

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service

Integrated Risk Management Plan  
2020-2024

Consultation summary

## Introduction

Welcome to the consultation summary of our Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).

The proposals in this document set out how we will reduce the risk of likely incidents that we would expect to respond to for those who live, work and travel within Essex. Our proposals are shaped by our risk analysis, which is set out in our Strategic Assessment of Risk (SAOR).

The Government's Fire and Rescue Service National Framework says that all fire and rescue services must produce an IRMP. You can find out more about the IRMP process in the [National Framework](#).

Our IRMP will cover four years (2020 to 2024), and we will review it each year. The proposals in the plan will lay the foundation for change that focuses on the needs of our staff and communities.

This consultation is part of the development stage of our IRMP, and involves our community, workforce, union representative bodies and our partners.

Our priorities are set out by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex in their Fire and Rescue Plan (2019-2024). The Fire and Rescue Plan outlines how we work with other emergency services to be efficient and effective, to prevent incidents wherever possible, and to be closely involved in the communities we serve.

Our main aim is to prevent incidents through educating, involving and supporting communities and local businesses and working with our partners to make sure we understand who is most vulnerable. We also want to achieve our mission of making Essex a safe place to live, work and travel.

The following is a list of factors taken from the SAOR that are identified as being on the IRMP risk register.

- An ageing population
- An increase in the number of properties being built in Essex
- Changes to climate conditions (more extremes of weather – hotter drier summers and colder wetter winters)
- Failure to take advantage of advances in technology that could help us provide improved services
- A reduction in the services we can deliver due to health issues, for example, pandemics
- A major gas or petrochemical industrial accident or incident
- An incident at a public entertainment venue
- Current and predicted transport infrastructure movements and developments, covering land, air and sea.

## **Our people**

Our values were developed by our staff and reflect how colleagues work with and involve each other, as well as our communities and partners.

### Our values

- We are open, honest and trustworthy
- We are courageous in everything we do
- We work as one team
- We are always professional
- We value the contribution of all

We recognise that we need to continually improve. We know that we can get more involved with our residents through a diverse workforce that reflects the diverse communities we serve, and we know we need to do more work to achieve this.

As we build on our improvements, we will continue our investment in training and developing our people, and work tirelessly to create a safe environment where all staff support and respect each other, whatever their role or responsibility. Our first proposal (proposal one) will support this.

**Proposal one: We will develop our workforce strategy to make sure that we continue to train our staff well. We will build a culture that's modern, diverse, forward-looking, innovative and collaborative so that we can meet the changing needs of the communities we serve, focusing strongly on the safety and welfare of our staff and the people of Essex.**

## **Prevention, protection and response**

Preventing and responding to incidents and protecting our community are all key to reducing risk and delivering our mission.

We will plan and provide effective and efficient prevention, protection and response activities, so the public will continue to have trust and confidence in us. We will continue to aim to reduce risk to life, property and the environment in our communities, and to reduce demand for the emergency response service we provide.

### **Prevention**

For our prevention work to be as effective as possible, it is vital that we understand who is most vulnerable in the community, and why they are vulnerable.

- In the home, the most vulnerable are those who are most at risk of being killed or seriously injured if there is a fire in their home, and those most at risk of having a fire.
- On the roads, the most vulnerable are those who are most at risk of being killed or seriously injured in a road traffic collision (RTC), and those most likely to be involved in an RTC.

We recognise that our prevention and community-safety work will not be effective if we do it on our own. It is essential that we work with groups such as Public Health Community Safety Partnerships and the Safer Essex Roads Partnership. These partnerships help us to better understand our communities and to develop joint actions and initiatives to deal with local needs effectively.

We will draw up an evaluation plan that identifies the most effective initiatives, and then use these initiatives to improve the lives of people who are most at risk, making sure we target our resources effectively. All of this will be supported by proposal two.

**Proposal two: We will develop a prevention strategy which will clearly set out how we identify the most vulnerable members of our communities. We will target our resources and initiatives in a way that protects those at risk of harm as they live, work and travel. We will also set clear targets and assess how we do against them. And we will increase the number of home fire-safety visits we do.**

In Essex, the most common incident that has an impact on life is road traffic collisions (RTCs). RTCs affect hundreds of people each year, and can devastate families and communities. We are committed to continuing to make our roads safer and to reducing the number of RTCs, and will continue to be active in the Safer Essex Roads Partnership, which leads us to proposal three.

**Proposal three: We will work with our partners through the Safer Essex Roads Partnership to continue to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads. We will identify groups who are at risk and target our activities at the most vulnerable in our communities.**

## **Protection**

We run an inspection programme that assesses fire risk for premises and considers the likelihood and outcome of a fire happening within a specific type of premises. The programme shows us where fires have happened and the type of premises that in the past have not met fire-safety standards. We will inspect premises identified as high risk more regularly. We recognise there has been a drop in the number of inspections in the last four years, and this is something we are committed to improving.

Though we enforce fire-safety legislation where necessary, we recognise the benefits of working with businesses and local authorities to help them understand the risk from fire. Our well-trained staff are involved in planning new developments, reviewing the quality of risk assessments, advising on fitting sprinklers in existing buildings, and reducing the number of false alarms.

The tragic events at London's Grenfell Tower in 2017 have placed a stronger focus on the protection work carried out by fire and rescue services. It is widely predicted that changes to how fire and rescue services will be required to act as the enforcing authority will be introduced. We will need to be prepared for those changes. Proposal four sets out how we will learn from incidents such as Grenfell Tower.

**Proposal four: We will review how effective our current protection strategy is. If necessary, we will increase training and resources in technical fire safety, and across our service, to make sure we continue to carry out high-risk inspections as needed. We will also work with developers, building control, building owners, businesses and planning teams to influence the fire-safety aspects of future building developments, to protect the people of Essex.**

### **Response**

It is essential that our fire cover is fit for purpose and fit for the future. When incidents happen, we must have the right number of firefighters to respond safely and effectively.

Our response plans need to consider the location of resources (people and equipment) for both existing and predicted changes in population, demand for services, and infrastructure (such as new roads and developments). We also need to consider the huge variety of incidents we attend, and make sure our staff are in the best location to support our 'prevent and protect' initiatives (when not training for, planning for and responding to operational incidents), as in proposal five.

**Proposal five: We will review the type, number and location of incidents we attend. We will use this information to develop our service and manage our staffing and resources according to the risks identified. We will take into account new technology, future requirements for our service, and the specialist risks within Essex communities.**

Our current response standards are:

- we should reach potentially life-threatening incidents within 10 minutes (on average); and
- we should attend 90% of all incidents within 15 minutes from the time the call was received.

We recognise that we currently don't always meet these standards. We believe that the standards are appropriate for the county and we are committed to meeting them. Nationally there are challenges relating to on-call systems maintaining operational cover. This is something we recognise. We value the commitment of all our staff and will work with them to make sure the cover we ask on-call firefighters to provide is suitable and sufficient to meet our and their expectations. This is one of our current priorities.

We will make better use of our firefighters to make sure that our appliances are available when and where we need them. This leads to proposal six.

**Proposal six: We will review the availability and performance of our fire stations to make sure we can meet our standards for responding to incidents. We aim to improve our current performance to reduce risks to our communities from incidents.**

We recognise the benefits that can be achieved through effective use of modern technology. New IT solutions can offer and support new ways of working that are more efficient and that can help our staff to be more effective. Unfortunately, current systems are not providing the benefits we expected and are presenting more challenges for our staff, rather than supporting them in carrying out their role.

Information – both managing it and using it to make good decisions – is vital in helping us to understand where to allocate resources so they have most effect in achieving our priorities. We need accurate information to base our performance on, so that we can encourage others to monitor and challenge us, which brings us to proposal seven.

**Proposal seven: We will develop an efficient, effective and reliable IT system to support and manage how we use our resources, and to manage our information and how we report it.**

Thank you for reading our consultation document. We appreciate your feedback as it will help us to shape our future to meet the needs of our communities.

## Get involved – Tell us what you think

The overall purpose of holding a consultation for an IRMP is to give you the chance to have your say on how we deliver our future priorities.

The consultation, which runs for 12 weeks, asks you to agree or disagree on what you feel is a priority, and gives you the opportunity to share your opinions on what we should focus on.

All of our priorities prepare us for a future with fewer incidents, an increased focus on prevention, and a commitment to become financially sustainable as reductions in funding continue.

Our priorities also recognise our ambition to be the UK's best fire and rescue service.

To have your say on the options, visit XXX. If you would prefer a hard copy of this document, please email [IRMP.2020@essex-fire.gov.uk](mailto:IRMP.2020@essex-fire.gov.uk) or call 0300 303 0081.

## Glossary

**Appliance:** Another name for a fire engine.

**Consultation:** The formal process of gaining views and opinions on a subject. The public response to this consultation will shape the final IRMP and our priorities.

**Fire and Rescue Plan:** A document which was created in 2019 and outlines the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's priorities for how we deliver our service. Our IRMP is a response to the Fire and Rescue Plan.

**FRS:** Fire and rescue services

**IRMP:** Integrated Risk Management Plan. A document which all fire and rescue services must produce to identify and assess all expected risks related to fire and rescue. The IRMP must set out how to lessen these risks, using the right resources at the right time and in the right place.

**On-call firefighter:** Firefighters who have everyday lives and jobs but respond to pagers when they are needed to attend incidents.

**Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner:** An elected representative who oversees how a fire and rescue service operates and makes sure it is effective.

**Response standards:** The time standards we set to arrive at an incident after the first call comes into 999.

**RTC:** Road traffic collision.

**SERP:** Safer Essex Roads Partnership – an organisation that provides a road safety service across greater Essex.