



**Cumbria Fire
and Rescue
Service**

**Annual
Report
2019 - 20**



Foreword by the Chief Fire Officer

As the Chief Fire Officer I am pleased to present this annual report for our local communities which includes highlights of the year, a summary of performance against our targets and how we are working to improve our service to the people of Cumbria.

This report demonstrates how we support our staff, how we are responding to the ever changing risk and demand profile in Cumbria, and how we are ensuring that our proactive approach to prevention and protection leads to a safer and thriving Cumbria.

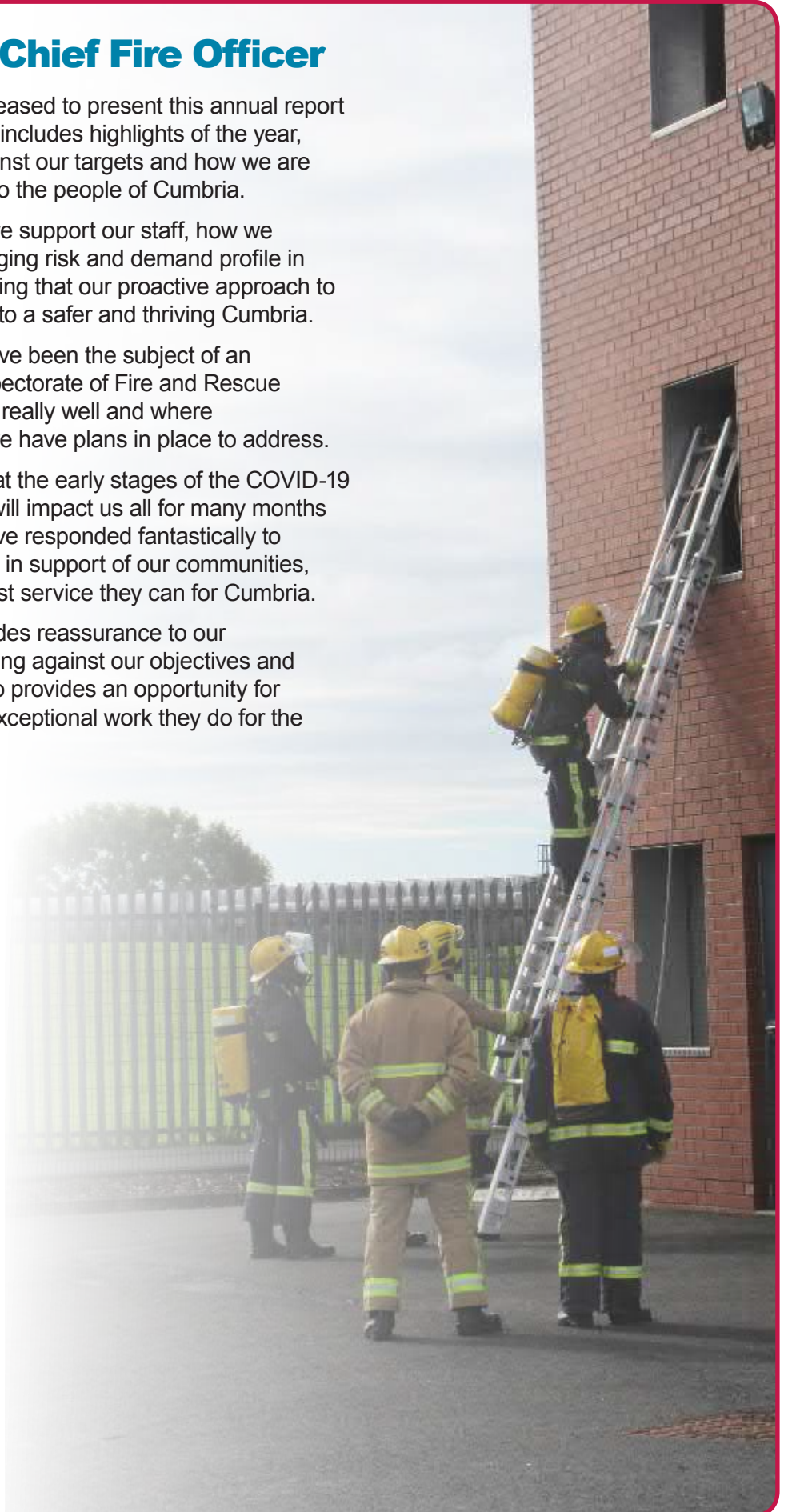
In the last twelve months, we have been the subject of an inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Fire and Rescue Services. Overall we performed really well and where improvements were identified, we have plans in place to address.

As we ended the year we were at the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic which we now know will impact us all for many months and years to come. Our staff have responded fantastically to changes to ways of working and in support of our communities, have continued to deliver the best service they can for Cumbria.

Finally, this report not only provides reassurance to our stakeholders that we are delivering against our objectives and providing value for money, it also provides an opportunity for our workforce to reflect on the exceptional work they do for the communities we serve.



Steve Healey
Chief Fire Officer



Introduction

This Annual Report gives an overview of our work and highlights how we, with our partners, are striving to deliver a first class service to our residents and how we have performed in the key areas of people, prevention, protection and emergency response.

We are committed to a vision of being a **Fire and Rescue Service that works with residents, businesses, communities and other organisations to deliver the best services within our available resources**, and we want to thank all our staff who continue to work with great professionalism and dedication to help achieve this.

The achievements from last year are clear evidence of this dedication and we believe we are well placed to meet the challenges of forthcoming years. As well as providing a summary of our performance, the annual report provides details on our finances and resources and gives an overall view of our work and performance in 2019/20 and our future plans.

To understand more about our Service we have a range of information on our website at www.cumbria.gov.uk/cumbriafire.

About Us

Cumbria is one of the most diverse counties in the country, and as such the fire and rescue service has to be adaptable to meet the various demands placed on it. Every year we deal with a large number of wide ranging incidents and provide significant levels of training in the community.

A snapshot of some of our activity in the last year is illustrated below.



Special service calls cover a myriad of incidents that we are called to and can include flooding, dealing with hazardous material, releasing people from lifts, animal rescue, and assisting the NHS with bariatric patients.

Our resources

Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service works to ensure that its stations, equipment and staff are deployed to respond in the most effective way to incidents. Our stations are located across the county and are staffed using a variety of duty systems.



Key

- = Wholetime/Day Crew and Wholetime/Day Crew with On-call
- = On-call

Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service is continually evaluating and improving its fleet. This ensures staff have access to the most effective vehicles and equipment designed to meet the risk and demand within the County.

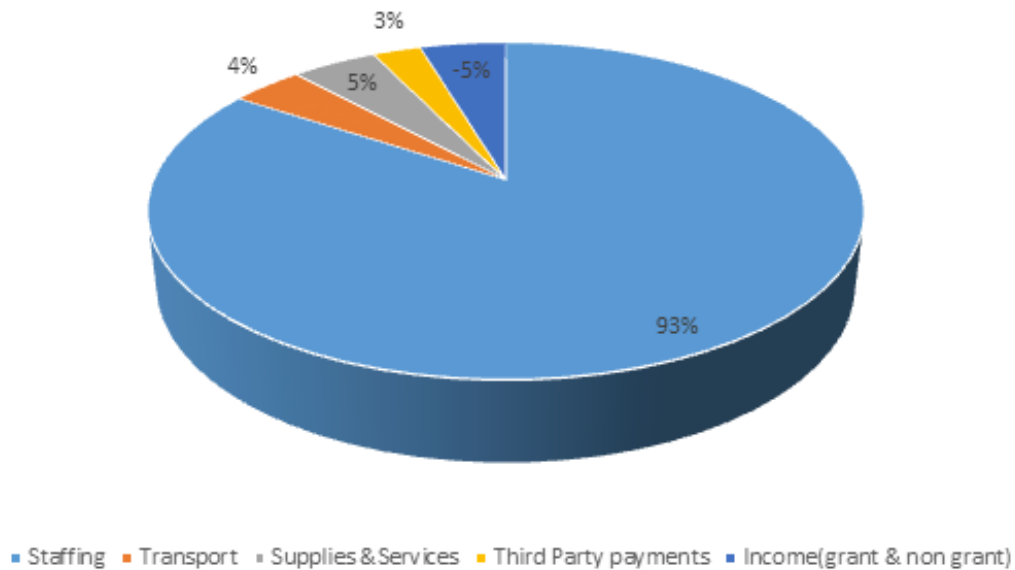
In 2019/20, we introduced the Rapid Response Vehicle (RRV) to Arnside, Staveley and Maryport stations. Following a successful evaluation, it is clear that the RRVs have provided a highly effective and innovative emergency response that has met the needs of the communities and allowed us to respond to incidents in such a way as to prevent escalation.



Our Budget

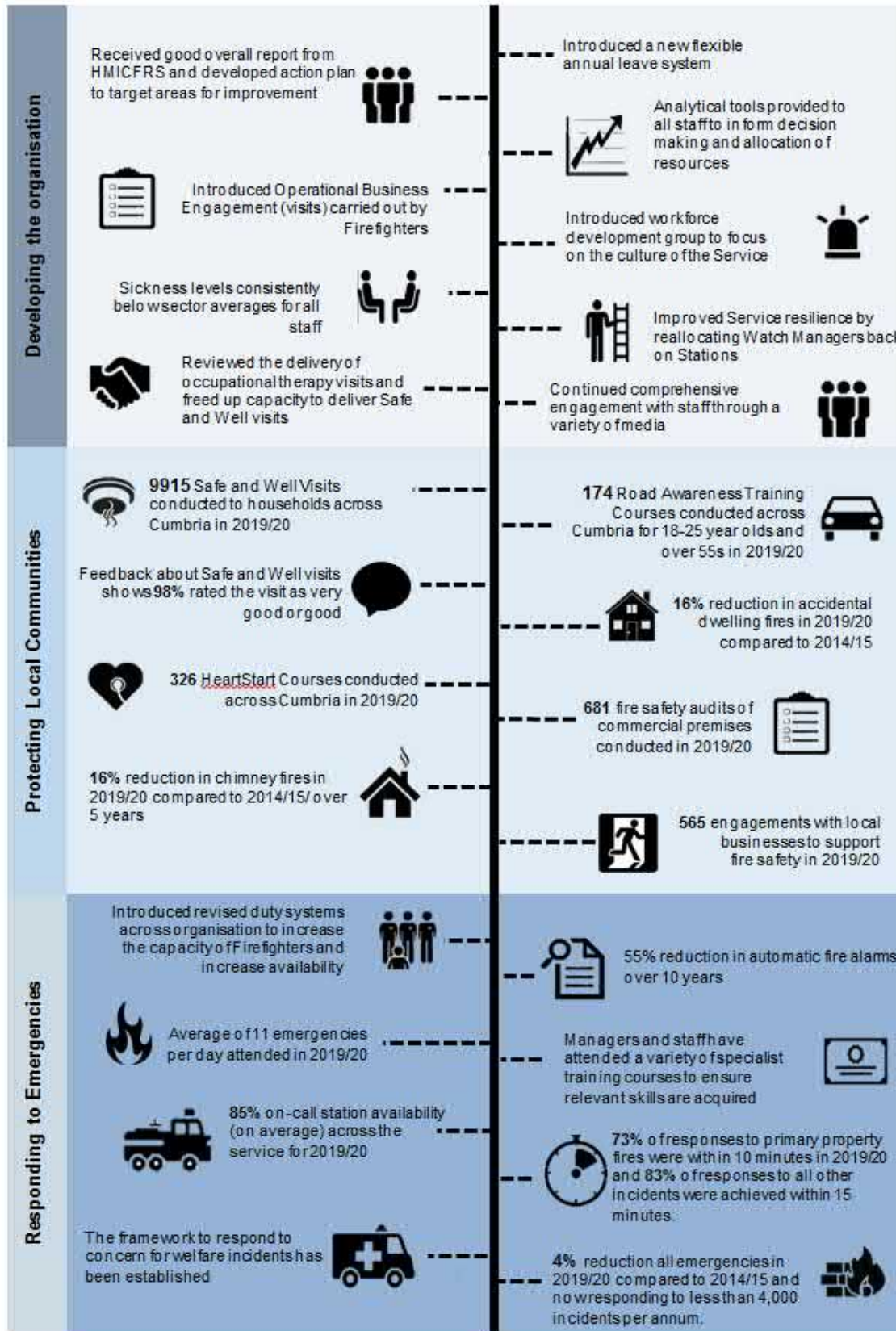
Cumbria County Council is the Fire Authority and therefore the Fire and Rescue Service benefits from a back office support provided by broader council teams. In line with this, the Fire and Rescue Service revenue budget is primarily aligned to staffing, transport and supplies and services, as shown in the graph below. In 2019/20 our annual net revenue budget was in the region of £17 million excluding capital depreciation. There is also an additional capital budget to procure our fleet vehicles and improve our infrastructure.

Cost as a proportion of CFRS Budget



What have we achieved

We are committed to protecting our local communities in a range of different ways and responding to incidents when they do occur. The figures below highlight our performance and commitment to delivering the best service possible.



People: We will have a motivated and committed workforce that is innovative, supported, skilled and customer focused.



Without its people, the Fire and Rescue Service would not be able to deliver on its promise to protect the people of Cumbria. A significant amount of our time goes into ensuring that all staff who work for us, whether that be on the front line or providing essential back office support, receive all the training they require and access to excellent welfare provision.

What we said we'd do

Adopt the new County Council approach to appraisals, Valuing Individuals and Performance (VIP).

What we did

The new VIP process was adopted from May 2019 and has been rolled out across the Service. The Valuing Individuals and Performance (VIP) approach promotes regular and informal conversations which focus on strengths, wellbeing, performance and development. A range of support has been put in place for staff and managers to help with the new process e.g. support tutorials and eLearn.

And as a result

An increased number of staff have had an individual VIP discussion (appraisal) compared to the same time last year and renewed focus on welfare and personal contributions to the overall Service performance.



What we said we'd do

Deliver Mental Health training, awareness and understanding to all staff.

What we did

Delivered a number of awareness sessions to wholetime staff and developed a bespoke training package for On-call staff. The fitness assessments now include mental health and wellbeing and will reach every member of operational staff each year.

And as a result

A new mental health and wellbeing group has been established. Stronger links have been formed with the provisions and services provided by the wider Council. We have seen an increase of over 20% in the number of staff who feel that the Service cares about their wellbeing and an increase of 10% in the number of staff who feel that health, safety and welfare is taken seriously within the Service.

What we said we'd do

Continue our apprentice programme and successfully recruit new firefighters.

What we did

During this period we delivered an apprentice recruitment campaign, which now mirrors the wholetime process including the same activities such as the assessment centre approach.

We planned for a joint apprentice and wholetime recruitment campaign which opened for applications on 5th April 2020. We reviewed the criteria for the practical selection tests and interviews to remove barriers and consider a wider range of skills needed by in the role of a modern firefighter.

And as a result

In 2019/20 we recruited 30 On-call firefighters and 12 wholetime firefighters. From the wholetime appointments, 20% were female.

The apprentices began their training in April 2020 and were joined by a number of wholetime candidates. This course has a female representation of 34%. The apprentice process provides an alternative route for people to join the Service and the application process is providing a diverse range of individuals with a good mixture of skills. The ongoing process will now provide up to 35 wholetime and apprentice firefighters if required.





What we said we'd do

Deliver enhanced supervisory management and leadership training.

What we did

Worked with the Council's Learning & Development team to roll-out management apprenticeships. Developed a three phase approach to delivering supervisory management training which would incrementally build on the knowledge and understanding of our managers.

To support flexible learning and to support managers in their role:

- A 10 minute manager suite of eLearning and Managers' Induction eLearning programme has been rolled out:
- A suite of managers training videos specific to CFRS has been developed

Specific sessions on project management and absence management have been provided and a Coaching Champions programme has been delivered across the council to support building a coaching culture.

And as a result

We currently have 9 staff on management apprenticeships working towards qualifications in project management, operational department management, chartered manager and senior leadership. The first phase was delivered, presentations and training sessions were programmed for Phase 2 in March 2020.

In addition, of the current CFRS management establishment 35% have attend the corporate Team Leading/Management Development Programme. 10 members of staff participated in the Coaching Champions programme.

What we said we'd do

Review our current structure to increase organisational capacity, including strengthening our wholetime fire station establishment level.

What we did

We have reviewed establishment levels and increased each Watch to a level of 6 per Watch including Watch Managers being placed back on frontline fire engines. Watch Managers have also been reintroduced to On-call Fire Stations increasing the responsibilities and accountabilities of On-call managers.

Additionally we have reviewed our middle and senior manager responsibilities to ensure there is sufficient leadership capacity across all our priority areas and introduced matrix management arrangements to empower staff at all levels.

A new duty system has been agreed to increase capacity across the daytime hours.

And as a result

This has resulted in a much more resilient frontline workforce with increased crewing levels and delivery of a more efficient and effective service.

Increased capacity at senior manager level and improved accountability.

What we said we'd do

Increase the roll out of the Joint Emergency Service Officers (JESO).

What we did

There are currently two JESO roles within Cumbria. The JESO role is in development and the job description and other associated documentation is currently being finalised. Three JESO taster sessions were held earlier in 2020 with a number of Police Community Support Officers showing an interest.

And as a result

It is anticipated that by the end of 2020 we will be able to progress with advertisement and recruitment of additional JESO roles throughout Cumbria.



What we said we'd do

Deliver the Concern for Welfare project, in which we will facilitate the timely entry to premises on behalf of North West Ambulance Service (NWAS).

What we did

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been finalised between ourselves, Cumbria Police and NWAS, the required legal documentation is being finalised. The concern for welfare awareness training is ongoing during early 2020/21 for both wholetime and On-call firefighters.

And as a result

Due to start officially on 1 July 2020 where we will respond to concern for welfare to assist NWAS, in the place of Cumbria Police.





What we said we'd do

Review governance structures to better align workloads whilst improving transparency and inclusivity.

What we did

Completed a review of governance arrangements with changes to the groups and boards that make up the structure. We have also introduced a Seat at SLT (Strategic Leadership Team). Any member of staff can attend the monthly meeting of strategic managers to contribute to and/or observe the discussion. Work is underway to make papers accessible to all staff and will be completed by May 2020.

And as a result

Interest in the Seat at SLT has increased since its launch and feedback from all those that have participated has been positive and they have all actively participated and contributed to the decisions made.



Prevention: We will prevent fires and other emergencies by prioritising the most vulnerable.



Fire prevention is the proactive method of reducing emergencies and the damage caused by them. Working within the wider Public Sector, we use the latest information to identify a range of risks, including fire, fuel poverty, physical and mental health and drugs and alcohol.

Our staff are trained to deliver interventions in these areas and ensure that the people of Cumbria either see a reduction in their risk level or receive the support they need.

What we said we'd do

Expand our Safe and Well programme to provide support and information on Cold Homes/Winter Poverty.

What we did

Expanded our Safe and Well offer to include advice on cold homes, referrals to other partners, working in collaboration with Cumbria Action For Sustainability.

Developed a new follow up visit programme for households that require further interventions after a Safe and Well visit. This programme was identified through consultations with staff and will further enhance delivery of prevention work with vulnerable households.

Developed a Home Fire Safety Assessment which will allow On-call teams in their rural communities to give fire prevention advice and refer on for a full Safe and Well intervention if necessary.

Continued to improve our web assessment tool.

And as a result

We carried out a total of 9915 Safe and Well visits and fitted 7,518 ten year smoke detectors and 129 Carbon Monoxide detectors.

We are working with multiple agencies such as Age UK, care agencies and Housing Associations. We are also dealing with increased urgent referrals from social workers, hospital discharge teams, district nurses and occupational health teams.

The numbers of fires has decreased since last year across all types of fire related incidents, with the exception of chimney fires that remain at a similar level to last year.



What we said we'd do

Support the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Fire Prevention campaigns.

What we did

Promoted a number of campaigns and raised awareness linked to specific risks such as kitchen safety during key festivals and holidays, BBQ safety, water safety and Bonfire Night. This work has continued during COVID-19 as the risks have changed with increased garden bonfires and wildfires.

Developed a CFRS plan for 2020 based on the NFCC planner taking account of our local risks using a tailored communications strategy to support each campaign.

And as a result

Events planned for 2020 include cooking safety, water safety, outdoor safety, chimney safety, student safety, road safety and winter safety.

We are continuing to support all NFCC campaigns through our internal and external communication channels and locally through station activities.



What we said we'd do

Deliver a programme of HeartStart, targeted Road Awareness Training (RAT) and support and delivery of Youth Engagement programmes across the Service.

What we did

As well as a full programme of HeartStart and RAT sessions we have supported youth work with the Prince's Trust, Cadets and Young Firefighter courses and worked with local authorities and Youth Offending Teams including delivering FIRES referrals. We have also worked in partnership with Cumbria Police to develop the local Safe Drive Stay Alive campaign.

And as a result

During 2019/20 we have delivered 326 HeartStart courses, 174 Road Awareness Training sessions to the 17-25 and over 55 age ranges. Since 2014/15 there has been a 7.2% reduction in the number of casualties at incidents we have attended. We have also seen a decrease in the number of deliberate fires of 5.6%.



What we said we'd do

Work with partners to increase the delivery of activity and explore opportunities for further collaboration around prevention and medical intervention such as atrial fibrillation and other health conditions.

What we did

We have worked with Council and other health partners to increase our ability to make and receive safe and well referrals. Through enhanced data collection we can better target the most vulnerable and high risk groups.

And as a result

We have a process in place that allows colleagues working in Adult Social Care to refer their vulnerable clients for specialist fire safety advice and equipment if required. Our staff are testing people for atrial fibrillation and referring them to seek medical advice if the results indicate the need.



Protection: We will protect people, property and the environment by working with partners to ensure compliance with legislation.



Following the tragic events of Grenfell Tower, the role of the Fire Service in working with commercial partners to ensure that people, property and the environment are protected has never been under more scrutiny. A refreshed Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP) has allowed us to put in place measures that will allow the best protection to be provided to the business and people of Cumbria.

What we said we'd do

Review the Fire Protection team structure to ensure it has the skills and capacity to meet the requirements set within the refreshed RBIP, including how frontline crews can support the programme.

What we did

The introduction of the new RBIP highlighted the need for additional Fire Inspectors to undertake audits of high risk premises. In order to meet this requirement we provided training to our existing Level 3 Fire Safety Advisors and using guidance from the Competency Framework for Fire Safety Regulators supported those personnel in the achievement of Level 4 qualifications.

In order to enhance the skills of our operational firefighters and support the delivery of lower level Fire Protection inspections we developed and delivered a training package for them to follow and be competent in their delivery.

And as a result

By providing a further three Level 4 Inspectors it has enabled us to deliver more High Risk audits and to ensure we have a robust mechanism in place to deliver against our Risk Based Inspection Programme.

The training delivered to operational firefighters has enhanced their understanding of Fire Protection matters thus enhancing the level of firefighter safety in the built environment, it has further provided opportunities to familiarise themselves with regulated premises that they may previously have not encountered additionally increasing levels of engagement with the business community through the adoption of the Operational Business Engagement (audits) carried out by firefighters.



What we said we'd do

Continue the roll out of crews undertaking Operational Business Engagement visits to lower risk premises.

What we did

Each Watch received training to carry out low risk inspections ongoing training will be ongoing during 2020.

And as a result

Targets were set for operational watches and achieved. This has now provided a means for us to have a procedure in place for visiting and providing advice to businesses deemed low risk.

What we said we'd do

Ensuring all Fire Protection Inspectors are qualified to Level 4 Fire Safety Diploma and supporting our Business Fire Safety Advisors achieve their Level 3 Diploma over the two year Apprenticeship.

What we did

Our Level 3 Advisors undertook additional training to achieve their Level 4 qualification. There is a programme in place using Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to ensure our Fire Inspectors, using their existing qualifications in Fire Safety, achieve the Level 4 Fire Safety diploma.

And as a result

All Fire Inspectors to date following the CPD route to claim their Level 4 Diploma have successfully passed and received the award and the remaining personnel should have achieved the award by the end of 2020. We have successfully recruited 3 Fire Safety Apprentices who are now being supported to achieve the Level 3 Business Fire Safety award due for completion by August 2021.

What we said we'd do

Conduct Fire Safety Audits in line with the new Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP) in order to meet the requirements of the Fire Safety Order 2005.

What we did

Our updated ICT system now allows all our Fire Inspectors/Advisors to be able to see in real time how they are performing against the service expectations.

And as a result

All Fire Inspectors/Advisors arranged and audited their requisite premises to meet their target where possible. The completion of these programmed audits will ensure we complete our Risk Based Inspection Programme.

What we said we'd do

Provide a bespoke fire safety development programme for our supervisory managers on wholetime stations.

What we did

Supervisory managers were provided with initial fire safety training during the delivery of our Operational Business Engagement (visits).

Inspection training.

And as a result

Supervisory managers have now a better understanding of fire safety within the built environment..



Response: We will plan for and respond effectively to emergencies when they arise.



Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service wants to ensure that incidents are responded to in the most effective manner. Using the latest intelligence equipment and innovation, we work to ensure we have the right people in the right places across the county to match the latest demand and risk profiles we have available.

What we said we'd do

Revise working arrangements and support for On-Call stations, listening to and engaging with our workforce through the On-Call working group.

What we did

All temporary promotions across the On-call have been filled and Watch Managers reinstated across all On-call stations. Work is ongoing to develop the new supervisory managers.

And as a result

Improved ownership and accountability at On-call Fire stations.



What we said we'd do

Revise the duty system across all wholetime stations to increase our efficiency and effectiveness to meet new demands and support delivery of the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).

What we did

We engaged with our staff and trade unions and successfully introduced a revised duty system at all stations increasing positive daytime hours. A new flexible annual leave policy is now in place and further discussions are on-going regarding the adoption of a new Continuing Professional Development policy.

And as a result

Increased capacity has been created by altering the shift start and finish times.

What we said we'd do

Explore further opportunities for collaboration with blue light partners for improving our services, and to complete the feasibility studies in to potential new blue light hubs in the Kendal and Whitehaven areas.

What we did

Feasibility study has been commissioned.

And as a result

Architects have been appointed and the work has been commissioned. Work has involved input from all three emergency services and the Mountain Rescue Service. Potential sites have been identified and are now being evaluated by each Service for suitability.

What we said we'd do

Evaluate the Rapid Response Vehicle (RRV) pilot and deliver on the findings in line with the IRMP

What we did

We carried out a full review of the six-month pilot at Staveley and Arnside stations where they are now permanently based, and a third has been rolled out at Maryport.

And as a result

During the pilot period, the RRV was proven to significantly increase the availability at the stations where they were piloted. Figures show that there was an increase in availability of 27% from Arnside and 22% for Staveley during 2019.

This increased availability also means that firefighters can respond quicker as part of an initial attendance, or as a supporting resource. This earlier intervention at incidents can prevent escalation and therefore a reduction in the impact on the community.

The innovative Rapid Response Vehicles are fitted out with ultra-effective and efficient firefighting equipment designed to meet the needs of a modern fire and rescue service providing a highly effective and innovative emergency response vehicle available to respond to the needs of the communities and the associated risk profiles.

The new state of the art vehicles have proven to be a valuable resource appropriate to the risks and demands and have been effective in response to all incidents attended.



What we said we'd do

Review equipment disposition in light of the refreshed Risk Based Evidence Profile and invest further in our rollout of high powered battery cutting equipment.

What we did

We have carried out a full review looking at the risk and level of incidents in each station area.

And as a result

We have so far purchased 8 sets of e-draulic battery operated extrication equipment which have replaced existing hydraulic extrication equipment on appliances across the fleet; they have been placed at stations where the risk and frequency of road traffic collisions (RTCs) is highest.



#notjustfires

Only a small proportion of a firefighters role is actually dealing with fires, and yet our crews often go above and beyond to save life, enhance the local community and support people in need.

In Our Communities

Throughout the year our staff are working in their communities to support residents, no matter what their age.

Kendal Fire Station's Red Watch crew brought happiness to a young family on Christmas day. Prior to Christmas the boys presents had been stolen, and the crew were determined that Christmas would not be spoiled. They arrived at the family's house with blue lights flashing, to give their three-year-old son an unforgettable gift. The excited little boy met the crew got to sit in the fire engine and wear a helmet. Later that day, the crew also worked with partners to deliver Christmas dinner to vulnerable communities in Kendal.



In October we hosted a number of events across the county as part of 'Silver Sunday' for older residents across the county. The events were part of a national day to overcome loneliness amongst older people. The day included tours of the station, vehicles and equipment, Heartstart and Road Awareness Training sessions were also delivered.

Crews at Barrow have been working with Furness Carers to better develop their knowledge of the support for carers in the Furness area and have become Carer Champions. They also worked with groups of Young Carers during Cooking Safety Week looking at the dangers of cooking.

Diversity and Culture

An understanding of the different communities in Cumbria, allows us to deliver our activities in the most effective manner. In recent years, with the arrival of Syrian Refugees into Cumbria, we have worked to increase understanding and provided tailored fire safety advice. In Barrow this has been taken one step further. The crews have developed really positive relationships with the Syrian community that has led to the planning of a cultural open day at the station.



We are always looking to help out other services, and earlier this year donated a fire engine to the Gambian Fire Service. This not only improves the delivery of services in Gambia, but provides the opportunity for firefighters in Cumbria to develop an understanding of another culture.

Recently within Cumbria we have been involved in the development of a Faith and Fire guidebook. This guidebook provides details of a multitude of faiths and beliefs, and covers areas of potential cultural sensitivity that firefighters should consider. The guidebook has been recognised both nationally and in international research as an area of good practice.

Man's Best Friend

It is not just humans that we interact with, we also work with man's best friend. Emergency vehicles in Cumbria are now equipped with pet-friendly oxygen masks. Fifty of the special masks have been given to Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service by animal lovers across the county who raised over £4,000 to buy the equipment.



Dogs will often hide when there is a fire, rather than run away, which leads to them suffering from smoke inhalation. The special masks come in three different sizes so that they can be used on different breeds of dogs.

Health and Wellbeing

We teamed up with Mind, the mental health charity, to support the Time to Change campaign.

Under the Time to Change campaign, hundreds of employers including councils, the NHS, community groups, charities, employers and schools have come together to change how we think and act about mental health. Research has shown as many as one in four people experience a mental health problem at some time in their lives.



In a bid to raise awareness of the campaign and the dedicated Mindline service offering mental health guidance and support in Cumbria, we added a fully wrapped fire engine featuring distinctive livery in to our fleet in Carlisle.

Stay up-to-date with the wide range of work we do:

Facebook - Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service

Twitter - @cumbriafire

Instagram - cumbriafire

Moving Forwards in 2020/21

As we head in to 2020/21 we are in the midst of the COVID-19 global pandemic. This is undoubtedly at the forefront of our minds and our teams are working hard to ensure we continue to deliver the best service we can for our communities, working alongside all our partners.

In December 2019, we received the final report from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS), following our inspection last year. This report demonstrates that we are performing well, having achieved a good rating for both the effectiveness and efficiency sections. However, we recognise that continuous improvement is vital to success and that there are a number of areas that require improvement, particularly in the 'people' area.

Our complete set of objectives is available in the 2020/21 Service Plan that can be found on our **webpage**.

And of those objectives we will be particularly looking to see delivery against

- Continued support towards the COVID 19 multi-agency response and delivery of services to the most vulnerable
- Develop a full programme to improve our understanding of the service vision, key objectives and behaviours which includes training, engagement and evaluation.
- Reshape the dedicated prevention team to ensure equality of access to our range of services for those living in rural communities
- Ensure that there are suitable arrangements to support out of hours fire protection advice for operational crews
- Strengthen support for and increase operational availability in our On-call stations through ongoing recruitment, development of managers and different working arrangements to ensure availability of appliances
- Explore further opportunities for collaboration with blue light partners for improving our services; and to complete the feasibility studies in to potential new blue light hubs across the county

In addition to these objectives, our performance against key indicators can be found on our **webpage**.

Moving forward, all our activity will be delivered in the spirit of ensuring that Cumbria has:

“A Fire and Rescue Service that works with residents, businesses, communities and other organisations to deliver the best services possible within available resources”



Translation Services

If you require this document in another format (eg CD, audio cassette, Braille or large type) or in another language, please telephone **01768 812612..**

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