the Fire and Rescue sector.
- **Making best use of our assets** – we will make sure we have the right tools to provide the best service, while providing value for money to the community.
- **Align to National Fire Chief Councils leadership across the sector** – we will do this by adopting a best practice approach to national standards.
- **Achieve an HMICFRS rating of 'good'** – we will address the findings from the latest HMICFRS reports to achieve a 'Good' rating across all even diagnostic questions.



OUR FOCUS**INVESTING IN OUR STAFF**

Our staff are our biggest resource and we are committed to ensuring that they are prepared and resilient to deliver our key priorities.

By ensuring that our staff have the right skills, equipment and support, we maximise opportunities to deliver better outcomes for our communities.

Our core business activities include:

- **People development** – we train our staff to ensure that the right people have the right skills, in the right place, providing opportunities for development and investing in our leaders at all levels.
- **Recruitment, retention and promotion** – we recruit and select the best staff in all areas of our Service by ensuring that we have the widest, and most diverse, pool of candidates to select from.
- **Health, fitness, safety and wellbeing** – we support a wide range of activities to maintain physical and mental health, safety and welfare for our staff, and maintain a Health and Safety team with expertise in mental health support.
- **Working groups** – we facilitate working groups and staff engagement to ensure staff can shape future ways of working.
- **Resourcing** – we ensure the Service is sufficiently resourced and has the tools and capability to deliver frontline services and support the organisation.
- **Staff communications** – we maintain regular communications with staff to keep them informed, engaged and included, embedding our values to develop an inclusive workforce where everyone is valued.

**Our strategic actions include:**

- **People development** – we will build a resilient workforce through the provision of development opportunities for our staff, including the launch of the leadership academy.
- **Health, fitness, wellbeing and welfare** – we will enhance a number of our health, fitness, wellbeing and welfare provisions to improve the support we offer to our staff at all stages in their career. This includes our ongoing sickness improvement plan.



OUR FOCUS

TRANSFORMATION

Transformation is a multi-year programme of interlinked projects designed to review, develop and improve the Service policies, processes and systems across all areas of the Service, using technology more effectively to maximise efficiency.

The following key areas have been identified as part of this programme of work:

- **Digitising our Service** – developing software, hardware and systems that talk to each other and are integrated to enable us to be more effective, reduce paperwork and reduce our administrative burden.
- **Review of our processes** – looking at all of our processes and procedures to make them more effective, efficient and empowering.
- **Review of our policies** – streamlining the number we have, their ease of use and ensure they have people at their heart as we move into revised ways of working aligned to digitisation.
- **Continuous improvement** – we will improve ways of working to meet the needs of the users, improve services to the community, increase efficiency, capacity and cohesiveness, and maximise the added value of digital solutions.



COLLABORATIVE WORKING

Our future success is directly linked to how we work with others. The Policing and Crime Act 2017 created a statutory duty on fire and rescue authorities, police forces and ambulance trusts to collaborate.

By engaging with our staff, communities, key partners and media, we are not only able to share what we do and how we do it, but we are also better placed to identify additional opportunities to improve from others. Thereby ensuring a more efficient and cost-effective service to our communities.

Our collaborative working relationships include those with:

South West Emergency Services Collaboration Forum and the Avon and Somerset Local Resilience Forum

– to coordinate shared understanding of risk within our community and a joined-up approach to addressing the risk. For example, we currently have a number of regional collaboration agreements signed by our ‘blue light’ partners in place, including:

- **Collapse behind closed doors** – supporting the ambulance service to gain entry to premises where there is concern for welfare.
- **Requests for assistance** – ensuring requests for support across South West regional emergency services are managed efficiently and effectively.
- **Missing persons services** – ensuring regional fire and rescue services are able to support regional police forces at incidents where specialist search and rescue skills and equipment are required.

Emergency Services Network (ESN) – working to support the Government initiative which will transform public safety in the UK, when it launches. With integrated 4G voice and broadband data services, over two hundred thousand users across police, fire and emergency medical services will be able to share mission critical data that is both reliable and secure.

West of England One Public Estate programme

– to identify opportunities for further collaboration and funding including the release and disposal of publicly owned sites.



Partnership working in key areas, including:

- Licensing, building regulations and housing, to continue to drive down risk within our built and business environment.
- Engaging with local authorities and a range of organisations and groups who can help us reach and support the most vulnerable people in our communities.
- Delivering education packages on fire, road, water and student safety in schools and other educational establishments.
- Working with partner agencies such as SARI (Stand Against Racism & Inequality) and the Race Equality Commission to build relationships with community groups to advise on matters such as public and business safety and recruitment.

We also engage with our partners to explore the following areas:

- Shared estate and assets.
- Shared functions.
- The way we work together operationally.
- Joint community initiatives and partnerships.
- Shared information.
- Joint marketing and communication.
- Targeted intervention to reach the most vulnerable in our communities.

For more information about our collaboration activities, see our [Collaboration Strategy 2021-2026](#) >



GOVERNANCE AND CORPORATE ASSURANCE

The Fire Authority has overall responsibility for ensuring there is a sound system of governance (incorporating the system of internal control) and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for and used efficiently, effectively and economically.

The arrangements in place for ensuring good governance include:

Avon Fire Authority

The Fire Authority carries out its duties through regular meetings and the following committees:

- **The Audit, Governance and Ethics Committee** – considers and reviews issues relating to audit, governance and risk management and the conduct of Members. Their work includes scrutinising and approving the Statement of Accounts, the Annual Governance Statement, Statement of Assurance and the Corporate Risk Register.
- **The Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee** - considers and reviews the Fire Authority's policies, plans and objectives. Their work includes scrutinising performance against key indicators and monitoring aspects of service improvement including health, safety and welfare, equality, training and development.

- **The People and Culture Committee** – keeps under review the Authority's compliance with its duties under the Equality Act 2010. The Committee deals with the recruitment and appointment of Statutory Officers and members of the Service Leadership Board and any disciplinary matters or grievances. The Committee also determines appeals under staff disciplinary or grievance procedures and reviews of pension complaints under the Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure.

- **The Local Pension Board** – assists the Fire Authority as Scheme Manager in administering the various Firefighters Pension Schemes, by providing governance and through the scrutiny of policies, pension documents, decisions and outcomes.

These meetings are recorded and available to view via the [AF&RS YouTube channel](#) >

Avon Fire & Rescue Service

The Service carries out its day-to-day responsibilities under the leadership of:

- **The Service Leadership Board** – responsible for considering strategic issues, finance and risk, setting the strategic direction for the Service and for overall management of the organisation.
- **The Service Leadership Team** – responsible for providing day-to-day leadership and management for the Service, overseeing a working environment which supports the effective achievement of goals and priorities.

Statutory Officers

- **The Clerk (and Monitoring Officer)** – responsible for overseeing and reporting on the lawfulness of decision-making and for advising upon and overseeing the governance arrangements for the Fire Authority.

- **Statutory Finance Officer** – provides independent professional advice and guidance to the Fire Authority to enable elected Members and the Service Leadership Board to effectively scrutinise financial information.

Audit

- **External Audit** – in accordance with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, a relevant authority must appoint an external auditor to audit its accounts. The Fire Authority fully consider all external audits.
- **Internal Audit** – an independent and objective assurance service to the Fire Authority which completes a programme of reviews throughout the year and also undertakes a National Fraud Initiative and proactive fraud detection work.

Inspections

- **His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)** – independently assess the effectiveness and efficiency of fire and rescue services and all reports are considered by the Fire Authority.



OUR BUDGET

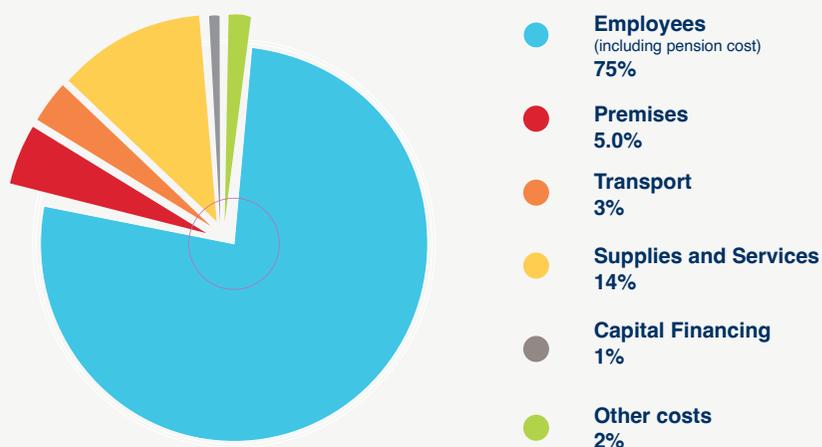
Our Service Plan will need to be delivered against a backdrop of financial pressures and increasing demand for public services.

The potential for less money will mean that providing the support and services people need will become more difficult.

We are not alone in facing these pressures in our area, so we are conscious that we do not push costs and pressures onto other services.

Avon Fire Authority has set its net budget for 2023/24 at £48.883 million. This represents a Council Tax level of £82.95 a year for a Band D property, an increase of 6.4%.

How is money spent



Development of the 2023/24 Draft Budget		£'000
Core Budget 2022/23 (Restated)		44,537
- add back use of reserves 2022/23		419
Base Budget 2022/23		44,956
Pay awards and Inflation		3,857
Other Spending Pressures		1,190
Transformation and Change Savings		
- Employees		- 272
- Other		- 248
2023/24 Revenue Budget Requirement before use of reserves		49,483
Use of Reserves		- 600
2023/24 Revenue Budget Requirement after use of reserves		48,883
Funding		
- Locally Retained Business Rates		- 4,802
- Central Government Support		- 12,036
- City Region Deal		- 298
- Collection Fund Surplus		- 145
Amount Required from Council Tax payers after use of reserves		31,602
Assumed Tax Base		380,974
Council Tax		£ 82.95
Council Tax Increase		£ 5.00
Budget Increase (excluding use of reserves)		10%

