



**Wiltshire
Fire & Rescue
Service**



Draft Corporate Plan 2014/15

www.wiltsfire.gov.uk

Your Safety: Our Priority

Foreword

Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service is on the cusp of what could be the most significant change in its history.

In September 2014, our Combined Fire Authority will decide whether or not to merge with Dorset Fire Authority.

If agreed in both counties, and following approval from the secretary of state, a new combined Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) will come into being in April 2016.



Councillor Graham Payne



Simon Routh-Jones GFireE MInstLM

We truly believe that combination with another FRS is the best possible solution to the financial problems that we face. It will also give us greater capacity to work as an active partner with our colleagues in local councils and the other emergency services. Should combination go ahead, it will not impact on the fantastic work we already do with local authorities - if anything, it will allow us to be an even more effective participant in local collaborations.

Most importantly, a 'fire-fire' combination will allow us to best protect our frontline services, ensuring that we remain 'at the heart of the community, for the community'.

This Corporate Plan sets out our direction of travel for the current year. As you will see, we are continuing to develop our services and work with our communities to keep people safe. We may be in a challenging financial environment, but we are committed to maintaining services by finding innovative solutions and working with other agencies.

Councillor Graham Payne
Wiltshire and Swindon
Fire Authority Chairman

Simon Routh-Jones GFireE MInstLM
Chief Fire Officer
& Chief Executive

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What is the Corporate Plan?

This Corporate Plan for Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service explains how in 2014/15 we will deliver against our Public Safety Plan (which can be viewed on our website www.wiltsfire.gov.uk). Our Public Safety Plan provides more details on the risks in our area and how we aim to protect against, prevent and respond to emergency incidents.

Our financial position

The Wiltshire and Swindon Fire Authority provides one of the lowest cost fire and rescue services in the country. It has already made significant reductions in the costs of running its Service over the last five years whilst maintaining and, in some cases, improving its performance levels. These cost reductions have been achieved through a focus on maintaining front line service delivery and with the implementation of systems thinking. The Authority carried out a comprehensive public consultation exercise in 2012/13, where it made five proposals for changing the way that operational services would be provided. The Authority stated that it would not close any fire stations, would not lose any fire engines from its operational fleet, would crew fire engines with five firefighters wherever possible, and would maintain its response standards. A commitment was also made to maintain the organisation's focus on prevention and community safety activities and, by working with partners, tackle key local issues through being in the heart of the community, for the community.

The financial gap faced by the Authority is between £3.1 million (best case) and £3.9 million (worst case) reductions from an annual budget of £25 million. Financial reserves are currently being relied upon to set a balanced budget. The Authority has already removed around 15% from all corporate capacity and our work to date indicates that, by working with another organisation, an optimistic saving of £0.7 million may be available from back-office savings. This leaves a very sizeable annual shortfall that can only be bridged by significant cuts to service delivery. If we cannot find an alternative way, the shortfall needs to be addressed as financial reserves will be exhausted within the next three years. The organisation is now widely acknowledged as being extremely lean and there are already many potential 'single points of failure' due to reduced levels of capacity.

Wiltshire & Swindon and Dorset Fire Authorities to explore potential combination

Wiltshire & Swindon and Dorset Fire Authorities have agreed to work towards developing a business case that would identify savings and improve resilience. The two fire authority areas are very similar:

- Wiltshire and Dorset are predominantly rural counties, with the majority of fire cover already provided by retained (on-call) firefighters.
- Each county has similar demographics, and local risks (such as the high number of thatched properties) are much the same.
- The two organisations already work together on a number of initiatives because of their shared border.
- Both face financial challenges, as the level of funding received from central Government has already been substantially reduced and this is expected to be halved by 2019/20.
- Meeting the shortfall produced by this reduction in funding cannot be sustained without a significant impact on frontline services.

A business case on the proposed combination is being developed and will be consulted upon during the summer of 2014 in readiness for a decision in September 2014. If approved, a single Fire Authority with a combined budget of around £55 million would be established from April 2016.

In advance of the proposed combination, it has already be approved at respective Fire Authorities that we will move to a Joint Command and Control Centre serving Wiltshire and Dorset based in Potterne, Wiltshire in 2015/16. This is expected to deliver approximate savings of £250,000 - £300,000 per year for Wiltshire in the costs of providing a command and control facility. Further savings may be realised for both Authorities in staffing costs over time.

Timeline for combination

December 2013	Decision to develop a business case
January - early June 2014	Developing and agreeing outline business case
June - August 2014	Staff and public consultation
September 2014	Decision on full business case by both Authorities
October 2014	Application to Minister for Combination Order
1 April 2016	New Fire Authority established



Wiltshire FRS vision

Our vision is to continue providing an excellent community safety and response service. We will work together with our partners to deliver our services by being in the heart of the community, for the community.

- Re-enforcing our position of serving in the heart of our communities.
- Always being there as a central focus for community activities.
- Being an employer of choice and attracting high calibre people.
- Being the leading community safety organisation.
- Focusing our work on reducing the risks to the community.
- Promoting our successes.
- Expanding our services and promoting community safety and risk reduction.

**In the heart of
the community,
for the
community**

We will provide safety information and support to help people whether they are at home, at work, at leisure or travelling through Wiltshire and Swindon. These services will include:

- Advising businesses to fit fire sprinklers and enhance their fire safety provisions.
- Continuing to provide key community leadership in all the activities we undertake.
- Business continuity planning and risk management services.
- Providing advice on flood risk protection.
- Providing advice on risk reduction and protection against road traffic collisions.
- Sustaining and contributing to economic growth in the county.
- Developing our staff to meet these challenges.
- Rural safety, including animal rescues, safety information for farmers and humanitarian assistance.
- Developing services to continue reducing risk in our communities.

Our mission statement

We will make life safer for people in Wiltshire and Swindon and help strengthen and secure the changing communities we live in, by working together with others to deliver local solutions for local priorities.



Our strategic aims

We currently have five strategic aims:



To create stronger, safer and more resilient communities



To provide a resilient response to fires and other emergencies



To develop a healthy, safe, well trained workforce which is representative of the community



To protect our environment and heritage



To resource our key aims to ensure maximum efficiency

In our proposal to combine fire authorities with Dorset, we have agreed the following aims for a potential new Authority:

Safe, Strong and Sustainable

Safe	Strong	Sustainable
Understand the make-up and needs of the communities we serve	Play a leading role in improving community safety, resilience and well-being in Wiltshire	Use of financial resources to achieve on-going efficiencies
Reduce risk to our communities through an innovative and integrated risk management plan	Ensure that we have appropriately resourced teams with the capacity, capability and agility to meet a wide range of community needs	Use innovative ways of working to improve our resilience and deliver efficient, reactive services that meet the current and emerging challenges we and our communities face
Maximise the operational potential of our response resources to reduce impacts on communities and maintain firefighter safety	Strengthen our commercial and business relationships	Build on our existing partnerships and seek new relationships that maximise efficiencies and strengthen service delivery and interoperability

Organisational structure

How we are going to deliver our services

A temporary management structure has been introduced, where the day-to-day running of the Service is handled by the Organisation Team reporting to the Chief Fire Officer. This consists of three Area Managers (two Uniformed and one Corporate), who run the Service through a pool of Group Managers and Corporate functional managers, department staff and specialist role personnel.

Provision of 'communities of stations'

By grouping together two or three neighbouring fire stations, we have created 'communities of stations' to achieve greater efficiencies and effectiveness. This approach improves planning, training, risk reduction and resilience work and, within each of the communities of stations, we have a 'community hub' housing a pool of personnel to work across the two or three stations and provide resilience.



New hub stations have been formed at Devizes, Marlborough and Amesbury, where wholtime firefighters now work alongside their on-call colleagues in the heart of rural communities. The other 'community hubs' are the existing day crewed stations at Trowbridge and Chippenham, and the wholtime stations at Stratton, Swindon and Salisbury.

To deliver our Service, we currently employ 462 operational firefighters, consisting of 183 wholtime staff and 279 on-call firefighters. Our operational crews are based at 24 fire stations (18 of which are crewed solely by on-call firefighters).

They are supported by 16 Control staff, 117 Corporate staff (full time equivalent), a Training & Development Centre, an Occupational Health unit, Vehicle Workshops and Service Headquarters.

Staffing figures (Headcount) as of end of April 2014

Collaborative Partnership

One of the ways we are working more closely with partners in the fire sector is through the Collaborative Partnership. A growing number of fire and rescue services are involved in this national project to standardise operational policies and procedures, provide training packages and improve operational delivery. This achieves efficiencies and provides consistency in service delivery. The partnership aims to deliver around 70 Tactical Operation Guidance (TOG) document suites and around 100 Additional Hazard or Information Sheets (AHIS) in 2014/15.

One Swindon

One of the ways in which we are working with our public service partners is through One Swindon. Swindon is one of nine areas in the country chosen to pilot the way that public sector partners can work together differently to achieve savings. A team of individuals have been seconded from One Swindon partner organisations including an officer from Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service and others from Wiltshire Police, Wiltshire Probation Trust and Swindon's Clinical Commissioning Group to form a Public Services Transformation Team.

Wiltshire Public Service Board

We will work together to deliver efficient services and support that helps Wiltshire people and communities to help themselves and to protect vulnerable people. A number of organisation work together to help prevent crime in Wiltshire. They include Wiltshire Police, Wiltshire Council, Wiltshire Fire & Rescue, NHS and Wiltshire Probation Trust. Areas where partnership working has been highlighted as key to success in the Joint Strategic Assessment of Crime and Policing in Wiltshire are road safety, public space violence, drugs and alcohol and ASB.

Operational competence

For any fire and rescue service, the operational competence of its staff will always be a key risk. We will continue with our Operational Competency Improvement Plan, with five main areas of focus - these are breathing apparatus and compartment fire behaviour training, incident command training, risk information, core skills training, and monitoring of operational competence.

Home fire safety visits

We will in conjunction with our partners deliver 3500 home fire safety visits in 2014/15 to vulnerable members of the community by targeting specific groups.

Working with young people

We will engage with juvenile fire setters to eliminate the number of incidents generated by those young people demonstrating fire setting behaviours. We will deliver fire safety to over 10,000 key stage 1 & 2 children across Swindon and Wiltshire. We will support the junior good citizen program for key stage 2 children across Swindon and Wiltshire. We will deliver 15 Salamander courses (an intensive one week youth empowerment, education and enrichment programme) to a number of groups, namely, long term out of work young people aged under 24, troubled families, young carers and down syndrome groups.

Road safety

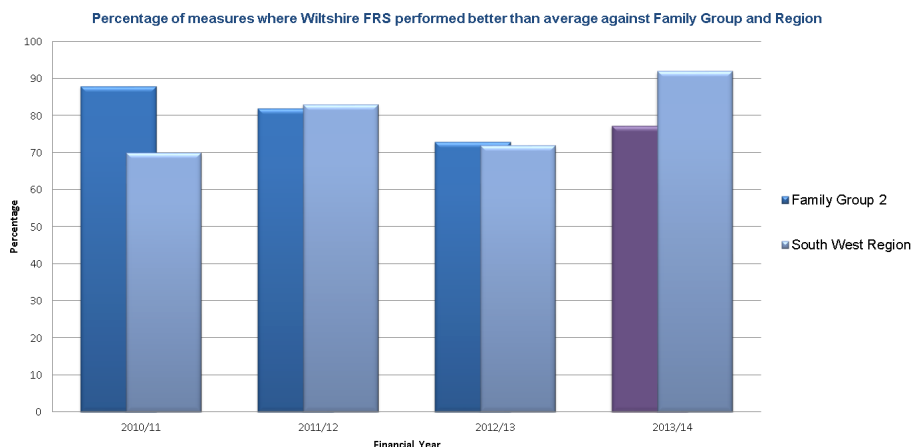
We will deliver the Safe Drive, Stay Alive (SDSA) roadshow, which is based around powerful personal testimony designed to make the audience aware of the nature and extent of personal tragedy and suffering a Road Traffic Collision can and does cause, to at least 8,000 students across Swindon and Wiltshire as well as 2,000 Ministry of Defence personnel.



Performance

We need to ensure that we are delivering services effectively and efficiently in an open and transparent way. We want you to be able to see how effective your Fire & Rescue Service is. To view our performance reports visit www.wiltshire.gov.uk

Alongside monitoring our own performance, we also compare ourselves with other fire and rescue services to provide context. To enable a fair comparison, the Government established Family Groups, and the fire and rescue services in our family group are similar to us in type and size of area and population. These members are Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Dorset, Durham & Darlington, East Sussex, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire, Royal Berkshire, Suffolk and West Sussex. We also benchmark regional performance with our colleagues in the South West - Avon, Cornwall, Devon & Somerset, Dorset and Gloucestershire.



Performance monitoring in line with 'systems thinking'

Last year, we modified our approach to performance monitoring in line with 'systems thinking'. We now measure things that specifically relate to our purpose and we think about things from a customer's point of view. A key principle of systems thinking is that performance comes from studying and redesigning the very way that work gets done, and not from placing arbitrary targets and other unnecessary burdens on it. Relating this to performance information, we have gone back to the fundamentals of 'why do we need to measure?' Systems thinking identifies five basic concepts around this issue:

- Understanding current performance
- Taking action to solve problems
- Knowing when not to take action (this step is seen as a new approach)
- Helping to predict the future and decide if it is the future we are aiming for
- Driving and evaluating improvement efforts

As such, we have moved away from the traditional approach of red, green and amber performance indicators to charts that show data plotted in a time or sequenced order. These enable us to monitor things that make a difference to the communities we serve through spotting trends, shifts and unusual patterns.

Our suite of performance measures include the following groups:

- Harm statistics (deaths and serious injuries)
- Incident overview (number of incident types)
- Response performance (confining fires to rooms of origin and the severity of fires we attend)
- Prevention performance (improved safety awareness)
- Protection performance (protection activity, output and outcomes)
- Response standards (meeting attendance standards)
- Availability of appliances (appliance availability and ridership)
- Recorded operational competency of firefighters
- Attendance management (more people at work more of the time)

Transparency

The Service is committed to being open and transparent and are working towards compliance with the new local government transparency code. On our website, we publish all spending over £500 and responses to Freedom of Information requests in a decisions log. The publication scheme is regularly reviewed to ensure that relevant information is made available.

Equality & Diversity commitment

Wiltshire FRS has an integral role in advancing equality of opportunity, fostering good community relations and eliminating unlawful discrimination. We accept that we have a legal duty to do these things in relation to race, disability, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, religion and belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, and age. However, we also recognise that disadvantage can take place due to social and economic factors and will take steps to ensure that our services are responsive to the needs of all vulnerable groups in society.

We exist for the communities we serve and we must develop and review our activities to ensure they remain appropriate to the needs of those communities. We cannot do this in isolation of those communities and are committed to engaging with community groups, partner agencies and other external bodies.

Mere Fire Station collaboration case study

Mere fire station is a good example of where Wiltshire FRS is already delivering against the national topic of blue light service collaboration. We have worked with the police through co-location in Mere since February 2003. We have also carried out co-responding activities on behalf of the ambulance service for over 5 years (471 incidents since 1/1/2009). This model is not unique in Wiltshire, as we continue to carry out co-responding activities from 8 stations and are co-located with police colleagues at 3 stations.

We work collaboratively with the police on community and rural safety, and specialist police staff train fire and rescue personnel in emergency vehicle driving.

However, Mere is unique in that - as well as the collaboration with other emergency services - it is also the project office for the Networked Fire Control Services Partnership, which brings together four fire and rescue services. Also, as at many of our other fire stations, Mere is available for use by local community groups and recognised organisations for meetings and/or training (e.g. Wiltshire Council)..



Preparing for the future

Whilst the day to day running of the Service is being handled by the Organisation Team, a further team is managing the planning and preparations for the future, which includes the work on the potential combination of Wiltshire & Swindon Fire Authority and Dorset Fire Authority. This team consists of two Area Managers and a selection of specialist Corporate staff and uniformed officers, to develop both immediate and long-term plans and processes.

Networked Fire Control Services Partnership (NFCSP)

A modern resilient mobilising and control system is expected to be operational this financial year serving the areas covered by four fire and rescue services - Wiltshire, Devon & Somerset, Dorset and Hampshire. This will allow the nearest resources will be mobilised across the area, giving the very best service for the public. A team of officers, specialist technical staff and Control staff are working with colleagues from the other organisations to deliver this key project, and a manager from Wiltshire is currently chairing the Operational Management Board. We received a grant of £1.8 million for this project, and expenditure against this grant funding is monitored through our Service's Control Project Board.

Joint Command and Control Centre

The NFCSP software solution has enabled the decision to be made to bring together the Control functions of both Wiltshire and Dorset. A new Joint Command and Control Centre will come into force during 2015, based at Potterne in Wiltshire.

Information security

We have connected to the Public Services Network (PSN) and will continue to work towards compliance with the Government's Security Policy Framework to safeguard our information and enable us to share data securely with our partners.

Planning gain and changing risk

We recognise that much growth is going to take place across Wiltshire and Swindon in the coming years. In addition to local housing and commercial development, this includes changes due to the Army returning to Salisbury Plain from Germany and also changes to the use of the MOD site at Lyneham to form a training college. We will continue to ensure that we are written into the planning policy documentation for our two local authorities. We are already receiving some funding to provide additional infrastructure required due to growth through Section 106. We are looking to receive funding from the community infrastructure levy (CIL) once adopted by the two local authorities.



Document management

We recognise that we need to improve our document management arrangements. We are working with Dorset Fire & Rescue Service to provide new document management software and improve communications across our organisations.

Salary based scheme for retained duty system firefighters

We recognise that the on-call duty system is critical to delivering the operational response across our county. We need to ensure that this system is sustainable and effective for the future. We are continuing to develop the salary scheme, which rewards time available with a fixed salary instead of paying for specific activity, so that we can guarantee availability 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

A redistribution of special appliances

We have reviewed our specialist vehicles. Two Operational Support Units have come into service and a Heavy Rescue Unit (as identified in the 2012 document “Our plans to improve your Fire & Rescue Service”) is ready for delivery. Our two aerial appliances are staying at present in Swindon and Salisbury but a review has started for their replacements, as the lease agreement expires in 2014.

Future consultation and engagement

To underpin our commitment to our communities, we have recently implemented a Community Engagement Strategy. Community participation is essential to secure sustainable improvement in the services we deliver that may affect their lives. To view our Community Engagement Strategy visit our website at www.wiltsfire.gov.uk

For further details please refer to our Statement of Assurance and our Annual Governance Statement. These can be viewed on our website (www.wiltsfire.gov.uk), along with our Statement Of Accounts which sets out the annual costs of providing the Service and our performance. This is prepared in accordance with practices determined by the Chartered Institute for Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom.



Providing community leadership by serving
“In the heart of the community, for the community”

