



Suffolk Fire & Rescue Service

Productivity and Efficiency Plan

2024-2025

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Message from Chief Fire Officer



Jon Lacey
Chief Fire Officer
Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service

This Efficiency and Productivity plan details how Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) aim to deliver efficiencies and increase productivity in 2024/25.

As part of the 2021/22 Spending Review the National Fire Chiefs Councils (NFCC) and the Local Government Association (LGA) proposed that across fire and rescue services the sector could by 2024 – 25 create:

- 2% of non-pay efficiencies per annum
- Increase productivity by 3%

In 2024 Fire Services that fall under the governance of County Councils were asked to produce a Productivity and Efficiency Plan.

This Productivity and Efficiency Plan will help the NFCC, LGA and Home Office collate evidence and to assess the progress at national level against spending review goals. It will also assist us to be more efficient and productive in our service.

A key priority for Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) is to be 'Swift to Serve' so Suffolk is a place where people can lead safe and fulfilling lives. As part of Suffolk County Council (SCC) . Collectively do this by making the best of our resources and delivering a service that is effective and value for money. We want to ensure the service is sustainable both from a financial and environmental perspective, we are committed to delivering a plan of savings as well as initiating a series of invest-to-save projects which will help to alleviate pressure on our budgets in the short, medium, and long term whilst supporting the Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan (SCEP).

The investment SCC has made in our service has ensured that SFRS is one of the top performing Council-led Fire and Rescue Services in the country. We remain an ambitious service that delivers incredible services to our community and we will continue to adapt and transform the way we work so we can deliver value, improve productivity, and drive innovation whilst delivering our CRMP (Community Risk Management Plan) priorities.

Section 1: Primary Information

Making sure the right resources are in the right place is vital. This includes securing the finance needed to allocate the necessary resources to meet the risks identified in our CRMP.

Our financial planning goes much further than the delivery of Prevention, Protection and Response activity. It enhances our people, the systems we use, our infrastructure and allows a positive culture to flourish.

Astute financial management provides adequate resources to ensure the service can develop, innovate, and meet emerging risks.

Annual financial and performance data for all fire and rescue services are published centrally, enabling services and their communities to measure themselves against regional family groups. Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service is consistently shown to deliver value for money for its county's residents.

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service 2024-25 Revenue Budget

	(£'000)
Employee Expenses	21,797
Premises	1,467
Transport	576
Supplies & Services	8,313
Internal Charging	5
Gross Budget	32,159
Use of Reserves – Planned	549
Grants	2,513
External Income	363
2024-25 Net Budget	28,733

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service 2024-25 Grants

Any funds or grants allocated to Suffolk Fire and Rescue are allocated to projects to achieve our CRMP outcomes.

	(£'000)
Firelink	94
Fire Private Finance Initiative	2,193
Building Safety Regulator Grant	72
Fire Protection	133
New Dimension	21
Total Grants	2,513

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service 2024-25 Sources of External Income

(£'000)	
Contributions from other FRAs as National Operational Guidance Lead	88
Cross Border Services	52
Blue Light Integration Rental Income – Police & Ambulance	189
Contributions from Schools to support School Liaison Officer	17
Other	17
Total Income	363

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service 2024 to 20299 Capital Programme Budget.

The Service needs to ensure money is available to purchase new assets or maintain existing assets (Equipment, Vehicles, Premises). Regular review and forecasting of our ten-year capital programme have allowed a reprofiling exercise to apportion capital spend when it is required rather than year one of a rolling project that could typically span 3 years.

Scheme (* denotes rolling programme)	2024-25 Budget (£'000)	2025-26 Budget (£'000)	2026-27 Budget (£'000)	2027-28 Budget (£'000)	2028-29 Budget (£'000)	Total Budget 2024-29 (£'000)
Operational Equipment *	438	650	86	558	89	1,821
Vehicle Renewals*	1,729	1,975	1,378	1,186	2,785	9,053
IT equipment *	205	190	400	140	340	1,275
Property Improvement *	245	95	175	125	275	915
Fire Control Centre	780	143	0	0	0	923
	3,397	3,053	2,039	2,009	3,489	13,987

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service 2024-25 Earmarked Reserves (as of 01 April 2023)

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service does not hold direct reserves. Reserves only provide one-off funding and are a fundamental part of the way Suffolk County Council manages its business risks and maintains a stable financial position. The county council manages reserves for broader financial stability.

Opening Balance 2023-24 (£'000)	
Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service Earmarked Reserves	431
Fire Private Finance Initiative (PFI) Project Reserve	1,893
Transformation Reserves for Prevention	147
Transformation Reserves for Fire Governance	277
Transformation Reserves for Fire Control	118
Grand Total	2,867

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service 2024-25 Planned Use of Reserves

	(£'000)
Transformation Reserves for Prevention	70
Transformation Reserves for Fire Governance	125
Fire Private Finance Initiative (PFI) Project Reserve	351
Fire Service App	3
Grand Total	549

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service 2024-25 Efficiency Savings

	(£'000)
Relocation of Fire Service Equipment & Stores	20
Reduction of the On-Call recruitment Budget	50
Withdrawal of IT Apprenticeship Post	82
Total Saving	

Efficiency

Efficiency has a place in any organisation to ensure we are as cost effective as possible and that we spend every penny of our community's money in the absolute best way possible.

To assist us in this process we have robust budget management within the council and fire service to forecast, track and deliver our budget and capital spend efficiently.

Within the fire service we have a Performance and Assurance Framework to help us have the right conversations and actions at every level in our service.

As part of this process, we have planned efficiencies in this year and plans to make sure we strategically look at our operating model to be as efficient as possible over the next few months and years.

Planned efficiencies 2024-25

We recently completed two successful IT apprenticeship placements. As our IT strategy and priorities continue to develop, the focus for future roles will shift away from in-house software development. This means we won't be offering IT software development apprenticeships at this time. However, we remain committed to investing in talent development within the IT field.

Relocation of Fire Service Equipment Stores to a central location: Providing a fit for purpose fleet and equipment model which maximises the use of our assets to realise efficiencies and reductions in our estate.

Cost recovery as part of the Sizewell C development: Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) will receive contributions of £601,761.76 during the construction period of Sizewell C. This will be released to Suffolk County Council and drawn upon when required by SFRS. This contribution is realised in phased payments that will support SFRS implement exercises conducted on site, site visits and familiarisation for fire service crews and officers to assure our operational response. Additional activity such as high-risk planning, training and resilience measures will also be supported through this funding provision during the life of the project.

Reduction in the on-call budget: The service has found it difficult to recruit into several vacant on-call fire fighter posts for several years, the service has now made the decision to reduce our On Call budget by £50k to realise efficiencies savings as part of the wider council savings programme.

Effective contract and procurement management: Taking a collaborative approach to procurement when possible, working with other fire and rescue services to secure value for money.

As a council service we do not have an additional fire authority to facilitate and fund, decision making is taken through the County Council Cabinet.

The service collaborates with other emergency services in shared stations - SFRS demonstrates a strong commitment to collaboration by sharing 17 of its 35 sites with our Blue Light partners. The extensive joint estates programme is a prime example of how we work together efficiently and effectively to deliver value to Suffolk communities. By actively developing relationships with our partners, we promote and deliver services that improve our collective effectiveness, efficiency, and public safety.

We continue to explore opportunities to make efficiencies through our budget forum which includes collaborating with our Suffolk County Council partners with joint service provision and equipment. Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service is committed to using resources efficiently. We already collaborate effectively with Suffolk County Council to share resources like legal services, IT, HR (Human Resources), procurement, buildings, and assets. SFRS is constantly exploring new opportunities to further optimise resource usage in partnership with SCC. This collaborative approach ensures SFRS can direct more resources towards providing the best possible fire and rescue services for the Suffolk community.

We take a strategic approach to utilising grant funding. We don't simply spend these grants; we invest them in initiatives that deliver the most significant impact on public safety

By strategically investing grant funding, SFRS uses valuable resources to enhance fire prevention, protection efforts, and public safety across Suffolk.

SFRS takes a proactive approach to asset management, ensuring that the cost of replacing faulty equipment is recovered wherever possible or repaired/replaced in a cost-effective manner. This approach minimises impact on our budgets, allowing us to allocate resources more efficiently.

Making environmental improvements, we have invested in solar panels at key stations to both reduce our carbon emissions and utility costs but also to improve our operational resilience. We are in the process of transitioning smaller service vehicles such as officer cars and prevention vans to electric, with charging points situated at key stations, currently we have 28% of the service now fully electric.

Responding to unwanted fire signals takes our firefighters away from emergencies and other prevention activity where they might be truly needed. By working to reduce unwanted fire signals we can reduce the cost of unnecessary blue light journeys, the risk of collisions and reduce our CO2 emissions.

Productivity

SFRS is committed to the nationally agreed productivity target of 3% per annum and is committed to improving how staff utilise their time effectively.

Our firefighters are already productive and do so much more than respond to emergencies, when not responding to incidents our crews undertake numerous activities including:

- **Prevention activity including Home Fire Safety Visits:** Visiting people in their homes to provide safety advice and fitting safety devices such as smoke alarms, they can also make referrals for further support. This activity is targeted at the most vulnerable in our communities, which may include the elderly, and those with physical or mental illnesses.
- **Road safety events and campaigns**
- **Water safety events and campaigns**
- **Safeguarding:** Safeguarding referrals from crews have increased by 54% due to investment in a dedicated safeguarding manager who has delivered training, guidance and reviewed current procedures and policies.
- **Christmas inspections:** During the festive season, Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service conduct fire safety inspections of local businesses. These inspections aim to ensure that businesses are prepared for the potential increase in customers and activity during the Christmas period.
- **Protection activity including site visits:** The crews visit high risk premises and locations such as hospitals, schools, and prisons to ensure they are familiar with the risks and procedures in the event of a fire or other emergency.

- **Training:** Our firefighters are expected to maintain a wide range of skills and competencies which require comprehensive training both on station, at our training centre at Wattisham and other relevant sites.
- **Development Firefighter training:** SFRS fosters a supportive environment for new firefighters. Experienced firefighters collaborate with development firefighters by providing training and mentorship. This collaborative approach helps ensure recruits successfully complete their Year 1 assessment and progress towards becoming competent firefighters.
- **Learning and Development:** This includes e-learning linked into SCC and our development pathways to ensure we maintain our ambitious standards of leadership development and service delivery.
- **Operational exercises:** This includes our cross border and collaborative training with our neighbouring county fire services and our Suffolk based partners such as the MoD, ports, and other emergency services.
- **Maintenance checks:** Ensuring our vehicles and equipment are operationally ready to respond.
- **Physical fitness:** Our firefighters are required to achieve a nationally researched and agreed level of fitness to keep them safe. We provide training equipment and support to maintain this standard. Additionally, some firefighters undertake the role of Physical Training Instructor (PTI) to assist with the Fitness Programme.
- **Community engagement events:** These range from local group visits to the station, school visits across the ages, fund raising for our firefighter charity and attendance at local events. These give us the opportunity to engage with our local community, raise prevention awareness, inspire, recruit future firefighters, and improve our diversity in our organisation.
- **Station routines:** Our firefighters maintain a constant state of readiness through dedicated station routines. These routines ensure our crews are prepared to respond effectively to any emergency.
 - **Equipment Checks:** Firefighters test and inspect essential equipment, including breathing apparatus, to ensure everything functions and is fit for purpose.
 - **Cleanliness and Maintenance:** Maintaining a clean and well-maintained station is crucial. This includes cleaning equipment, training areas like the drill tower and road traffic collision (RTC) training areas, and personal protective equipment (PPE).
 - **Inventory Management:** Regular inventory checks ensure all essential equipment and supplies are readily available and properly accounted for.
- **Administration:** Exciting, no, important, yes ... this means our incident reports are completed and can be used by the police or insurance companies, it provides information that supports our crews, service delivery and allows us to measure how we are performing.

We have developed a golden thread to deliver our four-year plan called the Community Risk Management Plan. This is delivered through the Service plan with targets set for all teams through our strategic performance measures, these are supported by service measures to investigate more detail at team level.

To measure our success, we have developed our data reporting systems to capture the objectives, training, prevention, and protection activity across all our teams, enabling managers to track progress against agreed targets and requirements through 1 to 1 meetings using a set agenda covering all areas of performance.

All our activity is recorded, and the data analysed in our performance board to help us evaluate outcomes and progress. Performance is monitored through team meetings, 1-1's and discussed at the quarterly Performance Assurance Board.

To become more productive, all fire stations have a Station dashboard, which captures key performance activities that are aligned to our performance assurance framework. Each station has local risk management plans (LRMPs) to ensure that its activities and resources are effectively targeted to respond to their local communities' vulnerabilities and risks. These systems support and inform our district management to improve efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity.

In addition to the productivity improvements of station and firefighter activity we have worked on a range of other productivity initiatives including:

- **Evaluating our prevention activity:** This evaluation is being used to prioritise resource allocation to our greatest risk, identify areas where we can deliver improved efficiency and productivity and ensure we are delivering a first-class service to our communities.
- **Collaborative procurement:** When possible, we have been working collaboratively with fire services to achieve savings, explore opportunities to influence development.
- **Work force planning:** The service has comprehensive work force planning to ensure we identify key issues, succession planning and changes to skill and workforce requirements. Service structures are regularly reviewed to help make sure that the right skills, competencies, and capacity is there or is planned to meet our current and future needs.
- **Firefighter recruitment and retention:** We have invested in our recruitment team, which has streamlined the recruitment process, provided additional support to new firefighters, and provided additional support to on-call stations. It has targeted recruitment events for underrepresented groups and worked closely with employers of on-call firefighters.

Section 2: Secondary Information

Collaboration

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service has an excellent history of working together with our Suffolk partners, including undertaking joint activity with blue light services and our regional fire services. We actively develop our relationships with our partner organisations to promote and deliver services to provide best value to the community and improve our effectiveness and efficiency.

We understand the value that working with others can bring and work closely with partners such as our colleagues at Suffolk County Council and the Suffolk local authorities, blue light services, health teams, local community groups and voluntary organisations to identify and support the most vulnerable in our community.

Where possible we have endeavoured to share premises with partners with a new premise opening last year in Stowmarket, which is shared with the police and used by the ambulance service, making it a true hub for us to work closely with our blue light colleagues. Out of our 35 stations we share 17 with our collaborative partners, 12 with the police and 5 with the ambulance service.

Home Fire Safety Visits are at the core of our prevention work, ensuring that our work is targeted to the most vulnerable, making sure we reduce the risk of fire and accidents in the home. Referrals from our partner organisations such as local authorities, health services, housing associations is a key means of reaching those who need our help.

Working together with the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) enables us to have the links to report any safeguarding issues that have been identified during a Home Fire Safety Visit or attendance to an incident particularly for hoarding, vulnerable adults, modern day slavery and child protection issues.

Our work with the Suffolk Resilience Forum has meant we are better prepared to keep our communities safe during significant local and national events. The Suffolk Resilience Forum (SRF) is a multi-agency group that provides strategic and operational support and guidance on the planning for multi-agency responses to a major incident. SFRS is an active member of the Suffolk Resilience Forum.

SFRS works closely with our internal partners within Suffolk including Felixstowe Docks, Adastral Park, RAF Lakenheath, Mildenhall Airbase and Suffolk Search & Rescue. We are carrying out various exercises that ensure we can provide safe and effective incident response when required.

While our collaborative work has yielded financial and economic benefits for all involved, the most impactful benefit lies in strengthening our community. Through collaboration, we have made our communities safer and reduced the strain on public finances.

Transformation Plans

Transformation is key to the delivery of an efficient and productive service. Our transformation project also delivers additional benefits and safety to our public and firefighters.

We have a program delivery board and system to coordinate all our activity along with good governance to ensure we have transparent effective decision making.

Planned transformation work 2024-25

Control mobilising and resource management: Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service will be working with Suffolk County Council colleagues to deliver a new Fire Control and Resource Management Centre over the next few months. This represents a significant opportunity for the service and will enable new and improved ways of working across all areas of the service with the introduction and integration of electronic systems that will see Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service on a journey of IT transformation. The control centre will be the bedrock for our new IT principals.

The new resource management element to our fire control room will drive improvements to make sure we are optimising our operational resources across our county to maximise fire engine availability.

Digital transformation: SFRS has charted a course for digital transformation, outlining an IT roadmap of improvements that will deliver the new strategic IT priorities. These priorities will drive innovation and improvement across all aspects of our information and communication technology (ICT) within the service.

SFRS operates on a 'invest to save' basis. This means reducing our reliance on on-premises technology where practical to improve resilience. We will integrate our services with partners wherever possible, aiming for a common approach and, where feasible, joint commissioning and delivery with our partner fire services

SFRS is committed to making better use of the data and evidence we gather to drive improvements in both efficiency and productivity. This includes investing in bringing together existing datasets and information sources to get the most out of them, as well as collaborating with others to access new data sources. In turn, this will help us make better use of our resources, whether for operational response or targeting prevention and protection activity

To maximise the benefits, we gain and achieve from efficient working practices, SFRS is committed to fully utilising the toolsets available within Microsoft 365 (MS365) and PowerBi.

Fleet: Our fleet and equipment teams are dedicated to aligning resources with risk. This means providing a modern, affordable, and fit-for-purpose fleet of specialist vehicles. Through staff engagement and ongoing research and development, we will identify any gaps in our capabilities that require new or different equipment and vehicles to be able to meet our CRMP priorities.

We will align with the Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan and minimise our environmental impact, SFRS is committed to further electrifying our smaller vehicles. We will also explore the feasibility of zero-emission solutions for our larger fleet. Value for money remains a priority – we will collaborate closely with Suffolk County Council on procurement, exploring frameworks and joint initiatives to ensure cost-effectiveness.

By co-locating our fleet and equipment functions, we aim to achieve a double benefit: reducing property costs and creating a more positive working environment for our technical support staff and workshop engineers.

Charging Policies

SFRS operates a charging policy, this policy applies to specific situations, including:

- Non-emergency special services: This covers assistance such as lift rescues or floodwater removal outside of emergency situations.
- Fire appliance use: Charges may apply for situations not considered emergencies.
- Cross border resource charges to other fire and rescue services.
- Planned efficiency saving for cost recovery from external uses of our training /professional services will be reviewed to encompass the full financial impact to service.

Asset Management and Investment in Technology

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) is committed to continuous improvement and providing the best possible service to the community. Here's a look at some key efficiency investments we are making:

Software for prevention, protection, and risk activities: We are investing in new software to streamline our prevention, protection, and risk management activities. This will allow us to be more efficient and effective in keeping our communities safe.

Fleet and Asset Management System review: We are reviewing our fleet and asset management system to ensure optimal resource utilisation. This will lead to more accurate recording, monitoring, and organisation of our fire engines, equipment, and other assets.

Power BI training and investment: We are committed to using Power BI, a data analytics tool, to its full potential. This includes ongoing training for both developers and users to gain deeper insights and make data-driven decisions.

New fire engines: We have recently purchased 10 brand new fire engines that include standard B Type appliances, Enhanced Rescue Tenders, a dedicated driver training vehicle, and a 32m Turntable Ladder. These state-of-the-art vehicles equip our firefighters with the latest technology for optimal response. The new additions not only boost efficiency, but standardised models will also lead to significant cost savings on maintenance overall, benefiting both firefighters and taxpayers.

Additional Investments

Fire Service App: We are investing in a mobile app to improve communication and efficiency.

Station equipment: We are continuously upgrading equipment at our fire stations to ensure our crews have the best tools available.

Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs): We are equipping our firefighters with the latest technology to improve communication and situational awareness on the scene of emergencies.

Misting Capability: Upgrading every frontline appliance to carry a misting capability to allow safer and more efficient firefighting and mitigate water use at wildfire incidents.

Thermal Imaging Cameras (TICs): We are replacing and upgrading the TIC capability on every frontline fire engine. This includes providing a TIC for the officer in charge to allow external thermal scanning alongside internal use.

Gas Monitors: We have supplied enhanced gas monitoring equipment to every frontline fire engine to allow safer hazard identification.

Battery Positive Pressure Ventilation (PPV) Fans: We are transitioning from fossil fuel to battery powered positive pressure fans and adding these to fire engines that previously had no provision. The strategy with equipment aims to afford the same safe system of work for every frontline firefighter with misting, gas monitoring, upgraded PPV and TIC's on every frontline vehicle.

Resourcing

SFRS employs the following resourcing models:

Whole Time Shift based: These are firefighters aligned to a 24-hr duty shift. This shift pattern is across all whole-time stations.

Whole Time Day crew: these are firefighters aligned to a Monday – Friday 08-17:00hr shift pattern.

Whole Time County Day crew: These are firefighters who provide resilience for our on-call and work Monday – Friday 08:00-17:00hrs

On-Call: These are firefighters who provide availability and respond to emergency calls in their local area, either from their home or place of work.

Support staff: Support staff keep our service running by providing professional skills and carrying out a range of duties to enable our service to deliver its core priorities across Prevention, Protection and Response.

A recent restructure of the service drove efficiency, capacity and focus. The new structure provided a clear governance and accountability across the departments.

Work force planning

At SFRS, we use a comprehensive workforce planning strategy to manage our operational and support staff. This approach involves:

Identifying future needs: We anticipate upcoming vacancies due to retirement, promotions, or other factors.

Skill gap analysis: We assess the existing skillsets within our workforce and compare them to future role requirements.

Strategic recruitment: Based on our analysis, we prioritise recruitment needs to ensure we attract individuals with the necessary skills and qualifications to meet our evolving service demands.

By proactively managing our workforce, SFRS strives to maintain a well-equipped and prepared team to deliver exceptional service to the Suffolk community.

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) is committed to attracting and retaining talent. We have made significant improvements to our recruitment process, including:

- **Dedicated recruitment team:** We have established a focused recruitment team to ensure a consistent and efficient approach across all stations.

- **Tailored campaigns:** Developed targeted recruitment campaigns for individual fire stations, highlighting the unique aspects and opportunities each location offers.
- **Enhanced support:** We provide increased support to recruits throughout the application process and beyond. This helps ensure a smooth transition into their new roles and fosters a sense of belonging.

These improvements aim to:

- **Reduce turnover:** By providing a better recruitment experience and ongoing support, we aim to retain new recruits and minimise turnover. This translates to a more stable workforce and reduced training costs associated with high turnover.
- **Increased effectiveness:** A well-supported and well-matched workforce allows SFRS to operate more effectively and efficiently, enhancing public safety.

Review of the On-Call Duty System

Over the next few months and years, we will be undertaking a service wide review to make sure all our duty systems are fit for the future are as efficient as possible and focused on the risk in Suffolk.

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) is committed to maintaining a highly effective and sustainable fire service for our community. As part of this ongoing commitment, we are conducting a comprehensive review of our duty systems, beginning with our on-call program.

The on-call duty system review focuses on several key areas:

- **Working hours:** We are assessing the required working hours for on-call firefighters to ensure a healthy balance between work demands and personal lives.
- **Compensation:** We are reviewing pay bands to ensure they are competitive and align with the new national guidelines outlined in the "grey book" (referencing national fire service guidance).
- **Sustainability:** We are evaluating the long-term viability of the on-call model. This includes analysing training expectations, course attendance requirements, and the types of duties performed by on-call firefighters.

Future Reviews

Following the on-call duty system review, SFRS plans to evaluate our other duty systems, including day duty systems, officer duty systems, and wholetime models. By conducting these comprehensive reviews, SFRS aims to optimise our staffing structure, ensuring we have the right people in the right roles with the appropriate compensation and support. This will enable SFRS to deliver the best possible fire and rescue service to the Suffolk community.

Asset management

Our ambition is to be more efficient and effective in using our resources. We are currently reviewing our Asset Management systems to gain a clearer picture of how our equipment is used, its lifespan, and when replacements are needed.

This review will bring several advantages:

- **Enhanced oversight:** Improved systems will provide greater visibility into asset utilisation, lifecycle stages, and replacement schedules. This allows for more informed decision-making about equipment maintenance and replacement.
- **Leaner operations:** A more efficient asset management system will streamline operations by identifying opportunities to optimise equipment use and potentially reduce the overall number of assets needed.
- **Strategic fleet management:** By strategically managing our fleet, SFRS can ensure timely equipment replacement, maximising equipment lifespan and operational efficiency.

By investing in a robust Asset Management system, SFRS aims to achieve a leaner operating model, optimise equipment lifecycles

Procurement

Our approach to procurement supports the delivery of cost-effective services, sourcing best value and where possible taking a collaborative approach.

We employ value-driven decisions, prioritising sourcing the best value for money, not just the lowest price. This ensures we acquire the best equipment and supplies to meet our needs.

We work closely with both Suffolk County Council (SCC) procurement partners and other fire services. This collaborative approach allows us to harness expertise and potentially find better deals.

Where possible, we utilise an established national framework for various procurements. These frameworks streamline the process, maximising efficiency.

We are dedicated to continuously refining our procurement practices. This involves actively seeking best practices and learning from past experiences to achieve even greater value and more effective processes.

Local Initiatives that are specific to SFRS

Volunteers: We recognise the vital role our volunteers play in fire prevention. They assist with smoke detector installation, promote fire safety and prevention work at community events, contributing significantly to public safety efforts.

Rural fire safety: This year SFRS began collaborating with the National Farmers Union (NFU) to promote rural prevention using their networks to reach rural communities. This partnership helps raise awareness of fire risks and improve fire safety practices in rural areas.

Targeted intervention programs: Our local initiatives like "Biker Down" and "Fire Setters" programs address specific fire risks. These programs aim to reduce the need for emergency response by proactively educating children, vulnerable adults, and high-risk groups. This year we will be focusing on vulnerable adult fire setters.

While the exact benefits are difficult to quantify, these targeted approaches aim to decrease the number and impact of emergency related incidents, keeping our community safer.

Section 3: Productivity

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service is dedicated to continuous improvement, and a key focus is enhancing firefighter productivity. This translates to a more proactive fire service and a safer Suffolk community.

We have set ambitious targets to increase the number of home fire safety visits conducted by our wholetime firefighters. We are continuously aiming to improve our prevention activities with this year's target represents a 20% increase, building on a 35% increase achieved between 2021 and 2023.

We are using the Fire Utilisation Survey as a base to gain a clearer picture of how firefighters spend their time. This allows us to tailor our approach and ensure targets reflect actual firefighter activity.

After development and consultation, we have launched Local Risk Management Plans (LRMPs) this year. These customised plans, tailored to each station's specific risk profile, allow firefighters to focus on key prevention and protection activities within their communities, training needs, cross-border exercises, and other tasks are also incorporated into the LRMPs (local risk management plans), ensuring a comprehensive approach. LRMPs are reviewed annually with targets adjusted to maintain effectiveness.

SFRS recognises the diverse roles firefighters play. We have invested in safeguarding training, improved procedures, and updated technology to support these expanded responsibilities. A dedicated prevention/response liaison officer role further enhances coordination.

Our Performance Department provides clear dashboards that track productivity and progress, enabling managers to offer targeted feedback and hold regular performance discussions with managers and their firefighter crews. This continuous loop ensures accountability, helps guide resource allocation and ongoing improvement

These investments in productivity and prevention have led to a significant decrease in the number of incidents, particularly fire-related ones.