

Community Risk Management Plan: 2025-28 Key Priorities

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

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1 Executive Summary

This report outlines the strategic priorities for the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), focusing on innovative technology, climate and environmental impact, and operational excellence. It highlights the consultation feedback and sets out a clear path for implementation, ensuring community resilience and operational effectiveness.

2 Recommendations

The Fire Authority is asked to:

- a) Note the report; and
- b) Approve the proposed key priorities for the CRMP 2025-28 for progression into the Service's 3-Year Strategy.

3 Background

The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the Fire and Rescue National Framework Document mandate the creation of a comprehensive Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). This strategic document ensures public safety by assessing risks and outlining response strategies based on demographics, geographic hazards, and social vulnerabilities.

The CRMP framework, guided by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Toolkit, standardises development processes across fire services to ensure consistency and alignment with local needs. Key components include risk assessment, data analysis, and community engagement, addressing challenges such as climate change and social inequalities.

The CRMP 2025-28, effective from 1 April 2025, will serve as the primary driver for the Service's strategic priorities over the next three years.

4 Progress to Date

Following the Fire Authority report on 9 October 2024, the Fire Authority agreed the emerging priorities for the Community Risk Management Plan 2025-2028. These priorities focused on three key themes: the Use of Innovative Technology, Climate/Environmental Impact, and Operational Excellence. These themes reflected a commitment to addressing evolving risks, improving community resilience, and enhancing service delivery through forward-thinking strategies and technological advancements.

On 1 November 2024, the Service commenced an eight-week formal consultation period, engaging both internal and external stakeholders. To ensure comprehensive participation and feedback, the consultation process was supported by Opinion Research Services (ORS), who were commissioned by the Service. ORS established an online portal to provide stakeholders with access to in-depth risk analysis and a streamlined electronic platform for submitting their feedback. This portal enabled effective engagement by facilitating easy access to critical information and a convenient method for collating responses.

Throughout the consultation period, the Senior Management Team (SMT) and Fire Authority members took proactive steps to engage with staff and stakeholders directly. They met with teams across the Service to present the risk profile developed during the CRMP planning process and provide detailed overviews of the emerging themes. These sessions offered an opportunity for staff to ask questions and share their thoughts. Over 35 sessions were held with various stakeholders, including Whole time and On Call stations, enabling teams, focus groups and open sessions for the public, further ensuring a wide-reaching and inclusive consultation.

The consultation period concluded at the end of 2024, having successfully gathered valuable input from across the Service and its communities. The findings from this extensive engagement have informed the refinement of the CRMP, as part of the Strategic Planning Process ensuring that it accurately reflects the priorities and needs of Shropshire's diverse communities.

5 Formal Consultation Feedback

On formal closing at the end of December 2024, the consultation had received 162 full responses to all the questions, with over a further 300 partially completed responses.

The consultation findings highlighted strong engagement from those connected to the Service with 82 respondents identifying as staff members. Among the staff responses, there was a balanced representation across various roles, including 29 wholetime firefighters, 41 on-call staff, and 7 non-operational personnel.

This diversity of input ensured a comprehensive understanding of the priorities and challenges faced by different areas of the Service.

The participation of on-call staff demonstrated their commitment to shaping the Service's strategic direction, while the inclusion of non-operational roles offered valuable perspectives on support functions and organisational development.

The consultation findings also highlighted considerable engagement from the wider community with 60 respondents identifying as members of the public.

Among the responses from the public, there was a diverse representation across various age, gender, disability and ethnicity groups. This diversity of input ensured a comprehensive understanding of the priorities and challenges faced by different areas of the community.

Innovative Technology:

The proposals were widely commended for being forward-thinking and modern, ensuring the Service is well-equipped to meet future challenges. Respondents appreciated the inclusion of quality assurance and the emphasis on efficiency. Suggestions included providing comprehensive staff training and balancing advanced technology with local knowledge to ensure all community members, particularly those in rural areas, benefit from the innovations.

Climate/Environmental Impact:

Stakeholders expressed strong support for the Service's proactive measures to address climate-related risks. Enhancing water rescue and wildfire response capabilities was particularly well-received, as was the strategic focus on Shrewsbury's unique challenges. Stakeholders recommended extending water rescue training and resources across the county and integrating community education to increase awareness of climate-related risks. The commitment to adapt to emerging environmental challenges was applauded.

Operational Excellence:

Respondents praised the Service's focus on preparedness and modernisation, ensuring both staff and equipment are ready to meet new and complex risks. Suggestions included tailoring specialist capabilities to local needs, enhancing training facilities, and ensuring flexibility in vehicle design to suit Shropshire's varied geography. The emphasis on transparency and continuous improvement was widely supported.

An overview of the Formal Consultation Feedback is given at Appendix A to the report.

The feedback highlighted overwhelming support for the CRMP's direction, affirming the Service's commitment to innovation, resilience, and operational excellence.

6 CRMP Key Priorities

The Service's proposed CRMP 2025-28, attached at Appendix B to the report, identifies key priorities designed to build on past successes and enhance capabilities in response to evolving risks. These priorities are focused on three main areas: the Use of Innovative Technology, Climate and Environmental Impact, and Operational Excellence.

Targeting those most at Risk: The Service aims to adopt the NFCC Domestic Dwelling Fire Methodology, combined with Artificial Intelligence (AI) and individual risk data, to better identify vulnerable properties and individuals at risk of fire. This targeted approach will improve prevention activities, reducing the frequency and severity of dwelling fires while protecting the most vulnerable members of the community.

The title of this initiative has shifted from, "Innovative Technology" to, "Targeting Those Most at Risk" to ensure the priority is explicitly clear and

aligned with the organisation's strategic objectives. While the use of innovative technology remains a critical component, it is now positioned as a tool to support the primary aim of identifying and engaging with those individuals or communities at the highest risk.

[Priority 1 Meeting the challenges of a changing community](#)

Climate and Environmental Impact: As climate change intensifies, the Service will enhance its water rescue capabilities, strengthen wildfire response, and develop a comprehensive water supply strategy to address drought conditions. In Shrewsbury, resource realignment, such as relocating a fire appliance during extreme weather, will improve response times and resilience against flooding.

[Priority 2 Adapting to the effects of climate change](#)

[Priority 3 Meeting the challenges of climate change and expansion in Shrewsbury](#)

Operational Excellence: To meet emerging challenges, Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) will introduce advanced capabilities for rescues from height and confined spaces, supported by specialised training and equipment. The Service will also enhance its ability to respond to risks posed by stored energy systems, such as electric vehicles and battery storage units, ensuring firefighters are equipped to handle these complex incidents safely.

Additionally, new attendance standards will be introduced to improve transparency and align with national benchmarks. A review of strategic aerial appliance capabilities will ensure the Service remains agile and compliant with modern safety standards, particularly for high-rise incidents. These priorities reflect SFRS's commitment to community safety, operational efficiency, and resilience.

[Priority 4 Competence](#)

[Priority 5 Meeting the challenges of new energy systems](#)

[Priority 6 Fire Service attendance standard](#)

[Priority 7 Strategic aerial appliance capability](#)

7 Integrated Strategic Planning

The Service has integrated both its Community Risk Management Plan 2025-28 and annual strategic planning process to create a unified approach to delivering its priorities. This integration ensures alignment between the CRMP and other critical workstreams, such as the HMICFRS 2024 inspection report outcomes and delivery of the Service Cultural Action Plan. By bringing these elements together, the Service can prioritise effectively, manage capacity, and maintain a clear focus on driving forward improvements across all areas of the Service.

Having a single, cohesive plan enables the Service to streamline decision-making and manage resource allocation, ensuring that all initiatives work towards shared strategic objectives. This integrated approach fosters efficiency, consistency, and accountability, supporting the delivery of a modern and resilient fire and rescue service.

The delivery of the key proposals, and the breadth of their implementation, will be finalised as part of the strategic planning process. This will consider the budget settlement for 2025/26 and the Medium-Term Financial Plan.

Extensive planning and integration with existing workstreams will involve teams across the organisation, ensuring a coordinated and comprehensive approach to achieving the Service's priorities and to ensure readiness for implementation on 1 April 2025.

8 Capacity

The proposals laid out within the report, will draw capacity from day-to-day activities to manage the delivery of the proposed key changes.

9 Fire Alliance / Collaboration / Partnership Working

The CRMP will foster collaborative working and drive this agenda forward.

10 Financial Implications

As part of the strategic planning process, the costs of each proposal are being carefully evaluated and aligned with the financial envelope set by the 2025/26 budget settlement, the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), and potential cost savings from specific proposals.

The 2025/26 budget settlement provides a foundation for funding core operations and strategic priorities, while the MTFP supports longer-term financial stability by forecasting income, inflation, and operational needs. Together, these frameworks enable the Service to allocate resources effectively while maintaining flexibility to address emerging challenges.

Proposals such as the strategic aerial appliance review offer opportunities for cost savings, which can be reinvested into CRMP outcomes. This approach ensures that capital efficiencies directly enhance key priorities, including improving water rescue capabilities, wildfire response, and adapting to the risks posed by new energy systems.

11 Legal Comment

The legal implications arising have been highlighted in the main body of the report and include the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, and National Fire and Rescue Framework.

12 Communications

The Service has produced a comprehensive communications strategy to accompany the CRMP process, which is constantly reviewed and refined to meet the need of both internal and external stakeholders.

13 Community Safety

The delivery of this CRMP over the 3-year period is primarily focused on ensuring that SFRS's interventions are delivering community safety through an informed assessment of risk.

The introduction of operational independence for chief fire officers and other proposed reforms could significantly enhance community safety. This independence might lead to more effective and tailored responses to local emergencies, enhancing the speed and appropriateness of reactions to

community-specific needs.

14 Environmental

The CRMP 2025-28 prioritises addressing climate-related risks, including flooding, wildfires, and drought. By enhancing water rescue and wildfire response capabilities, and developing robust water supply strategies, the Service demonstrates its commitment to mitigating the impacts of climate change, protecting communities, and ensuring resilience in an evolving environmental landscape.

15 Equality Impact Assessment

An initial EQIA has been developed for each proposal to support the recommendations.

Upon final acceptance of the key priorities, the EQIA will be reviewed and refined to ensure it accurately reflects the adopted recommendations, aligning with the outcomes of the strategic planning process and promoting inclusivity and equity.

Each of the EQIA's can be found embedded within each risk review below [CRMP 2025-28 Equality Impact Assessments](#)

16 Health and Safety

There are no health and safety impacts arising from this report.

17 Fire Standard Core Code of Ethics and Human Rights (including Data Protection)

The proposed Key Priorities within the Service are poised to bring about transformative changes in operational procedures, community engagement, and technological integration. As these proposals are further developed, it is imperative to assess their alignment with the Fire Standards Core Code of Ethics and Human Rights legislation.

18 ICT

The introduction of the key priorities outlined in the CRMP 2025-28 will place additional demands on ICT capabilities, alongside existing workstreams and projects, including the implementation of the new command and control system. Any ICT resources required to support these priorities will be carefully assessed as part of the delivery planning process.

A structured project management methodology will be adopted to ensure effective resource allocation and integration, supporting the successful delivery of all proposals without compromising ongoing ICT initiatives.

19 Insurance

The adoption of the key priorities outlined in the CRMP 2025-28, designed to enhance operational efficiency and community safety, carries potential

implications for insurance. These priorities, including technological advancements, equipment upgrades, and specialised response capabilities, may impact the Service's insurance requirements and liabilities. A full impact assessment will be conducted as these proposals are integrated into the Service's project management approach.

20 The On Call Service

The report highlighted concerns regarding On Call firefighter recruitment and retention when the reforms are implemented. The Government has committed to work with key partners, including the NFCC to explore any implications.

21 Public Value / Service Delivery

The proposed reforms in fire and rescue services, especially operational independence, are expected to significantly enhance public trust and satisfaction. This autonomy could lead to more effective and locally tailored emergency services, resonating with community-specific needs and expectations.

22 Reputation

There are no reputational impacts arising from this report.

23 Security

There are no security impacts arising from this report.

24 Training

The key priorities will enhance firefighter safety and public protection by ensuring On Call staff are better trained and equipped to manage emerging climate and other risks. These additional skills require ongoing maintenance of competence, which will be assessed and integrated into the delivery project plan to support operational readiness.

25 Appendices

Appendix A

Overview of Formal Consultation Opinions of Proposals

Appendix B

Community Risk Management Plan 2025-28

26 Background Papers

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority,

9 October 2024, Report 7 – Community Risk Management Plan 2025-28:
Emerging Priorities

Overview of Formal Consultation Opinions of Proposals

