



Protecting local
communities

Cleveland Fire Authority Integrated Risk Management Plan 2008-2011

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION



ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

Our objectives

- Preventing loss of life and injuries from emergency incidents and reducing the risks in the community
- Providing excellent community safety services delivered by a competent and diverse workforce
- Being an active partner in improving the quality of life for local people
- Delivering value for money services

Here are some of the things we have been doing, over and above our response to emergency calls. Looking back over the three years since 2004:

- 80,000 free home fire safety visits, 97,000 smoke detectors fitted.
- Winning the battle against arson: deliberate dwelling fires down by 44%; vehicle arson down by 56%; anti-social behavior fires down by 10%.
- Road safety initiatives ("Learn & Live") delivered to nearly 20,000 young people to date, contributing to a reduction of 30% in road traffic collision deaths and injuries.
- Over 730 calls attended jointly with the Ambulance Service (co-responder calls)
- 23,318 school children educated and 1,182 young people have participated in our Youth Initiatives since 2005

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Cleveland has some densely populated areas, with inner city problems. It is home to some of the most deprived housing communities in the UK. The incidence of fire and anti-social behavior is high; consequently we suffer from one of the highest arson rates in the country. We have high levels of unemployment (almost twice the national average), contributing to deprivation and social exclusion.

Yet this is what we are achieving

There were no accidental fire deaths in any homes in Cleveland from January 2006 to July 2007.

In the last three years (since 2003/04) our statistics show:

- Accidental fire deaths in the home down by 100% and injuries by 23%
- Accidental dwelling fires down by 46%
- Total fires down by 22% and primary (premises) fires by 48%
- Deliberate vehicle fires down by 56%
- Hoax calls down by 51% (90% since 2000/01)
- Unwanted Automatic fire alarms in business premises down by 41%

The Cleveland Emergency Planning Unit was awarded Beacon Status in recognition of good practices in emergency planning. It is an exemplar for other fire authorities.

We are inviting you to help us make decisions about the future of your fire service.

BUT...



THE CHALLENGE OF THE FUTURE

Starting in 2008/09, we will receive less funding from government. The government's latest method of calculation will have a major impact on the grant for Cleveland Fire Authority.

We have no choice.

Significant savings of over £1.8 million, which equates to 5.6% of our budget, will have to be made over the next few years.

We must look critically at budgets and scrutinise areas where funding can be used more effectively, while still providing a safe, efficient and effective service for everyone in our community.

Our priorities for the next three years

- **Provide an effective and efficient Fire and Rescue Service**
- **Enhance national, regional and local resilience**
- **Reduce community risk through a balanced strategy of prevention, protection and response services**
- **Achieve continuous service and performance improvements**
- **Achieve greater community engagement**
- **Adapt to local community needs by working in partnership to:**
 - **Help create strong and prosperous communities**
 - **Support health and well being**
 - **Help protect vulnerable people**
 - **Support children, young people and families**



WHAT WE WOULD LIKE YOU TO DO

Please read the 14 options we are raising (they are summarised below) and consider any other issues you think are important. These are changes over and above the efficiency savings we make every year as part of the regular reviews of our functions and activities.

It would be helpful if you would give your views on each of the options below. Feel free to use our questionnaire or write to us in free form, it's up to you.

We have considered the effect each change might have on service delivery and safety, using a rating system where:

'Low' means minimal effect on service and safety, and 'High' means a significant effect on services and safety.

The changes listed below are ordered from low impact through to those with a high impact.

LOW: net savings with minimal impact on service delivery and safety

1 Use our reserves [no savings]

We have general reserves maintained for exceptional circumstances.

The contingency fund would be reduced. This could adversely affect our planned maintenance and building improvements.

This option is a one-off, it is not sustainable.

2 Keep council tax increases up at 4.5% to 5.0% [no savings, we maintain the status quo]

This would allow us to maintain our current medium term budget strategy.

Government expectations are that council tax increases should be well under 5%. If we ask for more then we could be capped.

3 Change our senior management structure [savings to be determined (TBD)]

Our current strategic management structure is not exactly the same as the Government's expectations for the Fire and Rescue Service. In late 2006 we revised our middle management structures; it is time now to look for similar revisions to the senior levels of management.

Any changes will have to accommodate existing commitments regarding retirement plans of the individuals concerned.

It may limit middle management opportunities, because there will be fewer opportunities at the next level up.

4 Outsource 3 types of internal corporate support services [savings TBD]

This option meets guidance from the Audit Commission, the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework and the Best Value process.

It could enable us to better demonstrate value for money and improved services, and to make the total costs of these internal support services clear. The services are:

4 (a) Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

4 (b) Technical services (e.g. vehicle maintenance)

4 (c) Procurement (purchasing)

Outsourcing may produce a better quality ICT service.

It is possible to buy rapid and reliable technical services (e.g. vehicle maintenance) on the open market.

It may provide better regional collaboration in procurement.

We may have to provide an initial investment in ICT infrastructure.

Savings may be low.

Being relatively small, we may be unattractive to potential external providers.

MEDIUM: Savings can be made but there may be some potentially negative effect on service delivery

5 Maintain a 1.5% vacancy level [savings £200K]

This would mean keeping up to 6 posts vacant at any one time. The workload would need to be covered by our remaining staff and will require good staff management.

It would have a minimal and manageable impact on the delivery of our statutory obligations.

6 Close Marine Station [savings £880K]

Fire engines from nearby stations can meet our existing response benchmarks. Marine station is in Middlehaven Ward in Middlesbrough which has high deprivation, low population base and exhibits anti-social behavior fire incidents. There is re-development in the area which will affect the risk profile. The business/commercial premises will have modern design including fire engineered building safety solutions.

See 7 below for an alternative option.

7 Change Marine Station into a centre for arson reduction. Keep the fire engine and use it to respond to low risk small fires in the Middlesbrough District during the day when the general demand on our fire engines is high [savings £552K to £663K].

Reducing arson continues to be a priority. This proposal could improve community safety services and value for money to the public, and shows commitment to a service improvement area.

8 Set response time targets and review staffing arrangements for:

8 (a) the Environmental Protection Unit [savings £296K]

8 (b) the Incident Command Support Unit [savings £296K]

These appliances are currently staffed to provide immediate response. They do not have to meet specific attendance target times for incidents. A special appliance is often mobilised but not used. Some of these specialist services can be provided by normal appliances or brought on to the site later, at the right time to be useful.

This proposal will mean our special appliances will be mobilised when they are needed. Continued over

HIGH: Savings but possible negative impact on service delivery/safety

9 Set response times and review staffing arrangements for the aerial appliance [savings £436K]

This is a similar proposal to 8, but is classified as higher risk because we only have one aerial appliance immediately available.

As for 8, setting specific time targets for the aerial appliance will mean it will be mobilised when it is needed.

10 Encourage corporate (non-firefighter) staff to join Community Safety Teams [savings £174K]

Our Community Safety Teams are currently made up of firefighters on temporary transfer. Changing this to give opportunities for corporate staff could produce the same level of productivity at a reduced cost, increase flexibility and continuity and provide increased opportunities for equality and diversity in the Service.

The role profile will have to be adapted and investments made in training.

See 11 for an alternative.

11 Abolish station-based Community Safety teams [savings £281K]

This proposal would enable a review of resource requirements across all sections of the fire service against our key objectives. As a result of this option there would be a reduction in placement positions for staff on modified duties, and a loss of the agreed safety net to our operational services.

Could produce efficiency savings in management and staff time.

12 Changes to staffing arrangements and duty systems at low activity stations [savings £400K]

Demand for our appliances varies over the 24-hour period. It is generally lower at night. We know which stations have lower activity at certain times of day, which means we could do better at matching staff arrangements to needs, without compromising emergency response and continuing to achieve improvement in risk reduction.

13 Reduce crew sizes to a minimum of 4, on all engines, for up to 50% of the time [savings £562K]

There would be a limited impact on service delivery and no impact on attaining the response benchmark.

There would be a potential for the risk to both firefighters and to the community that would need further evaluation.

See 14 for an alternative.

14 Reduce crew sizes to a minimum of 4 on all fire engines permanently [savings £1.26 million]

Current crewing arrangements on fire engines allow for a minimum of 2 crews of 4 for 25% of shifts already. This proposal would provide crewing arrangements that would be the same on all fire engines in Cleveland.

There would be a limited impact on service delivery and no impact on attaining the response benchmark.

There would be a potential for the risk to both firefighters and to the community that would need further evaluation.

The Fire Authority will consider a formal report on the outcomes of this consultation before it approves any implementation in April 2008.





HAVE YOUR SAY

Our aim is simple - to be the best fire and rescue service at protecting local communities.

To help achieve that aim the Brigade publishes an Integrated Risk Management Plan every year which it puts to public consultation. This leaflet summarises the plan for 2008-2011. It outlines proposed future changes and is designed to encourage you to provide your comments to the Brigade.

If you wish to comment on this leaflet, would like a copy of the full document or require documentation in an alternative format or language please:

- Visit Cleveland Fire Brigade's website on **www.clevelandfire.gov.uk**
- Email **IRMP@clevelandfire.gov.uk**
- or contact
Tracey Bell
Cleveland Fire Brigade Headquarters
Endeavor House
Stockton Road
Hartlepool TS25 5TB
01429 872311 ext 4033