



**Cumbria Fire  
and Rescue  
Service**

**Statement of  
Assurance  
2019/20**



## Introduction

Welcome to Cumbria Fire Authority's Statement of Assurance for 2019/20. As the Cabinet Member for Customers, Transformation and the Fire and Rescue Service, I am pleased to present this statement for our local communities, setting out how Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS) meets the requirements of, The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England.

This document explains how the Fire Authority and CFRS work together to deliver on financial, governance and operational matters. The document outlines how CFRS has performed in the financial year 2019/20 and provides reassurance that it is working effectively and efficiently.

During 2019, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) carried out an inspection of CFRS. This inspection rated the service as good in many areas and reinforced the Authority's belief that CFRS is run to a high standard.

Working collaboratively with partners is a priority for the Authority, this, along with a targeted approach to risk, ensures that we continue to work towards the health, safety and wellbeing of our communities. This approach is demonstrated in some of the excellent performance contained within this document, and I am pleased to say that CFRS remains one of the best performing services run by a local authority in the country.



**Councillor Janet Willis**  
Cabinet Member for  
Customers, Transformation  
and Fire and Rescue  
Service



## The Statement of Assurance

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018 sets out the requirement for all fire and rescue authorities to provide annual assurance on financial, governance and operational matters and to show how they have due regard to the requirements included in the Framework and the expectations set out in the authority's own Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).

To demonstrate this, the Framework requires that each authority publish an annual statement of assurance. This statement outlines the way in which the Fire Authority and its Fire and Rescue Service, has due regard to the National Framework, the IRMP and to any other relevant strategic plan prepared by the Authority for that period.

## HMICFRS Inspection

In 2019, HMICFRS carried out its first assessment of CFRS. The assessment examines the service's effectiveness, efficiency and how well it looks after its people. It is designed to give the public information about how their local fire and rescue service is performing in several important areas, in a way that is comparable with other services across England.

As a result of the inspection CFRS was found to be good at making the best use of resources and at making its services affordable now and in future.

It was also found to be good at:

- Understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies;
- Preventing fires and other risks;
- Protecting the public through fire regulation;
- Responding to fires and other emergencies;
- Responding to national risks.

Regarding the people area, there were some areas identified for improvement. CFRS has moved to address these areas through several programmes of work that have at their heart the empowerment of staff. These include:

- A renewed focus on the culture of the service including values and behaviours;
- The creation of a workforce development group;
- A review of recruitment and promotion;
- The embedding of Equality and Inclusion in everything the service does.

A full copy of the HMICFRS inspection report can be found at <https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/frs-assessment-2018-19-cumbria/>

## Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP)

The IRMP reflects the service's risk profile and considers key areas of risk and demand across the County. This process enables the service to be clear about the levels of risk that exist, influencing prevention, protection and response arrangements. In 2019 CFRS went through a comprehensive process to develop an IRMP to cover the years 2019 – 2023. This process involved the creation of a comprehensive Risk Based Evidence Profile (RBEP) using the latest available data, an independent review of station delivery and a comprehensive engagement programme.

Link to **CFRS 2019 - 2023 IRMP**

The monitoring of significant achievements against the IRMP is important and is contained within our Annual Report 2019 /20.

Link to **ANNUAL REPORT**

## Governance

Cumbria County Council (CCC) fulfils the role of the Fire and Rescue Authority for the county as prescribed under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. They have a statutory duty to provide a fire and rescue service for Cumbria with responsibilities that include:

- Setting the overarching Corporate Strategy;
- Making key decisions where:
  - I. Significant change or impact will affect two or more communities or wards;
  - II. Expenditure or savings exceeding £500,000 are concerned;
- Oversight, challenge, evaluation and reporting in respect of Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS) business decisions and activities;
- Internal audit of CFRS activities to ensure, among other things, the correctness of all income and expenditure and;
- Provision of an Annual Governance Statement as set out in the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 (as amended 2016).

The Fire and Rescue Service is within the Customers, Transformation and Fire and Rescue portfolio held by Councillor Janet Willis. The role of the Portfolio Holder is to oversee the work of your Fire and Rescue Service, supporting the council's Cabinet and Council in making key decisions about policies and services that matter to local people.

The performance of the Fire and Rescue Service is overseen by the Communities and Place Scrutiny Committee, Members' Performance Working Group and Audit and Assurance Committee.

Details of how you can attend meetings, access agendas and reports and view decisions are available on the County Council website.



## Cumbria Fire Authority (Full Council)

The Fire Authority in Cumbria is the Full Council consisting of all 84 Members. A key part of their function is to approve the Policy Framework which includes the IRMP. They also approve the Council's Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), which includes CFRS.



## Cabinet

It is the responsibility of the Cabinet to implement the Budget and Policy Framework once it has been formally approved by Council. Cabinet receive quarterly performance reports against the Council Plan (see below) and budget monitoring reports against the MTFP.

In 2019/20 Cabinet considered the Statement of Assurance 2018/19. Cabinet also consider strategies and policies, such as the Council's Workforce Plan, Sickness Management and Digital Strategy which encompasses CFRS.

The Chief Fire Officer is appointed by the Fire Authority and forms an integral part of the Corporate Management Team within CCC.

Under the 'Scheme of Delegations' (contained within CCC Constitution), the Chief Fire Officer has the full range of powers to discharge the Council's functions in relation to its Fire and Rescue Service and can also make decisions concerning:

- Resilience and Emergency Planning;
- Any other services allocated or re-allocated to the Chief Fire Officer by the Chief Executive.

## Statutory Responsibilities

Fire and Rescue Authorities function within a clearly defined statutory and policy framework as contained in the key legislation and guidance outlined below:

- Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004;
- The Fire and Rescue Services (Emergencies) (England) Order 2007;
- Fire and Rescue Service National Framework 2013;
- The Civil Contingencies Act 2004;
- The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (Contingency Planning) Regulations 2005;
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

## Equality

CFRS is committed to ensuring it meets the Public Sector Equality Duty providing equality of opportunity through access to services for all by:

- Delivering services which meet the needs of our communities;
- Fostering good relations by understanding the communities the Service protects;
- Delivering meaningful engagement;
- Eliminating discrimination through the service's operational and workplace policies and procedures.

In meeting this duty, CFRS has developed an Equality and Diversity Strategy that can be found **here**.

## Transparency

CFRS is open and transparent and ensures performance data is routinely made available on its website for any stakeholders, including communities, to scrutinise. This includes data to individual station level and fire engine availability and response times.

This can all be accessed at <https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/cumbriafire/performance-and-transparency/performance-and-transparency.asp>

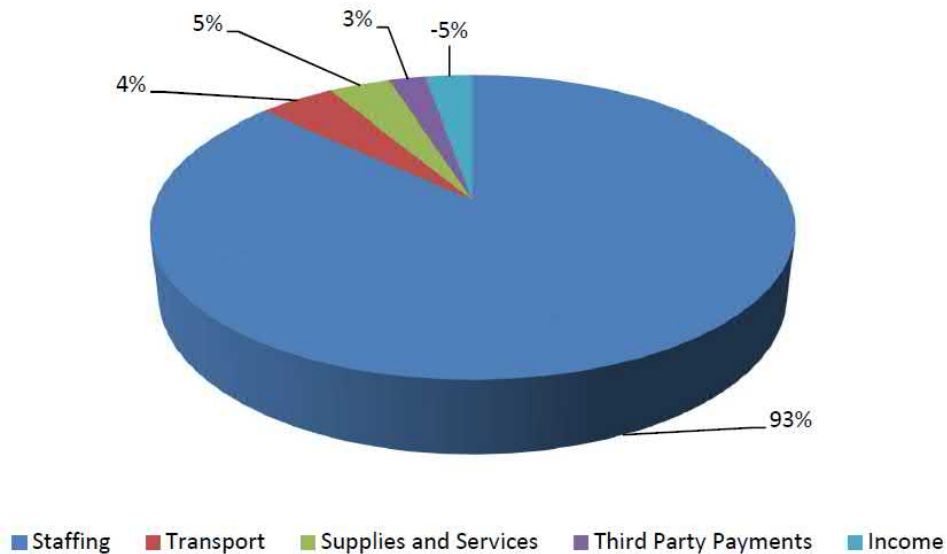


## Finance

The Fire and Rescue Service budget is primarily aligned to staffing, transport and supplies and services, as shown in the graph below. In 2019/20 CFRS annual net revenue budget (excluding support costs) was £17 million, which included 5% income from external sources. There is also an additional capital budget to procure fleet vehicles, equipment and improve infrastructure.

HMICFRS recognised that CFRS manages its budget efficiently, and indeed, when national comparisons are made using CIPFA data, CFRS is one of the most efficiently run services in the country given the area it covers.

### Cost as a proportion of CFRS Budget



CCC is responsible for ensuring that public affairs are conducted in accordance with the law and public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

A 'Statement of Accounts' is produced and published annually on the Council's website which contains headline financial information. The accounts can be accessed on the County Council website [here](#).

The Annual Governance Statement sets out the main features of the Council's corporate governance arrangements and its effectiveness. This Governance Statement can be found on the Council's website [here](#).



## COVID-19

Although the most significant impacts of COVID19 have been experienced in 2020/21 and as such will be covered in next year's Statement of Assurance. For those weeks in the year 2019/20 in which the service was impacted, several steps were followed to ensure that firefighter safety and appliance availability were maintained. These included the implementation of social distancing guidance specific to Service activities, the introduction of new hygiene measures, new protective equipment and the beginnings of a review into COVID security across all Service buildings in partnership with County Council colleagues.

## Service Assurance

The Service carries out a wide range of assurance functions that ensure we can review our performance and improve where possible. A key part of Service assurance includes Operational Assurance, Debriefs and Exercising. Another key area of focus is to ensure that we work effectively with our multi-agency partners under the Joint Emergency Service Interoperability Principles (JESIP). This approach is reinforced through the service using learning from inquests to inform policy, procedural reviews and to advise on any improvement to operational equipment where necessary.

Operational Assurance is used to promote workforce learning by identifying examples of good practice and where improvements can be made in the delivery of our service. This is captured through the Incident Monitoring processes. This work not only supports local learning but includes reporting through the national sector learning portals; Joint Organisational Learning (JOL) and the National Operational Learning (NOL).





## Business Continuity – Civil Contingencies Act 2004

CFRS has robust business continuity plans in place. In addition, the Council's Resilience Unit is within the Fire and Rescue Service and work in close collaboration with fire officers. The Chief Fire Officer has provided a business continuity assurance statement at the end of this annual Assurance report.

## Interoperability, Resilience and Safety

A comprehensive range of risk intelligence data and information is considered as part of the risk identification and analysis process underpinning the IRMP. This includes Community Risk Registers, with the service having a leading role in the Cumbria Local Resilience Forum (CLRF) which focuses on interoperability and joint planning with other emergency services.

In response to the improvement identified by HMICFRS in relation to the level of JESIP awareness within CFRS, we have now made it an integral part of all incident command courses and reintroduced refresher training.

## Control Room

North West Fire Control is a public sector company set up exclusively by the Fire Services in the North West to jointly handle all 999 emergency calls and be responsible for mobilising firefighters and fire engines to incidents in Cumbria, Lancashire, Greater Manchester and Cheshire.

North West Fire Control is responsible for emergency call handling, mobilising resources, incident support and co-ordination. The control room was part of the HMICFRS inspection and no areas for improvement were identified.



## Over the Border Mutual Aid Arrangements

Sections 13 and 16 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 allow mutual arrangements to be agreed with neighbouring services to improve resilience and capacity in border areas. Cumbria Fire Authority has in place contractual agreements with all of our bordering Fire Authorities for response to operational incidents:

- Scotland
- North Yorkshire
- Durham and Darlington
- Lancashire
- Northumberland

HMICFRS recognised that CFRS has a strong track record of responding to national incidents and collaborating with other services to manage major incidents.

## National arrangements

The National Coordination and Advisory Framework (NCAF) contains a range of designated roles that provide levels of advice and coordination when National Resilience capabilities are required. National Resilience, in the context of the Fire and Rescue Service, is the capacity and capability of services to work together with other Category 1 and 2 responders (Civil Contingencies Act 2004) to deliver a sustained and effective response to major incidents, emergencies and disruptive events. CFRS ensures its emergency preparedness and response capability is tried and tested through regular training and exercising on a local, regional and national scale.

## Blue Light Partners

The Policing and Crime Act 2017 introduced a statutory duty on blue light services to collaborate where there are real opportunities to improve efficiency, effectiveness and improve public safety. The service has embraced this concept and has been instrumental in the establishment of a Blue Light Executive Leaders Board.

Several collaboration projects have been progressed in 2019/20, including the use of Joint Incident Command Units, Missing Persons Searches and the piloting of Joint Emergency Services Officer roles. A significant piece of work that demonstrates CFRS's commitment to collaboration is in regard to Concern for Welfare. This project involves CFRS responding to time critical incidents where people have collapsed on behalf of other 999 services.



## Health, Safety and Wellbeing

The Authority complies with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and other relevant legislation in managing its health and safety (H&S) duties with clearly defined management responsibilities which includes the assessment and management of risks arising from its activities.

CFRS consults its employees on matters affecting H&S, providing information instruction and training to all employees.

In addition, the service has systems in place to support the reporting and investigation of all accidents and near misses. This helps in limiting the potential for recurrence, learn from incidents and create a safer environment with a positive Health & Safety culture.

The service works with Cumbria County Council and the Occupational Health Team to promote and support the wellbeing of our staff. The Service has a programme of health and wellbeing campaigns and has developed a cohort of mental health trainers and first aiders, thereby providing all staff with access to support for physical and mental wellbeing.

## Prevention

CFRS utilises risk and demand information to ensure that strategic, tactical and operational activities are intelligence led, and research driven. This is achieved by using specialist systems, software, data and skills delivered through professional analysts as well as sharing data with partners. This approach supports the service's intelligence lead Prevention Strategy and ensures that the service prioritises its resource to the most vulnerable within the communities of Cumbria and actively supports the wider health agenda. In 2019/20 CFRS delivered over 9900 Safe and Well visits across the County.

In addition, CFRS continues to run and participate in several targeted initiatives designed to prevent fires, reduce anti-social behaviour and improve life chances. These included working with Young Firefighters, Fire Cadets, and Junior Citizens.

This overall approach to Prevention activity was recognised by HMICFRS as being particularly strong and effectively targeting those most at risk.

## Fire Protection

CFRS enforces the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 through its delivery of its Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP). The RBIP captures all designated premises across the County by calculating a relative risk score which in turn allows categorisation of properties into high, medium and low risk. This risk score combines the severity of impact as a result of a fire occurring alongside the likelihood of that fire occurring.

The RBIP highlighted the need for additional Fire Inspectors to undertake audits of high risk premises. In order to meet this requirement CFRS 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 Business Fire Safety Apprentices and support the delivery of lower level Fire Protection Inspections CFRS developed and delivered a training package that allowed them to demonstrate their competency.

CFRS has provided support to local business through our delivery of Operational Business Engagements using Firefighters who go out and support regulated premises in compliance with the legislation. However, at times CFRS has been required to enforce the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 in accordance with the principles of better regulation set out in the Statutory Code of Compliance for Regulators, and the Enforcement Concordat.

## Grenfell Inquiry

Following the publishing of the Grenfell Inquiry Phase 1 report, CFRS has produced an action plan to highlight the areas it needs to focus on in order to meet these recommendations. Internally the Service is responding to all calls for evidence and consultations from both the MHCLG and the National Fire Chiefs Council in order to support the national direction. Externally the Service has worked extensively with North West Fire Control to ensure it delivers on the recommendations outlined by the Inquiry.

## Response

CFRS responds to a range of emergency incidents with 45 fire appliances operating from 38 fire stations across Cumbria. Stations are crewed by operational staff who work different shift patterns depending upon local risk.

CFRS has in place a standard to respond to high risk incidents such as house fires within ten minutes on 80% of occasions. Pre-determined attendance requirements are developed through the analysis of risk information from sources such as incident data and site specific risk information. Through the Authority's review of emergency response, specialist assets have been placed in strategic locations to improve response to incidents across Cumbria and respond to local risks, such as road traffic collisions on motorways, or water incidents in the Lake District.

## Operational Training

The CFRS People Strategy informs the development of the workforce. The annual Workforce Development Plan identifies and predicts the required skills and capabilities in line with appraisals, training needs analysis and workforce planning predictions. Our main priority of operational training is to ensure our incident commanders receive the appropriate command development and assessment to deal with a wide range of incidents.

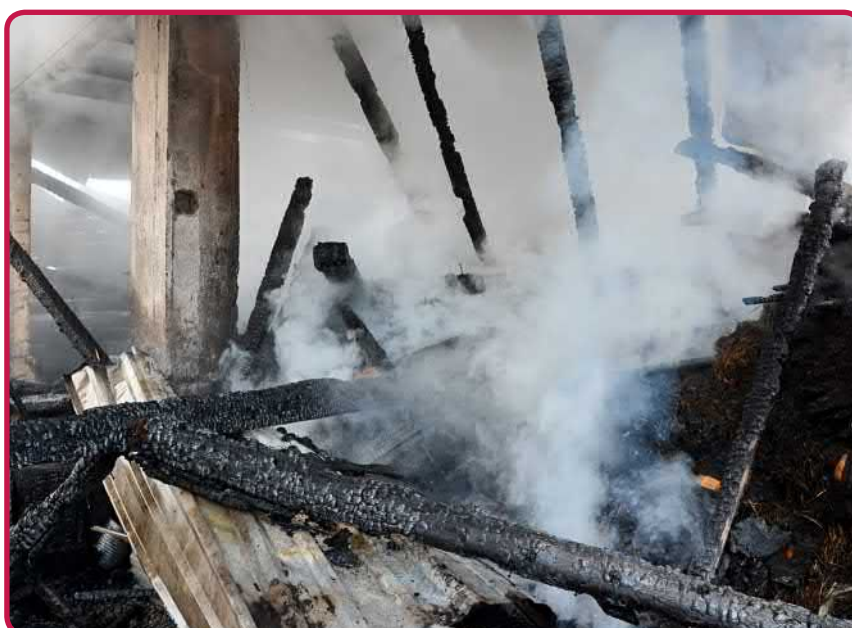
The service continues to maintain established training plans underpinned by Maintenance of Skills (MOS) and Maintenance of Knowledge (MOK) programmes.

HMICFRS commented on the high standard of operational training provided and the high levels of appliance availability in On-call Station areas.

## Fire Investigation

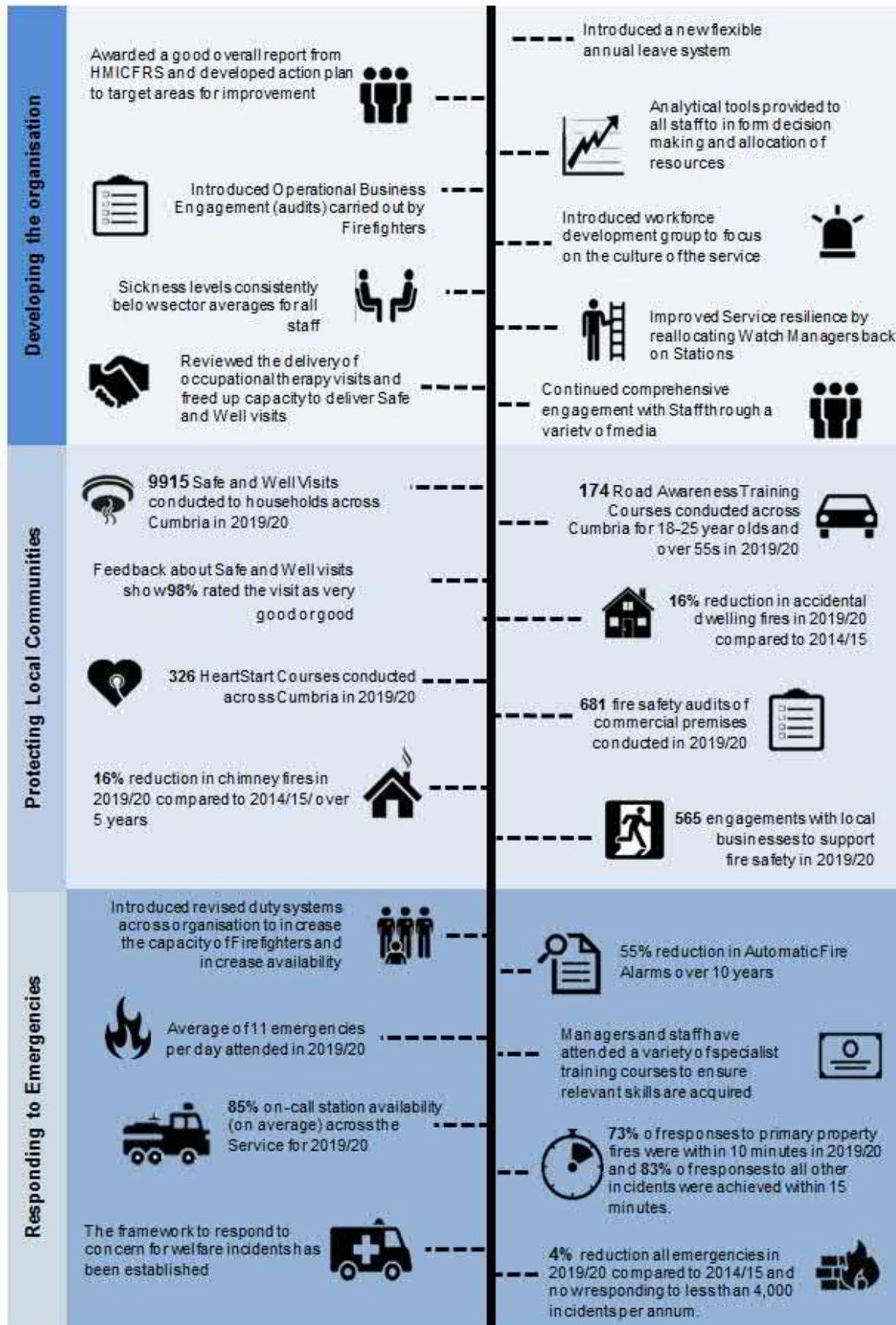
Fire investigation is an integral part of the service's prevention and protection activities. The main purpose of fire investigation is to determine the origin, cause and development of a fire and to contribute to organisational learning.

Investigation outcomes inform future prevention and protection activities and also assist in the prevention and detection of crime.



## Performance against Priority areas

This section highlights CFRS performance during 2019/20 against identified priority areas.



## Appendix - Business Continuity Arrangements

The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 place a legal duty for all Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) to write and maintain plans for the purpose of ensuring, so far as reasonably practicable, in an emergency the Authority is able to continue to deliver its critical services.

Having effective Business Continuity Management Systems (BCMS) and strong governance is an important part of the Authority's strategy. A robust programme is well established. Business continuity plans are maintained and tested, with the plans being owned by the CFRS Service Leadership Team. This feeds into the Cumbria County Council Business Continuity Board. The Cumbria County Council Business Continuity Board has overall responsibility for ensuring that the Council has proportionate business continuity arrangements in place.

BCMS within CFRS consist of plans and processes which identify risk and develop resilience across the Service. These are developed, regularly reviewed and exercised to ensure that adverse events cause minimal disruption to the services provided and that critical services are maintained. Examples of Business Continuity plans in place include :

- Fuel Shortage Plan;
- Pandemic Influenza Plan
- Withdrawal of Labour Plan;
- Departmental Business Continuity Plans.

These plans have been reviewed, exercised and as well as being tested during real incidents to identify lessons to learn.

The BCMS and associated plans have been audited by the council's internal audit team. The Audit graded CFRS as reasonable i.e. there is a reasonable system of internal control in place which should ensure that system objectives are generally achieved. CFRS is utilising the full report to strengthen business continuity arrangements.

### In summary

It is a requirement of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 that Fire and Rescue Services have business continuity arrangements in place, so that critical services can be maintained at all times.

The Fire Authority is content that CFRS have Business Continuity plans, arrangements and governance that are comprehensive, robust and tested to ensure they are current and fit for purpose.



Steve Healey  
Chief Fire Officer



## **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..**

আপনি যদি এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় পেতে চান তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে 01768 812612 নম্বরে টেলিফোন করুন।

如果您希望通过母语了解此信息，  
请致电 01768 812612

**Jeigu norétumète gauti šią informaciją savo kalba,  
skambinkite telefonu 01768 812612**

**W celu uzyskania informacji w Państwa języku proszę  
zatelefonować pod numer 01768 812612**

**Se quiser aceder a esta informação na sua língua,  
telefone para o 01768 812612**

**Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde görmek istiyorsanız lütfen  
01768 812612 numaralı telefonu arayınız**