



Annual Report and Statement of Assurance 2021 - 2022



Welcome to the Fire and Rescue Statement and the Annual Report for Essex County Fire and Rescue Service.

The report covers the financial year 1 April 2021 - 31 March 2022, and includes highlights of the year, how we spent your money, performance against our targets and how we are working to improve our service to you, the people of Essex.

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service must comply with the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England. Under this framework the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority (PFCCFRA) is Roger Hirst.

It is a statutory requirement for the PFCCFRA to provide annual assurance on financial, governance and operational matters.



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Fire and Rescue Statement

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England sets out a requirement for the fire and rescue authorities to publish a statement of assurance.

It says the statement should:

“... outline the way in which the authority and its fire and rescue service has had regard – in the period covered by the document – to this National Framework, the Integrated Risk Management Plan and to any strategic plan (e.g. the Fire and Rescue Plan) prepared by the authority for that period.

The authority must also provide assurance to their community and to government on financial, governance and operational matters. For Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority (PFCCFRA), this statement is subject to scrutiny by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel. The name of this statement differs across governance models. In the case of PFCCFRA it is called the ‘Fire and Rescue Statement’.”

2021/2022 Fire and Rescue Statement of Assurance

Essex Police Fire Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority (EPFCCFRA) is satisfied that its business during the financial year 2020/2021 was conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money was properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

The Authority is further satisfied that the requirements of the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England have been met.

Evidence to support this judgement can be found within this report, specifically:

- Governance matters - page 4
- Integrated Risk Management Plan - page 19
- Financial Matters - page 52

Signed:

Roger Hirst

Police Fire and Crime Commissioner
PFCCFRA

Governance

The Service is governed by Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority (EPFCCFRA).

Our Police Fire and Crime Commissioner is Roger Hirst.

Roger took on governance of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service in 2017 following approval from the Home Secretary and widespread support from the public and partners across Essex.

As the first Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner in the Country Roger has helped to establish the role and developed the first Fire and Rescue Plan. This plan is produced and agreed with the Chief Fire Officer.

The Plan sets out an ambitious programme of change and development for the Service, increasing efforts to keep vulnerable people safe, prevent fire, work collaboratively with partners and ensure an efficient and effective fire and rescue service.

The role of the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner is to be the voice of the people, hold the Chief Constable to account for policing and the Chief Fire Officer for the totality of fire and rescue services within their area.

Responsibilities regarding Essex County Fire and Rescue Service

The PFCC must:

- Provide a local connection between the fire and rescue service and local communities
- Set a budget and determine the council tax requirement
- Maintain an efficient and effective fire and rescue service for the county
- Approve an Integrated Risk Management Plan
- Develop a Fire and Rescue Plan and Fire and Rescue Statement
- Scrutinise, support and challenge performance against the Fire and Rescue Plan
- Appoint a Chief Fire Officer to lead and manage the service

The PFCC is elected by the public to hold the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Constable to account, effectively making the fire and rescue service and police force answerable to the communities they serve. The PFCC ensures that community needs are met as effectively as possible, and local relationships improve through building confidence and trust.

They work in partnership across a range of agencies at local and national level to ensure there is a unified approach to preventing and reducing crime, preventing and reducing fire incidents, and reaching the most vulnerable.

The Purpose of the Governance Framework

The governance framework comprises the systems, processes, culture and values for the control and management of all activities and how the Commissioner accounts to, engages with and leads the community.

The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Commissioner's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

Copies of these documents are available at www.essex.pfcc.police.uk or can be obtained from the Commissioner's office at Kelvedon Park, London Road, Rivenhall, Witham CM8 3HB.

The Governance Framework

The Scheme of Governance that operated during the year included the following:

- The Constitution
- The Scheme of Delegation
- The Elected Local Policing Bodies (Specified Information) Order 2011; the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Specified Information) (Amendment) Order 2012, and the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Specified Information) (Amendment) Order 2013. Quarterly audits are undertaken by the PFCC's office to ensure the Service's continued compliance with these Orders
- Information Management Protocol between the PFCCFRA and the PFCC

- Information Sharing Protocol relating to information shared between the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority and the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel
- Revised Financial Management Code of Practice For the Police Forces of England and Wales and Fire and Rescue Authorities created under section 4A of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004
- Codes of Conduct applying respectively to the PFCC and their Deputy and to the PFCC FRA's staff
- The Police, Fire and Crime Panels (Precepts and Chief Constable Appointments) Regulations 2012
- Government Security Classifications
- Financial and Procurement Regulations

Governance

HMICFRS

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) is responsible for carrying out Inspections of fire and rescue services in England and Wales.

Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority

Police, Fire and Crime Panel

- Scrutinise Fire and Rescue Plan and Statement
- Scrutinise Senior Appointments
- Review Precept
- Hear certain complaints against PFCC and DPFCC

Strategic board

- Strategic oversight of the Service
- Delivery of Fire and Rescue Plan and IRMP
- Development of Budget

Performance and Resource Board

- Monitor overall operational and financial performance
- Functions delegated to Chief Fire Office
- Medium Term Financial Plan
- Monitor Financial and Service Performance

Audit Committee

- Overview of financial regulations, contract procedures
- Financial management regulations
- Good governance
- Risk management

Essex Emergency Services Collaboration Board

Strategic governance of Emergency Services Collaboration Programme

PFCC Report



**Police, Fire and Crime
Commissioner, Roger Hirst**

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service has made significant progress during the year, building on its central leadership role in responding to the pandemic, working with partners across Essex to keep our communities safe and continuing to develop its own capabilities.

The Service has been rightly praised for its role in supporting the Essex wide response to the COVID Pandemic by working with the East of England Ambulance Service, Essex Police and wider partners.

The Service has provided over 7770 hours of support driving ambulances since the start of the pandemic and 68 staff have been a central part of the volunteer effort to get our county vaccinated. This huge contribution has been recognised by partners and also HMICFRS who inspected the service's response to the pandemic during 2021 and provided very strong positive feedback.

The Service has also continued to deliver its prevention, protection and response programmes. There were 725 dwelling fires in Essex this year compared to 738 in 2020-2021 and 818 in 2017-2018.

This is a 13% reduction over five years and is part of a longer-term trend where due to effective prevention activity, the number of fires are falling year on year.

At the same time, we have continued to see an increase in the number of special service incidents provided by the Service, ranging from responding to Road Traffic Collisions, rescuing people trapped or other emergency response activities. This shows a natural broadening of the response activities being undertaken by the Service and reflects the evolution of a Service that has proven itself effective at prevention, but which maintains a vital role in keeping us all safe.

Throughout the year the Service carried out 6,646 safe and well and home safety checks, an increase from 4,346 during 2020-2021. The service also fitted 7,540 smoke alarms including 1,125 sensory alarms. This activity makes a real difference across Essex as by identifying those most at risk and helping them reduce this we protect them and continue to drive down the risk of fires across the county.

The Chief Fire Officer and I have a shared ambition to significantly increase the volume and impact of these visits now they are less restrained by the impact

Roger Hirst

of COVID and we expect the number of visits to significantly increase during the next year.

The Service has also worked closely with partners to develop a much better understanding of the types of vulnerabilities or situations that increase risk. This assessment of previous fatal dwelling fires led to a clear indication that recent trauma, physical or mental injuries and social isolation are key risk factors when looking at the most vulnerable in our society. This insight is being used to target prevention activity from the Service and the wider public sector in Essex.

Throughout the year we have once again made significant investments in our protection capability as the learning from the Grenfell inquiry has been implemented. The Service undertook a Building Risk Review which provided a much more detailed picture of the buildings in Essex and their level of risk. This has resulted in a much better assessment of risk and several enforcement actions where the Service has stepped up to ensure

owners take responsibilities of issues that they have identified. Focusing on those at the highest risk, our Protection team has done a good job undertaking 1071 full audits and 113 desktop audits out of a total of 6759 jobs. While this is a significant step forward since the last year where 319 full audits were undertaken, there is still a long way to go for us to have both the capacity and capability within our protection capacity to fully meet our ambitions.

As highlighted by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) we must keep our focus on improving and developing this area. The Service was reinspected by HMICFRS towards the end of the year, and this provided a useful external view on the progress we have made in recent years and the areas where we need to continue to develop. The report highlights that there are clear areas of progress since the 2019 inspection. However, there remains areas where significant progress is still required, especially in areas such as prevention and protection, where we

need to see a significant increase in the level of prevention work done by staff on stations to reduce risks to the public and critical investment in the training of fire protection staff.

As HMICFRS highlight in their report, we must not underestimate the scale of the cultural challenges the service has faced in the past. It is positive, that, like us, HMICFRS has seen progress in this area, especially in promoting the right values and culture. Achieving cultural change is difficult, especially given the challenges faced during the pandemic, but one which is fundamental to improving performance across the service. HMICFRS rightly point out that we now have a much more detailed picture of our financial position and we are pleased that the budgeting process this year has allowed us to find the resources we need through savings and investments to keep the public of Essex safe.

Our cultural change programme which has been a huge piece of work over recent years continues to make a significant impact. This year it was a

PFCC Report

pleasure to launch the national Core Code of Ethics within Essex. This provides a strong transparent ethical framework for everything the Service does and complements the excellent work the Services has done in defining and embedding its values. We remain committed to robust and regular staff surveys to help us assess our progress.

This report is important as it provides public reassurance of the Service's financial management through the publication of their Statements of Accounts for 2021-2022. Financially, the Service has fared well this year with significant improvements in its financial controls and visibility which has provided the necessary reassurance for us to continue to make sizable investments in modernising and developing the service.

In particular, the Service has continued to increase its level of investment in technology following the agreement of the Digital and Data Strategy. This has led to the establishment of a programme of work that will enable our firefighters and staff to connect in a much more efficient

way and as a result be able to deliver a much more effective service to the public.

Greater efficiency has also been delivered through our emergency services collaboration programme where our joint education teams have shown significant innovation adapting to the restrictions on visiting schools during the pandemic and have been able to continue to deliver a wide range of inputs with schools. Prior to the pandemic this programme was reaching 98% of all primary age school children. In the last year they have seen 100,831 children, 52,527 face to face and 48,441 virtually. This collaborative programme will save £1.8 million in delivery costs between 2017 and 2027. The co-location of the Harwich Police station on the existing Fire Station site will also save money and strengthen collaborative working.

As a county with significant rural areas, I was particularly pleased to see the success of our Tri-Service Rural Community Prevention project which has been piloted during the year in the Dengie area of Maldon. This project uses a single

officer to provide visibility, prevention activities and advice, as well as other community-based support to residents on behalf of all three emergency services. Initial feedback suggests this has had a positive impact on local engagement with residents and has resulted in financial benefits to all services.

I was also pleased this year to promote Rick Hylton to the role of Chief Fire Officer. Rick has already made a significant contribution to developing safer communities in Essex as our Deputy Chief Fire Officer and together we have a clear and ambitious vision for the Service to be one of the best Fire and Rescue Services in the country.

We have achieved a lot in the last year and I want to thank all staff across Essex County Fire and Rescue Service for their work during the year to make our communities safer and improve the service we offer to the public.

Roger Hirst
Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

Chief Fire Officer Review of the Year



Rick Hylton
Chief Fire Officer

I am delighted to share with you Essex County Fire and Rescue Service's Statement of Assurance and Annual Report. This report has been developed to help our public understand our Service, how we manage our budgets and spend our money.

Our vision is that safe and secure communities are the bedrock on which we build well-being and prosperity for all. Our Service needs to be efficient and effective across all the services we provide, preventing incidents wherever possible and making sure we're embedded in our communities across Essex.

To be able to do this, we need the right financial support and for our budgets to be managed in the correct way. Our Statement of Accounts outlines some of the key financial issues in areas such as revenue and capital spending, ensuring that we are investing in areas that help drive change, reduce risk, and ensure that we can continue to provide a first-class emergency response service.

Our priorities for improvement and investment are in our people, prevention, protection, response, and technology. Our budget is planned to enable us to develop and deliver against these.

Covid-19

The last two years has seen us continue to adapt and do things differently, responding to the pandemic while meeting the needs of our communities. It has seen us innovate, it has connected our staff and has created a more positive organisation that is committed to high performance. And we made sure our Service was sustainable financially, even with the additional resources we have needed.

In 2021 we were inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services, who commended our Service for our response to the pandemic, noting that staff well-being was a clear priority. Since then, we have had our second full inspection and in July 2022, we received the report and gradings. The report didn't contain any surprises for us, and we know what we need to do.

Although the report has rated that we require improvement across the three areas of assessment, it has recognised that we are good at understanding

Chief Fire Officer Review of the Year

fire and other risks. We already have plans in place to cover all the areas for improvement highlighted, and we have already made progress since this inspection took place. One area highlighted in the report is our improvement in promoting the right values and culture to our people. This was graded as inadequate in a previous inspection. And although we still have a long way to go, I'm pleased that the work we are doing to embed and promote the right values and culture has been recognised by the inspectors.

Alongside delivering prevention and protection activities and responding to incidents, we've continued to use our resources, capabilities, and willingness to do more to support the wider combined response. We were at the forefront of Essex's Covid booster campaign, delivering lateral flow tests, setting up vaccination sites and supporting as stewards as well as vaccinators.

Together, we gave a combined 475 hours at vaccination centres, and our trained vaccinators gave 1,800 doses.

The pandemic has shown us that risks can present themselves in different ways and our work with the Essex Resilience Forum, alongside our robust business continuity plans and our approach to budgeting, has meant that we were prepared, maintained our core services and put the welfare of our staff at the heart of our decisions and activities.

The Essex Resilience Forum was critical to the success of local partnership working during the pandemic and provided a good way for our Service to continue to develop and build relationships with our partners and position Essex County Fire and Rescue Service well within our county.

Ukraine

Our thoughts are with everyone affected by the conflict in Ukraine and all those people whose lives have been turned upside down.

As a Service we collected enough donations to fill two 7.5 tonne lorries to be delivered to the Polish border for refugees fleeing Ukraine.

We filled 300 boxes with essential items like clothes, nappies, wet wipes, tinned food, and pet food. Thank you to everyone who has taken the time to help us with this appeal. Our colleagues kindly donated items and volunteered to sort through the donations, while our public and local businesses have been hugely generous.



Alongside our own donation efforts, we were also proud to have donated kit and equipment that made its way over to Ukraine in March 2022. This was the biggest UK fire service convoy – made up of 22 vehicles and more than 5,000 items of kit and equipment – and arrived in Poland before being transferred to Ukraine.

Rick Hylton

The equipment is being used to support emergency services which are dealing daily with fires and other emergencies to protect lives, people and property as the invasion devastates the country, often using old or worn equipment

The 22-strong vehicle convoy included 15 fire engines, an incident response unit, a hydraulic rescue platform, mechanical support for the journey and two lorries containing equipment such as thermal imaging cameras, generators, lighting, hoses, and thousands of sets of Personal Protective Equipment.

Red weather warning Storm Eunice

18 February was an exceptional day for our Service as one of the most severe storms in decades swept across the UK.

On average, our Control room receives between 40-50 calls a day, but we received around 500 calls in response to Storm Eunice. Crews and Control room teams dealt with a wide range of incidents including collapsed and

damaged buildings, large fallen trees, damage to power cables and small fires. We were well prepared, and our teams did an excellent job to keep our residents safe. We had our resources and specialist equipment in the right place and our teams were ready to respond.

Our firefighters and colleagues, our emergency services, local authority and utility company partners, as well as the people of Essex who listened to our advice and messages, all played their part. It was a real team effort and shows once again how Essex unites when faced with challenges.



Our commitment to you

Despite the pressures and the roles we've stepped up and into, we've continued to provide prevention, protection and response services to the communities across Essex. We'll always be there when you need us.

Over the course of the last few years, we have developed plans to improve the service we deliver and build the capability for the future, and now we're looking to up the pace. We want to be one of the best Fire and Rescue Services in the UK. It's what our public deserves.

From April 2021 to March 2022, we attended 15,426 incidents, carried out 6,646 safe and well and home safety checks, and we fitted 7,540 smoke alarms including 1,125 sensory alarms.

The Safeguarding team received 1149 safeguarding referrals, 1105 for adults and 44 for children. And the Education team have seen 100,831 children, with over half of these interactions face to face (52,527), and 48,441 virtually.

Chief Fire Officer Review of the Year

The Protection team completed 6759 jobs, this includes 1071 (803 against our Risk Based Inspection Process) full audits and 113 (110 RBIP) desktop audits against premises. 97% of statutory consultations received were responded to within the statutory time limit.

We continue to design and deliver safety campaigns and messages across our digital channels and work with our partners and our local media to share our messages and reach the public. Our digital channels continue to be a key tool when informing the public about safety and incident information, with 1.25 million website views in a year, alongside reaching 49.3 million across our social media channels.

Medium Term Financial Plan

Our medium-term financial plan (MTFP) ensures that we work as a value for money organisation, and that we demonstrate our efficiency and effectiveness. Our approach to budgeting is sustainable and ensures we meet the needs of our communities across Essex.

Our 2020-24 MTFP was published in the financial year of 2019/20 and seeks to deliver against our financial challenges and save £4.3m over this term, while ensuring we have sufficient financial resources that can be invested into areas we have identified as our priorities.

You can read more on our website:

www.essex-fire.gov.uk

We took early action to create savings and manage our budget through our MTFP that has led to a sustainable budgeting approach which delivers against our financial challenges, and ensures we have sufficient investment in identified priorities.

Our People

Our people are the heart of our Service. They're our greatest asset and they've continued to shine in this last year.

We've continued to attract and recruit and between April 2021 to March 2022 we welcomed 37 wholetime firefighters, 107 on-call firefighters and 33 support staff into our Service.

In March 2022, we held our largest ever Long Service and Good Conduct medal ceremony, where we recognised our people who have served 20, 30 and more than 40 years in our Service. I am, of course, always proud of the achievements of our people and their dedication and long service and the evening was one of the highlights of my year. Due to the pandemic, we'd done things a little differently the last two years, so it was great to get people back together and take the time to celebrate and pay tribute to their hard work and dedication to duty over many years.

March also saw us host a virtual conference to celebrate International Women's Day. Our tri-service approach – Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex, the East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust and Essex Police – hold this event annually to celebrate and recognise the achievements of women in the emergency services.

Rick Hylton

This year's theme was #BreakTheBias, and I am proud to say that across our emergency services and throughout Essex, we live and work in a place where difference is valued and celebrated. There are still improvements to be made, and collectively we are all striving for equality and continue to make positive gains.



I am proud to have become Chief Fire Officer from 1 January 2022, and in my role I want our Service to be one of the best in the UK.

That means our communities are safe and our people have the opportunity to thrive. We have focused on having a culture that is safe and fair.

Our recruitment is transparent, and we continuously seek to attract under-represented groups through positive action.

I'm also incredibly proud that our Service has achieved the Bronze Inclusive Employers Standard, which is another important step for our inclusion, diversity and equality work. The standard, which is only awarded to a handful of organisations in both the public and private sectors, helps us to assess how effective our inclusion work is and provides detailed feedback to enable further development and progress of our inclusion and diversity priorities.

While the Bronze accreditation is an important step, it isn't any kind of finishing line; we're aiming for Gold. But this accreditation does give us another means of demonstrating what we offer as an employer, which will support our recruitment of the very best candidates as part of our aim to become one of the best fire and rescue services in the country.

Thank you to all our communities

And finally, thank you to all our communities for the continued support they give to all of us at Essex County Fire and Rescue Service. Whether that has been following our safety advice, coming to our charity car washes, donating items to our Ukraine appeal or passing on details of a vulnerable neighbour or person for us to visit.

However you have supported us this year, thank you.

Rick Hylton

Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive

Our Fire and Rescue Service

We are one of the largest fire and rescue services in the country, serving 1.8 million residents. Essex is home to two airports Stansted and Southend, and Harwich seaport, Lakeside shopping centre, Coryton oil refinery, power stations, docks at Tilbury and along the Thames, seven underground stations and parts of the M25 and M11 motorways.

Alongside this, our county contains many ecologically important areas, one of the largest sections of coastline (320 kilometres) in the country, various conservation areas and over 14,000 listed buildings. We are a county of real contrasts, made up of people who have differing needs.

ECFRS provides prevention, protection, and emergency response services from 50 fire stations and an Urban Search and Rescue facility.

The organisation is administered from its headquarters at Kelvedon Park in Kelvedon, where the Service also has a mobilising control centre.

Our Vision

Safe and secure communities are the bedrock on which we build success and well-being for all.

Our Mission

Essex is a safe place to live, work and travel.

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

Our Service Leadership Team

Rick Hylton

Chief Fire Officer/ Chief Executive

Moira Bruin

Deputy Chief Fire Officer

Chris Parker

Director of Operations

Emily Cheyne

Assistant Director
Communications, Marketing and Brand

Colette Black

Director of People Services

Karl Edwards

Director of Corporate Services

Neil Cross

Chief Finance Officer
Section 151 Officer

Our Strategic Priorities

Fire and Rescue Plan

The Fire and Rescue Plan sets out the priorities for fire and rescue services in Essex on how we will keep our communities safe.

Working with the public and alongside our partners, we created the plan to make sure we provide efficient and effective prevention, protection, and response activities.

In this Annual Report and Statement of Assurance, we will provide an overview of our progress against the Fire and Rescue Plan priorities.

Fire and Rescue Plan Priorities

- 01** ■ Prevention, protection and response
- 02** ■ Improve safety on our roads
- 03** ■ Help the vulnerable stay safe
- 04** ■ Promote a positive culture in the workplace
- 05** ■ Develop and broaden the roles and range of activities undertaken by the Service
- 06** ■ Be transparent, open and accessible
- 07** ■ Collaborate with our partners
- 08** ■ Make best use of our resources

Integrated Risk Management Plan

Our Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) is part of our overall Fire and Rescue Plan and guides the priorities in our annual Strategic Plan.

It sets out how we intend to put in place our aims for Essex County Fire and Rescue Service. It identifies how we manage risks in Essex, protect our communities and respond to fires, all against a backdrop of financial challenges.

Our risks and demands in Essex, like the rest of our country, continue to change, which means that we need to regularly review our priorities and activities so that we actively respond to our community's needs.

An IRMP is a plan that assesses fire and rescue related risk and sets out how we plan to lessen these risks to ensure we deliver the right resources at the right time, in the right place.

Our plan covers four years (2020-2024) and will:

- Reflect up-to-date information on how we manage risks to lives and properties in the Greater Essex area
- Outline how we will enforce the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 as set out in the Statutory Code of Compliance for Regulators and the Enforcement Concordat
- Demonstrate how we can best use our prevention, protection and response activities and resources to prevent incidents and manage risk
- Be reviewed each year and revised to make sure that we can act on it
- Show how we have used what we have learned from consulting our workforce, communities, representative bodies, and partners
- Be easily accessible

A Snapshot of Our Year



Jun 2021 - Celebrating Essex Pride



Jun 2021 - Our Service signs Incident Support Unit agreement with Salvation Army



Jun 2021 - Cadets Duke of Edinburgh Bronze



Jul 2021 - Waltham Abbey converts to an On-Call Station



Jul 2021 - Nine On-Call Firefighters join Canvey



Jun 2021 - Epping, Harlow and Loughton take part in water exercise



Jul 2021 - Firefighters and Prevention deliver water and road safety advice



Aug 2021 - Canvey give advice to 4,000 residents living in caravans



Oct 2021 - Fleet Services win national award - Employer of the Year



Oct 2021 - the Service pays tribute to Sir David Amess MP



Nov 2021 - Bailey joins from the Dogs Trust, as search and rescue dog



Nov 2021 - crews visit new high rise blocks

April 2021 - March 2022



Nov 2021 - Observing Armistice Day



Jan 2022 - Rick Hylton becomes CFO and Moira Bruin becomes DCFO



Feb 2022 - Harlow crews helping six-year old in cancer battle



Mar 2022 - We supported Ukraine through collections, delivering two lorry loads of donations to Poland, charity car washes and giving kit to the NFCC.



Dec 2021 - Firefighters Francesca and Lyndsey represent England FRS Rugby



Jan 2022 - Grace received award for her bravery during a kitchen fire



Feb 2022 - Storm Eunice - an exceptional day for our Service



Mar 2022 - biggest Long Service and Good Conduct event held



Mar 2022 - Epping and Billericay crews were guests at a royal visit at Ambulance new airbase.

01 | Prevention, Protection, Response

We plan and provide effective and efficient prevention, protection and response activities, so our communities continue to have confidence in us.

We aim to build on previous successes to reduce fires through our prevention and protection activities, reducing the need for emergency interventions across Essex. However, when an emergency response is needed, it will be timely, professional, and appropriate.

We will be innovative in our methods to make sure we are prepared to respond and that our people and resources are appropriate to the risk. The prevention and protection work we carry out will be targeted to reduce vulnerability and risk to those most in need.

Prevention

We are committed to improving the overall safety of our public, our people and environment by preventing fires and other emergencies from occurring in the first place. By doing this, we can make Essex a safe place to live, work and travel.

Our prevention workstreams:

- Live safe (accidental dwelling fires/ deliberate fires)
- Be road safe
- Be water safe (flooding, drowning)
- Safeguarding



How we deliver prevention

Operational and community risk management considers local risk and raises awareness to the communities of the services we offer.

Essex is split geographically into north and south groups. In each group our Operational and Community Risk Teams and operational crews provide prevention activities locally to raise awareness and provide advice to their communities.

Central to this delivery is attendance and representation within the community safety partnerships, the combined resources of the partnership have the focused ability to tackle key issues facing the local community.

Specialist intervention assess intelligence led risk and designs a person centred early intervention.

Prevention

Accidental Dwelling Fires

We are focused on continuing to reduce the number of Accidental Dwelling Fires (ADFs), keeping our most vulnerable and communities in Essex safer. This number has been declining in Essex since 2017. This decreasing trend can also be seen nationally (a 22% decrease since 2010/11).

2021 - 2022	725
2020 - 2021	738
2019 - 2020	787
2018 - 2019	831

Injuries and Fatalities

	Primary fire fatalities	Primary fire injuries
2021 - 22	10	79
2020 - 21	5	67
2019 - 20	3	66
2018 - 19	4	68



Case Study | Safe and Well Officers

Our Safe and Well Officers receive exceptional feedback.

Our Safe and Well Officers visit a huge variety of residents, many who are vulnerable, to make sure they are living as safe and well as possible.

When 101 residents they helped were asked if they would recommend a visit to a friend or family member, 92% strongly agreed and 8% agreed.

When asked: “How did you find the experience on a scale of 1 to 10?”, the average score was 9.6.



Going the extra mile

Claire McGeoch, Safe and Well Lead, said: “We’ve got group of really good people who consistently go the extra mile. Some of the people we visit just need someone to talk to, and our team always makes time.

“The ultimate goal is to get to the disconnected, vulnerable people who are really isolated, because we know they are at higher risk of harm.”

Our Safe and Well Officers each carry out about 20 to 25 visits a week – they are free and personalised. Referrals come from family and friends, colleagues, healthcare professionals and other agencies.

The team carry out fire safety checks and give advice about smoking, candles, testing fire alarms regularly and having an escape plan and clear route.

They also carry out visits for people with hearing impairment and fit sensory smoke alarms.



Photo: vibration device linked to smoke alarm

The team are qualified Essex Care Limited assessors, so they can organise equipment like fire retardant bedding and grab rails. They are also trained to offer advice on home security.

Our Home Safety Information team plays a vital role in keeping vulnerable residents safe. Every week they deal with an average of 299 phone calls and emails and make an average of 313 calls.

They triage the contact depending on the risk. “Gold” cases are contacted within 24 hours for example.

Case Study | Safe and Well Officers

'If you smell gas, it's an emergency'

In December 2021, Safe and Well officer Peter Glover shared life-saving advice after helping to prevent a potentially dangerous gas incident.

Peter was visiting a house in Chelmsford to replace smoke alarms and provide safety advice. He smelt a strong odour of gas as he approached the property.

He could not smell gas inside, but the occupants said they had also noticed the odour outside.

Peter said: "I asked them to phone the emergency gas number – 0800 111 999 – and report the smell to Cadent, which they did immediately.

"Cadent arrived in about 30 minutes and, after giving my advice and replacing the smoke alarms, I left them in the engineer's hands.

"I telephoned the occupants later and they confirmed that there was a gas leak on the public footpath just outside their property.

"This just goes to show that any continuous smell of gas, whether it's inside or outside your home, should be treated as an emergency.



Better safe than sorry

At Peter's second visit on the same day, he discovered a gas cooker had melted a small area of the plinth separating it from the washing machine.

He said: "It may have been caused by a damaged seal around the oven door or a poorly positioned gas cooker that is now a fire risk.

Peter was thanked in June this year after he advised a resident in Pitsea to contact Cadent during a Safe and Well visit after she smelt gas. An engineer found a leaking gas pipe in the living room.

If you know someone who would benefit from advice, call 0300 303 0088 or email home.safety@essex-fire.gov.uk

Protection

Our priority is to protect businesses, people, the local economy and the environment from fire and wider community-related risks.

Our protection work is guided by the duties placed on us by the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

Our protection teams work towards reducing the impact of fire in commercial premises. The teams work closely with local businesses, supporting them to meet their fire safety responsibilities, guiding them on how to keep to regulations, and making sure protecting people from fire is their priority.

We are committed to making our communities safer through appropriate regulation, while also using our enforcement and regulatory powers where necessary.

As with all fire and rescue services, we have reviewed our policies and

procedures in line with the outcomes of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry reports.

The Service has undertaken a Building Risk Review which has provided a much more detailed picture of the buildings in Essex and their level of risk.

Focusing on those at the highest risk, our Protection team has completed 1,071 full audits and 113 desktop audits out of a total of 6,759 jobs.

Our teams are involved in a number of activities to make sure our communities are safe.

- Inspection and audit
- Statutory consultations



Case Study | Sprinklers

Continuing our Commitment to Fund Sprinklers

Our Service has contributed to funding for the installation of sprinkler systems at a number of premises in Basildon and Harlow, helping to keep residents as safe as possible in their homes.

Since 2013, our Service has part-funded and supported the retrofitting of sprinklers in a number of high-risk premises in Essex.

Installation has been completed at Joseph Rank House, a high-rise block of flats in Harlow, while seven housing estates in the Felmores area of Basildon are the latest properties to be awarded match funding of £70,000.

Sprinklers are a reliable and cost-effective way of stopping fires from growing and spreading. In most cases, they actually put them out completely.

Sprinklers on charity's lightship

Our Service has part funded a sprinkler system on a charity's lightship moored off Tollesbury.

Fellowship Afloat Charitable Trust's converted lightship, Trinity, is a floating residential centre which is used by school, youth, church and special needs groups, and can accommodate up to 48 guests in 16 cabins.

It's the first time our Service has put funding towards sprinklers on a ship. In terms of fire safety, a suppression system was the best answer. A suppression system brings the temperature down and limits the fire to the place of origin, giving the maximum time for occupants to get off the ship.

Sprinklers extinguish chip pan fire in hostel

As a part of our sprinkler match funding initiative, 10 hostels in Southend have sprinklers installed. This year, there was a chip pan fire in one of these hostels.

The sprinkler head was situated on the wall just offset from the cooker. It activated and extinguished the fire.

There was no visible heat damage to the adjacent kitchen units, and there was no spread beyond the room of origin.

No one was hurt in the incident and no one was made homeless as a result of the fire.



Response

We respond to a variety of emergencies, including fires, road traffic collisions, specialist rescues, maritime incidents, flooding, and incidents relating to hazardous materials.

To make sure we can respond effectively we have a modern fleet of fire appliances, including specialist appliances such as aerial ladder platforms, heavy rescue pumps, incident command units and water rescue units.

We also have equipment, vehicles and firefighters who support fire and rescue services across the country, which include urban search and rescue, high-volume pump, hose layers and tactical advisers.

Incident numbers across Essex over the last five years

	Total	Fires	Special service	False alarms
2021 - 2022	15,418	3,744	5,221	6453
2020 - 2021	14,340	4,200	4,088	6,052
2019 - 2020	15,243	4,720	4,521	6,002
2018 - 2019	15,515	4,938	4,283	6,294
2017 - 2018	15,566	4,769	4,485	6,312

First attendance to potentially life-threatening incidents Target - average of 10 minutes

2021-2022	10 minutes 17seconds
2020-2021	10 minutes 14 seconds
2019-2020	10 minutes 6 seconds
2018-2019	10 minutes 26 seconds

First attendance to 90% of all incidents within 15 minutes

2021-2022	85%
2020-2021	85%
2019-2020	87%
2018-2019	87%

The Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority has set response standards for the attendance of fire engines at fires and other emergencies.

Our two response standards defined within our IRMP are in the two tables to the left.

Case Study | Service Wide Response

Storm Eunice

Friday 18 February was an 'exceptional day' for our Service.

Between 10am and 9pm, our Control colleagues and crews dealt with around 500 calls, with up to 100 calls an hour during the peak of Storm Eunice.



It was a real team effort and shows once again how Essex unites when faced with challenges.

Our emergency service, local authority and utility company partners as well as the people of Essex, all listened to our advice and messages and supported in anyway they could.

Crews and control room staff dealt with a wide range of incidents including collapsed and damaged buildings, large fallen trees, damage to power cables and small fires.



Fire at industrial unit

In January 2022, colleagues from across our Service responded to an incident at an industrial unit in Braintree which lasted more than three days. On attendance, our crews found a large industrial unit containing recyclable materials alight.

Our response was truly Service-wide. Crews from 27 different stations and 11 officers attended the scene, co-ordinated by our Control teams.

A range of out-of-hours support teams also assisted to ensure an efficient response across almost 76 hours, with the last crew leaving the site three days later.



Response

Control

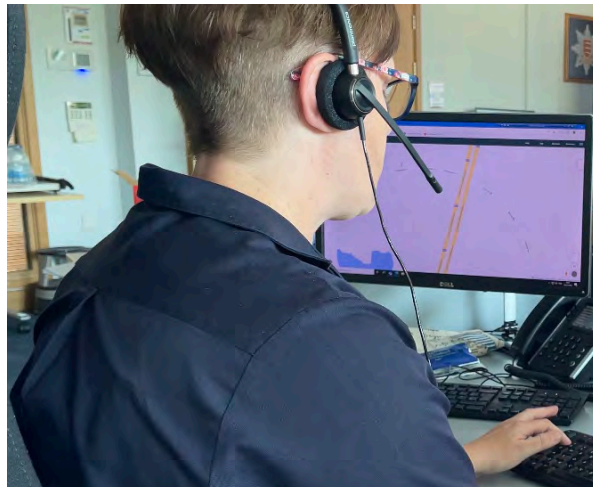
Service Control is responsible for answering 999 calls from members of the public, our partner agencies and our staff and, where appropriate, mobilising the appropriate response to the emergency.

Year	Calls	Incidents
2021 - 2022	30,115	15,418
2020 - 2021	28,651	14,340
2019 - 2020	30,542	15,033
2018 - 2019	32,595	15,513

Another vital part of this role includes liaising with our blue light partners including Essex Police and East England Ambulance Service, as well as contacting third party providers such as National Rail, Highways Agency, energy companies and water companies.

Control is also responsible for answering and dealing with administrative calls from across the Service from Stations and Support services.

Control also holds the responsibility for ensuring the Service maintains its fire cover throughout the county, which simply means making sure we have appliances distributed across Essex in such a way that we can reach all incidents within our agreed response times.



Appliance availability

We maximise the availability and utilisation of resources within our operational response model.

Our Central Resourcing Team and our Control Team consistently monitor the availability and levels of resource within Essex. This includes those at station ready to respond and those already attending incidents across the county.

Photo below: CFO Rick Hylton with Control staff during International Control Room Week - Oct 21





02 | Improve the Safety on our Roads

We continue to work alongside partners in Essex as part of the Safer Essex Roads Partnership (SERP) to reduce the number of people killed on Essex roads.

In the last three years alone, 2,730 people were killed or seriously injured on Essex's roads. One quarter of those people were aged between 16-25, with other groups including motorcyclists and those over 85 also at significant risk.

Through a range of initiatives, we're working hard towards Vision Zero – an aspirational approach to tackle road risk.

Whether it's FireBike, FireCar, Virtual Reality goggles or Community Speedwatch, colleagues across our Service work hard to educate and inform people of the risks of dangerous driving, as well as how to be safe.

As a key partner of SERP, we are working to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on Essex roads. SERP has launched Vision Zero; an ambition to have zero road deaths and serious injuries on roads across Essex by 2040.



Case Study | Better Biking Course

Our FireBike motorcycle instructors have been thanked for holding a “professional” and “engaging” training session.

The team held a Better Biking Course with 14 motorcyclists on Sunday 18 July 2021. The course started at our Service Headquarters with a classroom session on risks, consequences and advanced riding theory and was followed by on-road riding assessments to develop advanced riding techniques.

Ben, one of the participants, said learning from the FireBike team was a great experience.

He said: “The day was spot-on and time very well spent. Your initial ‘classroom’ session was really engaging.

“The practical riding was great and the instructors did an extremely professional job in balancing the gap in skill levels between the motorcyclists.

“It was particularly beneficial having tutors who have spent so much time on the road and seen first-hand the consequences of little mistakes.

“Despite a long day and the punishing heat, I actually felt more alert and conscious of my environment while riding home.

“After attending the course I understood more and could see how to continue improving my safety and skills as a rider.”



FireBike is our motorcycle safety initiative. It promotes skills improvement and safer riding and encourages advanced rider training in a bid to reduce the number of motorcycling casualties.

Our instructors are all RoSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) Gold advanced motorcyclists, as well as qualified RoSPA advanced riding instructors and, of course, motorcycle enthusiasts.

A selection of courses, including advanced skills and on-road training, are available.

To book a place on a FireBike course :
firebike@essex-fire.gov.uk

03 | Help the Vulnerable to Stay Safe

Every year, thousands of people across Essex receive fire prevention advice and support to help keep them safer in their homes.

Whether that's through home safety visits, as part of events like Surround the Town, via our social media pages or through education schemes, like school visits and our Museum, it all makes a huge difference.

ECFRS staff and volunteers undertake Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSC) and Safe and Well visits across Essex, to help the most vulnerable in our communities.

The aims of our Home Safety Fire Safety Check and Safe and Well visits are:

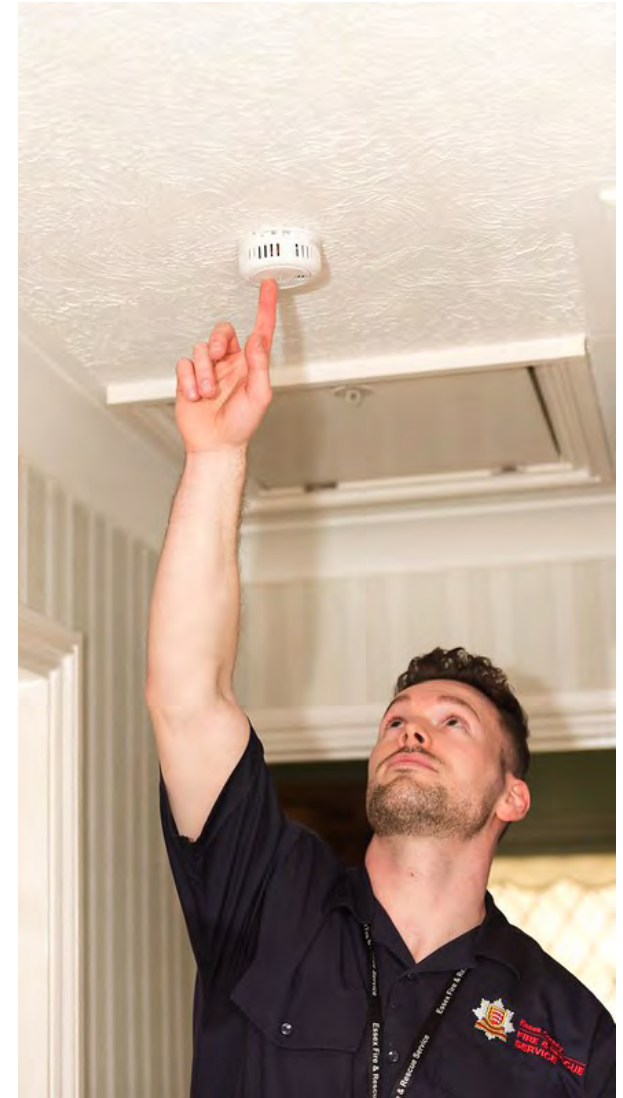
- To reduce the number of accidental house fires in Essex
- To reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured as a result of house fires.

We offer two types of visit:

- A HFSC by firefighters, volunteers and Community Safety Officers. This visit gives people advice on fire safety around the home.
- A Safe and Well visit by trained Safe and Well Officers. This more in-depth visit aims to improve the health, well-being and provide crime prevention advice to the more vulnerable people in our communities

At the HFSC visit we ask five questions:

1. Do you have enough working smoke alarms, are they in the right areas and do you know how to test them?
2. Is there anything in your home that could make a fire more likely (eg do you smoke or use candles)
3. Is there anything that might make it more difficult for you to escape if there was a fire? For example does anyone here have a disability
4. If you were alerted to a fire in your home, would you and everybody you live with know what to do? What if there was a fire at night?
5. Do you have any other questions for us?





Measure	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020
Total number of visits	6,645	4,346	7,718
Safe and Well visits	5,179	3,764	5,288
Standard smoke detectors fitted	8,441	5,865	8,459
Sensory smoke detectors fitted	1,125	753	1,307
Home safety doorstep interactions	291 *	762	N/A
Smoke detectors provided to public via doorstep drop offs	505 *	1,349	N/A

* Doorstep interactions and drop offs stopped in July 2021 as Covid restrictions lifted.

Number of individuals visited in the following vulnerable groups:	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020
Over 65 years old	4,989	3,230	5,278
Who live alone	2,528	1,916	3,248
Who have a disability	2,480	1,663	3,053
Who live in social housing	319	243	525

03 | Help the Vulnerable to Stay Safe

Throughout the pandemic, more and more people across Essex have found themselves in difficult circumstances and needing support.

Often, that support isn't an emergency response – and a key role of our Service is making specialist interventions and offering safeguarding support before vulnerable people reach crisis point.

Education, Specialist Intervention and Safeguarding is an integral pillar of our Prevention Strategy. Our colleagues are helping keep hundreds of people in our communities, as well as your own colleagues, safe from abuse or harm.

In the last year, 1,149 referrals have been made to our Safeguarding team, including 360 from crews and other teams.

Each of those referrals was assessed, and almost every one showed good practice and a great understanding of safeguarding responsibilities.



This means 1,140 vulnerable people in our communities have received a person-centred approach by our Safeguarding team to mitigate the risk of significant harm.

Groups most at risk of fire: Adults over the age of 65, single adult households, lone parent households with dependent children, those with physical disabilities, people with mental health problems, aging populations, smokers, heavy drinkers and people that face significant deprivation.

Case Study | Essex Leading the Way

Safeguarding Fire Standard Essex is leading the way

A new video by the Fire Standards Board highlights that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

The Safeguarding Fire Standard aims to ensure that fire and rescue services are doing all that they can to protect their communities, colleagues and volunteers.

Donna Bentley MBE has led on this area of work as the National Fire Chiefs Council's Strategic Lead for Safeguarding and Head of Safeguarding at our Service and Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service.

Donna said she is incredibly proud of how our Service has embraced safeguarding.

She said: "Our Service is a really good example of how training and awareness has made sure that risk of harm has been mitigated in our communities.

About 10 years ago, on average, our Service would have half a dozen safeguarding referrals a year. In the last three years we've completed 2,394 safeguarding referrals. They have been from crews, Prevention and Protection colleagues and other key partners.



04 | Promote a Positive Culture in the Workplace

Our people are at the heart of making sure we keep our communities safe. We want our colleagues to be supported and feel engaged so that they can do this to the best of their ability.

Our People Strategy outlines how we will continue to attract, develop, value, involve and care for our colleagues, so that we have a safe and diverse workforce who we can support to perform well and who have access to excellent training.

We do these things so that we have a modern, forward-looking and innovative service that works together to anticipate and meet the changing needs of our communities.

Our focus is to continue developing a positive culture. As part of this work, we have continued to develop our staff networks, delivered dignity in our workplace facilitated sessions, engaged dignity at work champions, provided

training for people impact assessments and neurodiversity training and coaching, and have focused on diversity data declarations. Where concerns do arise, we have continued trying to resolve these early via informal resolution where it is appropriate to do so.

We know that when our people are genuinely valued in the workplace, they are more likely to be committed to their work and to be a good representative of our Service. We recognise that we need to continue refreshing and reinforcing our expectations of behaviours.

Core Code of Ethics

In 2021, the National Fire Chiefs Council, Local Government Association and Association of Police and Crime Commissioners published the Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services.

We have embedded them into our Code of Conduct. The five ethical principles includes behaviours designed to help Fire and Rescue Service colleagues act in the best way towards each other and while serving the public.



Case Study | Record Year for Training

Our training strategy makes clear our commitment to offering training opportunities so that all of our people have the skills and behaviours they need to flourish and remain safe in their work.

Our £1.4m investment in Operational Training has delivered benefits including increased assurance of competence via our Competency Skills Assurance Programme and is delivering results.

Record year for Operational Training Department was a real team effort

Our Service has trained a record number of recruits in 2021 – and it has been a real team effort.

A total of three wholetime and 11 on-call squads have completed their training, with the latest wholetime recruits passing out in December 2021.

The figures are all the more remarkable considering the impact the COVID pandemic has had.

Temporary Station Manager Jason Gould and Station Manager Dan Kirk have thanked everyone involved.

Jason said: “It has been an incredibly busy year for the Operational Training Department. To deliver a record number of courses, we have had to develop new ways of working and really work as one team.

“We’d like to pay a special thanks to all those colleagues and teams who support our recruits from point of entry to starting at our Service Training Centre to eventually arriving on stations.”



Case Study | Inclusive Employers Standard

Accredited as an Inclusive Employer

In March 2022, the Service achieved bronze status in the Inclusive Employers Standard - another important step for our inclusion, diversity and equality work.

The standard, which is only awarded to a handful of organisations in both the public and private sectors, helps us to assess how effective our inclusion work is and provides detailed feedback to enable further development and progress of our Inclusion and Diversity priorities.

Our Service joined the likes of Asda, Sony, Bank of England and Serco in receiving the accreditation.

Colette Black, Director of People Services, said: “To achieve bronze status is a great step forward for our Service

and recognises the commitment we are making to valuing all our people. We are on an exciting journey to becoming a more diverse and inclusive place of work that represents the people of Essex.”

Colette added: “This independent verification shows that we have strong foundations in place and provides a clear plan for us as a Service to achieve silver and gold in the future.”

The Inclusive Employers Standard supports organisations to assess progress with their inclusion journey and award those meeting the Inclusive Employers Standard with accreditation. It is an evidence-based, objective, accreditation tool for assessing and promoting inclusion in the workplace developed and run by Inclusive Employers.

Rupert Moyne, MD - Corporate Services at Inclusive Employers, said: “Huge congratulations to all of the amazing organisations who took part in the latest round of the Inclusive Employers Standard.

“This round saw almost one third of participants coming from organisations that had taken part previously and wanting to measure the progress they have achieved since the last time (and looking to improve their accreditation level).

“The great thing about the Inclusive Employers Standard is that participation works for organisations at all stages of their journey to workplace inclusion.”

Case Study | Inclusive Events



Breaking the bias on International Women's Day

Our online International Women's Day conference held on 8 March was a huge success with over 300 colleagues from across the three emergency services as well as the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner..

This year's #BreakTheBias theme looked to recognise the inequality that still exists for women. The conference provided the opportunity to listen to experiences from both women and men working in the emergency services.



International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia - May 2021

Colleagues from the East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust, Essex Police and the Office for the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex, and our Service shared their best practice for creating an inclusive workplace.

The event was organised by each service's LGBTQ+ staff support network and event attendees heard from speakers about creating more inclusive workplaces. Attendees also attended workshops about hate crime and mental health in the LGBTQ+ community.



Muhammad shares safety advice at Punjab Cultural Heritage Day

Community Safety Officer Muhammad Ahsan visited Thetford in Norfolk to celebrate Punjab Cultural Heritage Day.

The regional event was organised in collaboration with Thetford Council and Essex Cultural Diversity Project, a voluntary organisation, which works to promote harmony among different communities.

Case Study | Recognising our People

A year of celebrations!

From national recognition to the biggest Long Service and Good Conduct Awards we've held to date. From recognising our staff at our People Awards, to Chief Fire Commendations, celebrating those colleagues who have gone above and beyond. We know that rewarding and recognising our people is part of a positive, kind culture. And it's been a record year of recognising and celebrating our people!

Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA)

The annual AFSA Awards took place in November and our Service was shortlisted for two categories.

Well done to Sarah Taylor, Head of ICT – Equality role model of the year and to the Collaboration Team/ recruitment campaign – Positive Action Award.

FIRE Magazine

Excellence in Fire and Emergency

In December 2021, we were recognised and shortlisted for three Inclusion and Diversity categories at the Excellence in Fire and Emergency Awards.

Well done to Donna Bentley - Head of Safeguarding - nominated for Most Influential Woman in Fire and Matthew Hill - Education and Specialist Interventions Manager - nominated for Most Influential LGBTQ+ Individual in Fire (both pictured centre below)



In addition, our Service, Essex Police and the East of East England Ambulance Service was shortlisted for the Emergency Services Collaboration of the Year award for the joint International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia conference.

Celebrating our People Awards 2022

This year we were able to get together once again and celebrate our people. Our annual People Awards were held in March 2022 and we recognised our People Award runners up and winners, Chief Fire Officer Commendations, and we also celebrated firefighters from Squad 220 who were not able to have a passing out ceremony due to the pandemic.

Biggest ever Long Service Event

Our biggest ever Long Service and Good Conduct Ceremony was held in March 2022.

Colleagues who have served 20, 30, 40 years and beyond in the fire service were presented with their Long Service and Good Conduct medals and Long Service awards by Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Essex, Mrs Jennifer Tolhurst at a special ceremony.

Family, partners, friends and colleagues joined the celebrations for a very special evening of long service achievements.



Photo above: Long Service and Good Conduct Award Recipients
Photo below: People Awards 2022 Winners



Chief Fire Officer Commendations

The Chief Fire Officer Commendation is awarded when an individual, or team have shown courage and determination and have gone beyond the call of duty.

This year we recognised 16 colleagues who all went above and beyond. From firefighters who undertook life saving actions, to a fire cadet who helped a man who was unwell outside Tesco.

Jack has been a Fire Cadet with our Service for the last five years.

Jack explained: “I was made aware of a man lying in the road outside the store having taken ill. The training I’ve received as a Fire Cadet kicked in. I helped the man inside to better assess him and called 999 for an ambulance. I got a First Aid kit and a defibrillator ready.”

Jack is the first Fire Cadet in our Service to receive a CFO Commendation, and is a shining example of the success the Fire Cadets bring to our Service and our communities.

05 | Develop and broaden the roles

#WeAreEssexFire #NotJustFires

Responding to fires, accidents and rescues are just one part of our day to day activities. We also work with our communities and businesses across Essex to keep them safe, and help prevent fire and incidents from happening in the first place.

We also work with our partners and play a huge role in tackling wider social issues by creating a number of intervention programmes that can influence positive behaviour change.

ECFRS has been recognised nationally and internationally for its innovative approach to community engagement and supporting some of the most vulnerable members of the community.

Special Services

A special service is where we respond to emergencies other than fires. These can include flooding incidents, road traffic collisions, rescues from water, building collapse, making dangerous structures safe, spill of hazardous materials, providing assistance to other partners and agencies.

In 2021- 2022 we responded to 5,221 special services.

The five most frequent special services we provided were:

- Assistance at road traffic collisions
- Affecting entry (collapsed behind closed doors)
- Assisting other agencies
- Making safe (for example - dangerous structures, fallen trees, building collapse)
- Flooding

70 Rescue Incidents in 24 Hours

Our Service was called to more than 180 incidents in January 2021, after heavy rain caused widespread flooding.

Our Control Room took three times the average number of calls over 24 hours. The team dispatched crews to about 70 rescue incidents which included a dog who had been swept away in a river, a number of flooded properties as well as road traffic collisions.

The team also received about 90 calls from homeowners and drivers who were experiencing the effects of the flooding, but were not at life risk.

On-call firefighters helped prevent flood water entering 12 houses after the River Brain burst its banks. The crews worked with on-call firefighters from Maldon, who brought specialist equipment to help pump the water away from the houses, and the Environment Agency.

and range of activities undertaken by the Service

Crews delivering prevention and protection

Following the easing of the pandemic restrictions, our firefighters are visiting the homes of our communities once again, and delivering home safety advice as well as fitting smoke alarms.



We're committed to keep increasing the number of these visits, and are tracking our home safety visits and safe and well visits, to ensure we meet the national average.

Our crews also carry out fire safety inspections and audits. This is where they visit businesses and buildings, assessing how well the premises are managed with regards to fire safety.

In 2021 - 2022, our firefighters completed 1,267 Home Fire Safety Checks, and 3,391 Protection jobs.



Continuing to make a Difference | Covid

2021 - 2022 saw our Service continue to support our health partners in the fight against Covid.

From delivering lateral flow tests, supporting vaccination centres or administering vaccines - our colleagues helped more than 36 million people in the UK to have a booster dose.

Kieron Moir, who has been co-ordinating our volunteering, said: "The phrase 'every little helps' really is true. Every vaccination and every effort to keep a centre open makes a genuine and real difference to the first line of defence against COVID-19 in Essex.

"Our people, and volunteers from other organisations, have been key to plugging gaps and providing additional resources – and the NHS is hugely appreciative."

Statutory Requests

We have responsibilities to process and respond to statutory requests made under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI), Environmental Information Regulations and Data Protection Act.

ECFRS' Information Governance (IG) team publish responses to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations 2004 on the Service's transparency page. Responses are published as they demonstrate how we have made decisions, spent public money, or used our resources. Personal information has been removed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

2021-2022 statutory requests

- 410 Environmental Information Regulation (EIR) Requests.
- 130 Freedom of Information (FOI) requests.
- 12 Subject Access Requests (SAR)

Performance monitoring and management framework

To make sure we can monitor our performance against the Fire and Rescue Plan and the IRMP, we have developed a performance framework. This framework includes a continuous improvement board who will meet regularly to discuss progress.

The Police Fire and Crime Commissioner receives highlight and exception reports each month, monitoring and analysis reports every three months, and an end-of-year performance report. These are available to the public and are published externally.

As part of the ongoing review of this IRMP, we will continually review our performance measures to make sure that our performance is monitored and managed across all parts of our service, in line with the priorities laid out in the Fire and Rescue Plan.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) is responsible for carrying out Inspections of fire and rescue services in England and Wales.

Our inspection reports can be found here: https://www.essex-fire.gov.uk/About_Us/Inspections

Performance measures

The most effective way to save lives and to reduce injuries and other losses through fires and other emergencies is to reduce the number of incidents that happen.

We track and report on our prevention activities through a range of measures. We also recognise the importance of considering how these work together to make our communities safer.

These are the measures we will report to the public on, telling them whether we have met our target. They have been reported in the various sections of this document.

Open Communications

The way in which we communicate is crucial to how the Service is perceived by stakeholders and plays a lead role in developing our public profile and reaching our communities to make them safer.

Our communication is used to raise awareness, correct inaccurate information or “fake news”, campaign for behaviour change and support positive action recruitment. Our communication, marketing and brand team works in partnership with colleagues, the public and our partners to deliver campaigns which make a difference to our communities and our people.

We use a range of channels to communicate with the public. We check in with our public and employees through a range of polls and surveys, to ensure that we are telling a narrative that people want to engage with, in a way that is accessible and favoured by them.

Communications in ECFRS also specifically supports and delivers against operational activity and priorities as set out in the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) and Fire and Rescue Plan.

External communication statistic headlines

1,269,497	visits essex-fire.gov.uk
199,452	visits join.essex-fire.gov.uk
71,349	total social media followers
49.3m	total social media reach
152,271	total social media clicks
724	press enquiries
121	press/ news releases issued
358	incidents published on website
2,089	subscribers to newsletter

07 | Collaborate with our Partners

We know that we are better able to achieve our aims and objectives across all areas of the Service by collaborating and working in partnership with others who have similar aims and goals – these include other emergency services and public sector organisations, charities, voluntary groups and other fire and rescue services. Not only does this improve the service we each deliver, it also makes financial sense to remove duplication and share resources.

Estates Strategy

Where possible, we look to design and develop collaborative and shared services. We are looking at the feasibility to have a fully collaborative fleet workshop for Police and Fire – subject to a full business case.

We also work with East of England Ambulance Service to enable a number of Ambulance Response posts from Fire Station sites, which is making better use of shared estate and improving how we work together.

Essex Resilience Forum (ERF)

The Essex Local Resilience Forum (ERF) is a multi-agency partnership that's made up of representatives from emergency services, other local public services, local authorities and the NHS.

Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 every County in the United Kingdom is required to establish a resilience forum.

Through the ERF we are prepared and rehearsed for a number of issues and scenarios. We do it every month of every year for issues such as bad weather, major disasters on our transport network or pandemic health crisis.

Read more about the ERF here:
www.essexprepared.co.uk



ECFRS Working with ECC Essex Open Data

We have been working with Essex County Council (ECC) Data and Analytic team to publish our incidents data on the Essex Open Data platform to proactively address the demand created by FOIs.

By working with ECC, we have improved how our Service sees and uses data.

Our Service is increasingly using this data to inform the decisions we make. For example, we've created a dashboard that helps us to reduce the risk of accidental house fires.

We want even more of our colleagues to use data in their roles, we want to increase the number of partners we work with, and we want to be at the forefront of using data to keep our communities even safer.

Case Study | USAR shares skills with Ambulance

Urban Search and Rescue Team hosts training with Ambulance Service

Our Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) team has hosted a series of training sessions to share its skills with Ambulance Service colleagues.

Eight sessions were delivered for the Hazardous Area Response Team (HART), paramedics who are trained to work as part of a rescue team, at USAR's site in Lexden, Colchester.

USAR colleagues met with the Essex HART team, giving demonstrations, noise/confined space training and equipment and rescue awareness.

Activities included being lowered into a confined space and working in a tunnel with power tools operating.

Training like this for HART and USAR is beneficial as it helps to build relationships.



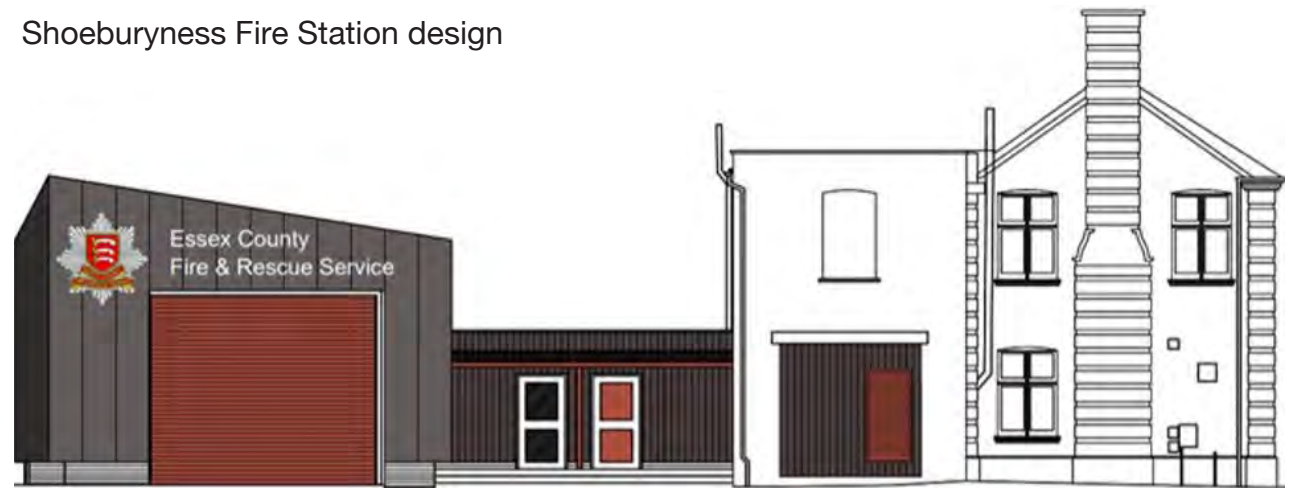
08 | Make Best Use of our Resources

Ensuring that we have an efficient Service that offers value for money underpins everything we do. The Authority is responsible for ensuring that our Service's business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

The Authority also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way our Service's functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

The Statement of Accounts includes an Annual Governance Statement that sets out a review of the key financial controls. The Draft Statement of Accounts for the financial year that ended on 31 March 2022 was published June 2022.

Shoeburyness Fire Station design



Proposed South West Facing Elevation

The Authority's core budget before funding is £80.35m. In addition, the Authority committed £1.83m from Earmarked Reserves to fund one-off investments, making a total budget spend of £82.18.

Funding

60% of the Authority's funding is from the Council Tax collections across the districts in Essex, and the unitary authorities of Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock. The precept remained at £73.98 for a band D council tax property. The balance of funding is provided by central government, through a share of non-domestic rates, revenue support grant and other specific grants.

Capital and investment

Estates Programme

We are investing in our Estates Programme to ensure that we have modern, fit for purpose Fire Stations that promote inclusive working for all of our people and ensure that their working environment helps them to be the best they can be.

The Authority has invested £1.16m in our property portfolio, mainly on fire stations and training facilities. The planned capital programme includes £0.9m for the redevelopment of Shoeburyness Fire Station and £1.7m for the refurbishment and modernisation of Breathing Apparatus training facilities.

The budget included £2.3m for the delivery of 10 new fire appliances in the year. Supply chain issues resulting from the current economic situation has resulted in significant delays in the delivery of the appliances.

£1.4m of expenditure was incurred in the year, and the remaining spend will be incurred in 2022/23 where all 10 new Fire Appliances will be delivered.

Digital and Data Strategy

We are investing in technology to enable more efficient and innovative working practices. This include a new 999 mobilising system which is set to go-live in April 2023, and a new Workforce Management System which enables better planning and use of resources. We are also upgrading all of our Wide Area Network (Broadband) to all Fire Stations improving connectivity through digital platforms.

There was a spend of £0.3m on ICT and operational equipment, including investment in the new Control system. The procurement has been completed in the year and the capital spend on this project will be incurred in 2022/23.

Expenditure

Core Employment Costs for 2021/22 were £59.31m which is an overspend of £1.43m compared to Core Budget. The key reasons are:

- £0.95m resulting from unbudgeted pay awards that were made in year
- £0.5m unbudgeted additional shift work

Core Total Other Costs (non pay) for 2021/22 are £22.53m, which is £1.1m lower than the core budget for the year.

Procurement

In October 2021, the Authority embarked on a procurement department transformation. This has resulted in the Authority adopting a category management approach and upskilling the team, to ensure value for money is achieved through its procurement function. The transformation is set to be completed by the middle of next year.

2020-2021	Description	Core actual £000	Earmarked actual £000	2021/ 22	Core budget £000	Earmarked budget £000	2021/ 22	Core budget variance £000	Earmarked budget variance £000	2021/ 22
Actual £000				Total actuals £000			Total budget £000			Total budget variance £000
35,425	Wholetime firefighters	35,052	437	35,489	34,061	279	34,340	(991)	(158)	(1,149)
7,064	On call firefighters	7,522	39	7,561	7,081	-	7,081	(441)	(39)	(480)
1,615	Control staff	1,575	-	1,575	1,568	-	1,568	(7)	-	(7)
14,937	Support staff	14,985	620	15,605	14,985	89	15,074	0	(531)	(531)
59,051	Total Employment Costs	59,133	1,096	60,229	57,695	368	58,063	1,438	(728)	(2,166)
2,135	Support costs	2,161	199	2,360	1,838	310	2,148	(323)	111	(212)
10,439	Premises & equipment	9,862	484	10,346	10,024	-	10,024	162	(484)	(322)
2,869	Other costs & services	3,065	81	3,146	3,278	-	3,278	213	(81)	132
2,253	Ill health pension costs	2,212	-	2,212	2,278	-	2,276	64	-	64
5,370	Financing items	5,229	-	5,229	6,215	-	6,215	986	-	986
23,066	Total other costs	22,530	763	23,293	23,631	310	23,941	1,101	(453)	648
	Investment in productivity improvement		-	-	-	1,151	1,151	-	1,151	1,151
82,117	Gross expenditure	81,664	1,859	85,523	81,326	1,829	83,155	(338)	(30)	(368)
(1,439)	Operational income	(1,650)	-	(1,650)	(975)	-	(975)	675	-	675
80,678	Net expenditure before funding	80,012	1,859	81,871	80,351	1,829	82,180	339	(30)	309
	Funding									
(7,833)	Government grants	(7,637)	(135)	(7,772)	(6,386)	-	(6,386)	1,251	135	1,386
(8,473)	Revenue support grant	(8,511)	-	(8,511)	(8,520)	-	(8,520)	(9)	-	(9)
(16,919)	Non domestic rates	(16,901)	-	(16,901)	(16,519)	-	(16,519)	382	-	382
(543)	Council tax collection amount	(80)	-	(80)	(80)	-	(400)	(320)	-	(320)
(47,765)	Council tax precepts	(47,796)	-	(47,796)	(47,796)	-	(47,451)	345	-	345
37	Collection fund adjustment amount	3	-	3	-	-	-	(3)	-	(3)
71,343	Total funding	(80,923)	(135)	(81,058)	(79,276)	-	(79,276)	1,647	135	1,782
(818)	Funding Gap/ (surplus)	(910)	1,724	814	1,075	1,829	2,904	1,985	105	2,090
-	Contribution to/ (from) general bals	-	135	135	-	-	-	-	(135)	(135)
(64)	Contribution to/ (from) earmarked res	123	(1,859)	(1,737)	-	(1,829)	(1,829)	(123)	30	(92)
(64)	Contribution to/ (from) reserves	123	(1,724)	(1,601)	-	(1,829)	(1,829)	(123)	(105)	(228)
(882)	Net Gap/ (surplus)	(787)	-	(787)	1,075	-	-	1,862	-	1,862

NB: The financials shown are unaudited

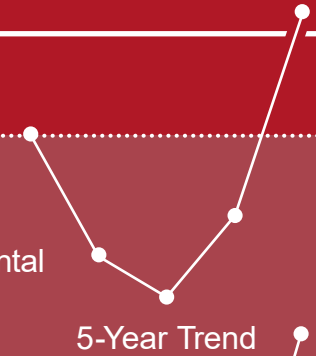
Our Service in Numbers



30,115
Total calls to Control
2021-22



10
Fatalities (from Accidental
Dwelling Fires)
2021-22



15,418
Total incidents attended
2021-22



79
Injuries from fire
2021-22



3,744
Total fires
2021-22



5,179
Total Safe & Well visits
2021-22



6,453
Total false alarms
2021-22



9,566
Total alarms fitted
2021-22



725
Accidental dwelling fires
2021-22



4,580
Inspections completed
2021-22



Statutory Responsibilities

As a Fire and Rescue Service we have legal responsibilities under multiple pieces of legislation. We aim here to explain what responsibilities fall under which piece of legislation.

Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004

The Act replaced the Fire Services Act 1948 with a new legislative framework to ensure fire and rescue services were better able to meet the particular challenges of the 21st century.

The Act clarifies the duties and powers of fire authorities to:

- Promote fire safety
- Fight fires
- Protect people and property from fires
- Rescue people from road traffic incidents
- Deal with other specific emergencies, such as flooding and terrorist attacks
- Do other things to respond to the particular needs of their communities and the risks they face.

Civil Contingencies Act 2004

Under Part One of the Act, emergency services and local authorities (defined as Category One responders) have a legal obligation to assess risk, plan and exercise for emergencies and undertake business continuity management

Fire and Rescue National Framework for England

The Fire and Rescue National Framework sets out the Government's priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in England. It was updated in May 2018.

The priorities within the framework are for fire and rescue authorities to:

- Make appropriate provision for fire prevention and protection activities and response to fire and rescue related incidents
- Identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue risks their areas face
- Collaborate with emergency services and other local and national partners to increase the efficiency and

effectiveness of the service they provide

- Be accountable to communities for the services they provide
- Develop and maintain a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse.

Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 replaces most fire safety legislation with one simple order. It means that any person who has some level of control within a premises must take reasonable steps to reduce the risk from fire and make sure people can safely escape if there is a fire. The Order applies to virtually all buildings, places and structures other than individual private dwellings, for example a family home or individual flats in a block.

Fire and Rescue Services (Emergencies) (England) Order 2007

This outlines the additional statutory duties of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 for fire authorities.

The duty requires authorities, where provision of resources has been made by central government, to respond to incidents both within and outside the authority area involving Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear hazards (CBRN) and Urban Search and Rescue (USAR).

Localism Act 2011

The aim of the Localism Act was to devolve more decision making powers from central government back into the hands of individuals, communities and councils.

The Act covers a wide range of issues related to local public services, with a particular focus on the general power of competence, community rights, neighbourhood planning and housing.

The key measures of the Act were grouped under four main headings:

- New freedoms and flexibilities for local government
- New rights and powers for communities and individuals
- Reform to make the planning system more democratic and more effective
- Reform to ensure decisions about housing are taken locally.

Fire and Rescue National Framework for England

The Fire and Rescue National Framework sets out the Government's priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in England. It was updated in May 2018.

- The priorities within the framework are for fire and rescue authorities to:
- Make appropriate provision for fire prevention and protection activities and response to fire and rescue related incidents
- Identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue risks their areas face

- Collaborate with emergency services and other local and national partners to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the service they provide
- Be accountable to communities for the services they provide Develop and maintain a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse.

Equality Act 2010

Under the Public Sector Equality Duty, the Service must have due regard to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people of different protected characteristic groups.

Our objectives, published in-line with The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) of the Equality Act 2010, are:

To improve the recruitment, retention, progression, development and experience of the people employed by Essex County Fire and Rescue Service

to enable the organisation to become an inclusive employer of choice.

To promote and encourage employees to voluntarily declare their self-classification diversity data to ensure ECFRS actions as an employer are evidence led and improvement focused.

To improve the mapping, quality and extent of equality information in order to better facilitate compliance with the public sector equality duty in relation to service delivery including IRMP additional activities.

To review the equality impact of key organisational policies for differential impact in areas such as recruitment and selection, learning and development, absence management, modified duties, talent management, appraisal, disciplinary and grievance.

To ensure that all staff are treated with dignity and respect and have a workplace that is free from harassment and bullying by changing the culture

of the organisation to one that is genuinely inclusive. All employees are high performing because we value their differences, which includes gender or gender identity, race, or religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, pregnancy, caring responsibilities or membership of a trade union.

To seek external review, challenge and accreditation of ECFRS' actions as an employer by actively participating with relevant equalities standards and benchmarks including the Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework.

These objectives were adopted on 1 March 2018. They were approved by the Inclusion and Diversity Steering Group and are in place until 28 February 2022.

We last reviewed these as part of creating our People Strategy 2020-24. The objectives are reflected in our People Strategy.

Data Protection Act 2018

The Act is a complete data protection system, so as well as governing general data covered by the GDPR, it covers all other general data, law enforcement data and national security data.

The Act exercises a number of agreed modifications to the GDPR to make it work for the benefit of the UK in areas such as academic research, financial services and child protection.

The Act aims to:

- Make our data protection laws fit for the digital age in which an ever increasing amount of data is being processed
- Empower people to take control of their data
- Support UK businesses and organisations through the change
- Ensure that the UK is prepared for the future now we have left the EU

Health and Safety at Work Act

Our Service recognises and accepts the responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of our employees and undertakes to protect people, assets and the communities in which we work.

To achieve this, we meet all relevant requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (together with all other statutory provisions associated with it) and supports staff in meeting their obligations under the act.

Detailed health, safety and welfare specific arrangements, based on the Health and Safety Executive's methodology, are set out in our Health and Safety Policy and associated framework of policies, which take relevant legislation, guidance and industry best practice into account.

The policies provide employees with relevant and comprehensive information on the risks they face and the preventative and protective measures required to minimise them.

Quarterly inspections are carried out on all our premises and any defects are reported and monitored until completed.

There is a shared common understanding of the Service's mission, values and beliefs and a positive health and safety culture is fostered by the visible and active leadership of Senior Managers. Our Health and Safety Team continually develops and improves systems for monitoring and improving the effectiveness of our Health and Safety Management Systems. These processes include peer Health and Safety Audits.

A productive relationship has been established between the Health and Safety Trade Union Safety Representatives and the Health and Safety Team.

Feedback and Recognition

Feedback

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service is fully committed to providing the highest possible levels of service to the communities in Essex.

In 2019/20 we reviewed and updated our compliments and complaints and whistle-blowing policies.

This in part was to adapt our policy to incorporate our new Governance arrangements but also to ensure that members of the public had clear information on how they could complain to us and what level of service they could expect when they did.

Getting in touch

If you would like to send us your feedback please email: **compliments.complaints@essex-fire.gov.uk**
or call: **0300 303 5555**.

Compliments

We love to know when you have received especially good service from us.

This feedback is useful because it helps us to learn about the things we are doing right, so we can make sure we carry on doing those things in the future.

20/12/2021, 22:50

I just wanted to say a massive thank you to the Grays team tonight. My water tank leaked which lead to my kitchen being flooded. The guys were amazing and even helped mop up and tidy my kitchen. I can't thank them enough. Hope you all have a very merry Christmas.

21/12/2021, 12:41

Complaints

Sometimes things do go wrong. Hearing about times when we've not met your expectations helps us to improve the service we provide.

We will always make sure your complaint is dealt with quickly, fairly and consistently.





Helpful links

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service website

www.essex-fire.gov.uk

Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner website

<https://www.essex.pfcc.police.uk>

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)

www.essex-fire.gov.uk/hmicfrs

Fire and Rescue National Framework for England

www.gov.uk/government/collections/fire-and-rescue-national-frameworkfor-england

Our Strategies - IRMP and Fire and Rescue Plan

https://www.essex-fire.gov.uk/About_Us/Our_Strategy

Be a FireStopper.

Deliberate fires destroy lives.



Essex County
Fire & Rescue Service

Tell us what you know

FireStoppers.

0800 169 5558



essex-fire.gov.uk

join.essex-fire.gov.uk