

Council

16 March 2021

Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service Integrated Risk Management Plan 2020 - 25

Recommendations

That Council:

1. Notes the outcome of the eight-week Draft Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2020-2025 consultation process.
2. Approves the IRMP 2020 - 2025 and the proposals therein.
 - **Proposal 1** - Ensure our workforce and ethos reflect the diverse communities we serve
 - **Proposal 2** - Assess our capabilities to improve our ways of working in response to any future pandemics
 - **Proposal 3** - Assess our overall resource capacity to ensure our personnel and physical assets are in the right place and at the right time to deliver our statutory duties
 - **Proposal 4** - Develop further opportunities to support the wider community health outcomes and help to protect Social Care and the NHS
 - **Proposal 5** - Implement digital solutions to enhance our service delivery
3. Authorises the Cabinet to approve the annual action plans to deliver the IRMP.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. Following the consultation process and, after considering the feedback received that showed that the majority of the respondents agreed with the proposals and felt they were important, the Chief Fire Officer considers that the overarching proposals contained within this report should remain unchanged and form the vision for the IRMP over the next five years. Supporting IRMP action plans will align to these key proposals and to the Council's strategic direction throughout this period.
- 1.2. This report was considered by Cabinet at the meeting on 11 February 2021 and will be considered by the Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) at the meeting on 9 March 2021. Any updates from OSC will be shared with Council separately.

1.3. Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service (WFRS) has a statutory duty under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, via the Fire and Rescue Service's National Framework, to prepare an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). The IRMP 2020 - 2025 sets out the Fire Authority's vision and priorities for the next five years and provides details on how WFRS will ensure Warwickshire's communities and individuals are supported, to be safe, healthy and independent.

1.4. The plan reflects up to date risk analyses and demonstrates how Fire and Rescue assesses and manages foreseeable risks within communities to ensure that Warwickshire remains a safe place to live and work and it describes how Fire and Rescue mitigate risks through their activities and the effective and efficient use of people, resources and equipment.

1.5. The proposals have been developed and linked to the Warwickshire County Council's (WCC's) Council Plan 2020 - 2025 Priority Outcomes:

- Warwickshire's communities and individuals are supported to be safe, healthy and independent
- Warwickshire's economy is vibrant and supported by the right jobs, training, skills and infrastructure
- Making the best use of resources.

The IRMP Proposal 3, 'Assess our overall resource capacity to ensure our personnel and physical assets are in the right place and at the right time to deliver our statutory duties', is linked to development of the property estate for WFRS in alignment with the WCC Property Strategy, as set out in the Cabinet Report: WFRS Strategic Direction for Property, approved by Cabinet in January 2021.

1.6. The proposals will complement the WCC Recovery Plan that outlines priority actions for recovery from Covid 19.

1.7. The approach to developing the IRMP consists of incorporating and coordinating a number of elements to form a continuous and interactive process. It will continue to evolve and adapt to address and mitigate emerging national and local community risks and will conduct effective consultation, as appropriate, throughout its development and at all review stages. In this way, the methodology allows Fire and Rescue to review and revise the plan as often as it is necessary to ensure that it is able to deliver the requirements set out within it.

1.8. The IRMP includes the following components all of which were available during the public consultation

- IRMP 20-25 Summary Document (includes the proposals)
- Warwickshire Risk Profile 2020
- Local Area Profiles ·
- Community Risk Register ·
- Warwickshire Insights (includes our performance) ·
- Annual Action Plans ·
- Our Annual Review ·

- Annual Statement of Assurance

1.9. Fire and Rescue, with support from Business Intelligence, Communications, Legal Services and the Strategic Consultation and Engagement Lead, planned and delivered an eight-week consultation process that commenced on 14th September 2020. The current situation around Covid 19 curtailed face to face opportunities, however this was addressed by making use of virtual and online technology with particular emphasis on social media.

1.10. The process incorporated the following elements:

- An online survey was hosted on the 'Ask Warwickshire' website and was supported by the production and release of a short-animated video to explain the proposals. Paper copies of the survey and alternative formats were also available. People could respond directly in writing or by e-mail.
- News releases to the local press and promotion of the online surveys across Fire and Rescue and WCC social media, internal communications platforms, and the Localities' communities mailing lists.
- Communications with key partners to advertise details of the consultation process across communities and community groups.
- Raising awareness with harder to reach groups via the production and release of short video clips on social media over a period of time, using fire staff to explain the proposals.
- The Equalities Impact Assessment, which has been reviewed and did not raise any further issues during the consultation.

1.11. Overall, the majority of the respondents agreed with the proposals and felt they were important. The analysis for each proposal is summarised in more detail in section 4 of this paper and the full analysis report and verbatim comments are provided as background papers.

1.12. Key messages from Consultation Exercise

- There was a total of 163 respondents to the survey.
- Overall, the majority of the respondents agreed with the proposals and felt they were important.
- Proposal 3 was the most agreed with proposal, with 93% agreeing, or strongly agreeing with it.
- No respondent stated Proposals 3 and 5 as being 'Not at all important'.
- Nearly one quarter (22%) of respondents disagreed, or strongly disagreed, with Proposal 1 thus making it the least popular proposal.
- Over two thirds (72%) stated the five proposals would help the WFRS prepare for fire related risks and issues over the next five years, opposed to 9% who did not believe this, leaving 18% unsure.

- Over half (60%) of respondents were the general public, with 21% of all respondents stating they currently or previously worked for the Fire Service.
- The survey response reflects the proactive work undertaken to ensure that the diverse views of our communities can be heard.
- Over four fifths (83%) of respondents were of White ethnicity, 7% being of a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) background whilst the remaining 10% stated 'Prefer not to say' / left the question unanswered.
- Nearly half (46%) identified their religion or belief as Christian, followed by 36% stating they had no religion.
- Nearly half (46%) of respondents were aged 45-59 years, followed by 22% aged 60-74 years.
- Most of the 46 further comments praised the WFRS for their services (36 respondents).

1.13. Further responses to the consultation were received from Leamington Spa Town Council, Fire Officers' Association (FOA), and the Fire Brigades Union (FBU). The analysis of their responses is summarised in section 4 of this report.

1.14. The quality feedback received through the public consultation exercise will be used to inform future IRMP work. In particular, it will shape and influence the annual action plans. The consultation analysis report and the verbatim comments that are provided for members as background papers highlight all the feedback received from the consultation and is available for members to consider as part of their decision-making process.

2. Financial Implications

2.1. This paper seeks approval for the IRMP and its proposals. The IRMP financial implications arising from future planned activities will be addressed through the formulation and development of the Fire Service annual action plans which is the next stage of the process.

2.2. Once the IRMP proposals are approved, Fire and Rescue will develop the annual actions which will consider both the financial impact of the activities contained within.

2.3. The first annual action plan will be developed and presented for consideration and approval during 2021.

3. Environmental Implications

3.1. This paper seeks approval for the IRMP and its proposals. The IRMP environmental impacts arising from future planned activities will be addressed

through the formulation and development of the Fire Service annual action plans which is the next stage of the process.

3.2. Once the IRMP proposals are approved, Fire and Rescue will develop the annual actions which will consider both the environmental impact of the activities contained within.

3.3. The first annual action plan will be developed and presented for consideration and approval during 2021.

4. Supporting Information

4.1. The analysis for each proposal is summarised below:

4.2. Proposal 1: Ensure our workforce and ethos reflect the diverse communities we serve.

- 67% (109 respondents) agreed or strongly agreed with this proposal and 67% stated it was important or very important.
- Respondents who agreed with this proposal stated reasons such as reflecting the diversity of the community and being inclusive of all. Respondents who disagreed or were neutral mentioned themes such as ensuring the right person for the job (20 people). It is worth noting that respondents who felt this proposal was important, or very important, also echoed that it is about the right people for the job
- A further theme to emerge from those who gave their reasons for why the proposal was not important was that it is not applicable for fire service jobs.
- 44 respondents provided comments on what WFRS should consider when developing this proposal. The responses were varied however the reoccurring comments were ensuring the right person for the job. Other considerations were youth recruitment, promotional recruitment material showcasing diversity and consider staff's recommendations and training in general.

4.3. Proposal 2: Assess our capabilities to improve our ways of working in response to any future pandemics.

- 88% (143 respondents) agreed or strongly agreed with this proposal and 88% stated it was important or very important.
- The key themes to emerge were supporting vulnerable residents, being prepared for the inevitability of a future pandemic, WFRS being visible and in the position to deal with future pandemics, and the need to adapt to an ever-changing world.

- The key theme to emerge from those who gave their reasons for not agreeing with the proposal or did not think it was important was that it was not an applicable role for the fire service, however the respondents did admit it was best to be prepared.
- 32 respondents provided comments on what WFRS should consider when developing this proposal. The responses were varied however the two themes that emerged were that WFRS should consider staff wellbeing and collaborate with partner organisations.

4.4. Proposal 3: Assess our overall resource capacity to ensure our personnel and physical assets are in the right place and at the right time to deliver our statutory duties.

- 93% (151 respondents) agreed or strongly agreed with this proposal and 94% (153 respondents) stated it was important or very important.
- The key themes to emerge were around society evolving with growing populations and wider issues such as HS2, WFRS having the resources to deliver their statutory duty, response times being met and saving lives.
- One respondent thought the proposal was vague and others mentioned limited resources and ensuring staff are supported.
- 35 respondents provided comments on what WFRS should consider when developing this proposal. The responses were varied however the following themes emerged. WFRS should consider the location of fire stations, noting that rural areas need some thought, environmental issues (i.e flooding) and collaborating with other services.

4.5. Proposal 4 Develop further opportunities to support the wider community health outcomes and help to protect Social Care and the NHS.

- 74% (121 respondents) agreed or strongly agreed with this proposal and 71% (116 respondents) stated it was important or very important.
- The key themes to emerge were collaborating with partner agencies, supporting community health outcomes and supporting Social Care and NHS, though respondents did note that WFRS's primary functions should not be diluted.
- Other themes to emerge from those who gave their reasons for not agreeing with the proposal or did not think it was important or had a neutral stance was it was not applicable to WFRS, the primary function should not be lost, and the proposal caters for reductions in national funding.
- 26 respondents provided comments on what WFRS should consider when developing this proposal. The responses were varied however the following theme emerged; WFRS should collaborate with the NHS and Social Care to

develop specific actions for this proposal and communicate it effectively to the public.

4.6. Proposal 5: Implement digital solutions to enhance our service delivery.

- 92% (150 respondents) agreed or strongly agreed with this proposal and 87% (141 respondents) stated it was important or very important.
- The key themes to emerge were ensuring WFRS evolve in the digital world, improving performance, ensuring the community is not negatively impacted and ensure maximum value of service delivery.
- Other themes to emerge included ensuring training is not neglected and that technology is not wholly relied upon. Another comment received was that this may make WCC/WFRS vulnerable to cyber-attack.
- Other comments included one respondent who stated that more response staff and appliances were needed and three who gave a neutral response as they felt the proposal lacked sufficient detail to comment on.
- 36 respondents provided comments on what WFRS should consider when developing this proposal. The responses were varied however the following themes emerged. Some respondents stated more consideration needed to go into elaborating on the proposal and sharing specific examples. Other considerations ranged from ensuring that technology does not replace human interaction and consider access issues e.g. for the elderly or disabled and more.

4.7. Other information

- 72% (117 respondents) stated that the five proposals would help WFRS prepare for fire related risks and issues over the next 5 years.
- The key themes to emerge from this question was that proposal 1 and 4 did not relate to fire related risks, and respondents were concerned about the impact this would have on capacity and core duties. Four respondents stated more information on the proposals were needed to assess if they would help WFRS to prepare for the next 5 years.
- Online surveys, social media and community events and newsletters were the most popular choices when asked how respondents would like WFRS to communicate in the future.

4.8. 46 respondents provided further comments. The most common theme was praise for WFRS services which should receive more publicity and WFRS should advertise its service to Warwickshire residents.

4.9. Other formal responses received

- 4.10. Leamington Spa Town Council supports the aspirations and the five proposals in the draft plan. The Town Councillors noted the importance of diversity issues and their significance in ensuring that the service works effectively with all sections of the community to support safety and wellbeing. They also commented on their recent experiences of the Warwickshire Fire and Rescue service being involved in activities and events which support diversity.
- 4.11. Please see the background paper - 'IRMP Survey results 2020' for the Leamington Spa Town Council's full response.
- 4.12. The FOA fully supports the five IRMP proposals, whilst maintaining the view that statutory duties and emergency response should be prioritised. They are also supportive of innovation and new ways of working which support the Fire and Rescue principle of delivering its statutory duty and prioritising firefighter and public safety.
- 4.13. The Fire Brigades Union (FBU) provided a response which included comments that were outside the scope of the IRMP consultation. Their position in relation to the specific IRMP proposals is summarised below:
- Proposal 1 - 'A priority that requires urgent work'.
 - Proposal 2 - 'Work which should have been undertaken prior to the pandemic on a national and local scale as the risk sat on the National Risk Register for over ten years'.
 - Proposal 3 - 'The very purpose of IRMP and should be detailed within the document and not left open ended'.
 - Proposal 4 - 'This is out of the role of a Firefighter and should not be the focus of an FRS. Additions and changes to role and function of an FRS should be pursued through the National Joint Council'.
 - Proposal 5 - 'No reference in the document. Unable to comment until we have seen specific proposals'.
- 4.14. Several external and internal communication channels were used to encourage communities to engage with the consultation process and complete the online survey including social media adverts, news releases, internal publications (Fire Matters and Working for Warwickshire).
- 4.15. Across all social media platforms, the consultation advert/video was seen 22,284 times and 2,998 people clicked the link or viewed the video. There were 24 posts on Facebook which had a reach of 40,000 and led to 1195 engagements. There were 21 posts on Twitter with 95 likes, retweets and replies.
- 4.16. Please see background Paper - Marcomms Evaluation Report for a full breakdown of all communication activity undertaken to support the consultation.

5. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 5.1. The IRMP 2020 - 2025 proposals will inform and influence the Fire and Rescue annual action and business plans and will serve as the strategic framework for the delivery of all prevention, protection and response activity over the next five years in a way that makes best use of resources.
- 5.2. The draft Fire and Rescue 2021 - 22 action plan will be developed and submitted for Cabinet approval during 2021 and will provide more detail on the specific actions that will be taken to address community risk.
- 5.3. Future annual action plans will align Service planning with the Council Plan 2020 -2025 priority outcomes, as well as the WCC property and people strategies.
- 5.4. Fire and Rescue will consult with communities on any actions that may affect them as appropriate.
- 5.5. All subsequent action plans will be developed in line with the IRMP2020 - 2025 and submitted for approval at the appropriate time.
- 5.6. Once approved the IRMP and its component documents will be published on the website in April 2021.

Appendices

IRMP 2020 - 2025

1. IRMP 20-25 Summary Document
 2. Warwickshire Risk Profile 2020
 3. WFRS 2019-20 Annual Review
 4. WFRS 2019-20 Statement of Assurance
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5. Consultation on IRMP 2020-2025 - 'IRMP Survey results 2020' Report
 6. Verbatim Comments IRMP 2025
 7. Marcomms Consultation Evaluation Report
 8. Equality Impact Assessment

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The report was previously considered by Cabinet.