Fire Safety Policy

Fire Safety Strategy

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PREVENTING PROTECTING RESPONDING
www.westyorkshirefire.gov.uk
Page 1 of 38
Fire Safety Strategy

Introduction

The West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service’s (WYFRS) Service Plan outlines the overall ambition of “Making West Yorkshire Safer” and establishes an ambitious set of service delivery targets. This strategy sets out the Prevention and Protection measures that will achieve those targets.

The strategy further supports the aim, to “provide an excellent fire and rescue service working in partnership to reduce death, injury, economic loss and contribute to community wellbeing.”

The Service Plan documents four strategic priorities and the overriding goal of this document is to meet, in full, the specific Strategic Priority stated below, whilst supporting the other three:

“Deliver a Proactive Fire Prevention and Protection Programme”

A significant part of achieving the above priority is to develop a more integrated approach to Fire Safety and specifically the work that is carried out by operational personnel.

In meeting this Priority we will:

1) Ensure the authority’s statutory fire protection duties are discharged efficiently and effectively in order to reduce the incidence of fire and the effects of fire should it occur.

2) Work with partners to deliver a reduction in fires, road traffic incidents and anti-social fire related behaviour.

Purpose and Scope

This strategy outlines how West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service will reduce risk in the community. The main objective of the strategy is to reduce the risk of fires and other emergencies. The document is intended to present a co-ordinated approach between Service Delivery, other Directorates and partners to improve health, wealth and wellbeing across West Yorkshire. The strategy is intended to be an internal document to provide direction within West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service.

The document articulates the context of the Community Risk Management Strategy and Service Delivery Framework to provide a holistic approach to risk reduction.
The strategy broadly aligns to the workstreams of Business Safety, Home Safety and Road Safety as outlined by the Chief Fire Officers’ Association (CFOA)

There are two primary strands to this Fire Safety Strategy:

1) Protection Strategy

The Protection Strategy outlines how West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service will support businesses and other employers to meet their legal requirements, enhance safety and subsequently support economic growth. The strategy is built around the legislative framework provided by the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order), the Health and Safety at Work Act and the Fire and Rescue Services Act.

2) Prevention Strategy

The Prevention Strategy outlines the activities that will be undertaken by West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service in order to ensure that the risk to the Community is reduced as far as is possible, through a wide range of appropriate intervention and education programmes. The Fire Prevention strategy ensures that the greatest amount of resources are committed to the most vulnerable within the Community.

These two elements are subsequently broken down into a number of relevant areas, which are detailed within this document.

**Responsibilities**

Responsibility for the delivery and monitoring of these strategies sit with the following post holders:

- The Director of Service Delivery is responsible for the delivery and review of this strategy
- The Area Manager (Fire Safety) is responsible for the development and delivery of these strategies. The monitoring and reporting against the outcomes of these strategies will be carried out through reporting to Service Delivery Board on a two-monthly basis and Community Safety Committee twice per annum.
- The Fire Protection Manager is responsible for the development and delivery of all policies, procedures and protocols that support the Fire Protection Strategy.
- The Fire Prevention Manager is responsible for the development and delivery of all policies, procedures and protocols that support the Fire Prevention Strategy.
• District Commanders and District Prevention Managers are responsible for the delivery of these strategies through the District Risk Reduction Plans.
• Local Area Risk Reduction Teams are responsible for the delivery of these strategies through the Local Area Risk Reduction Plans.
• All Operational and Fire Protection staff are responsible for the delivery of Fire Protection activities.
• All Operational and Fire Prevention staff are responsible for the delivery of Fire Prevention activities.

**Review**

Review of these strategies will occur annually prior to the April Service Delivery Board meeting and will be undertaken by the Area Manager Fire Safety. A review may also be carried out due to a fundamental change in the way that WYFRS operate in relation to Fire Safety. The purpose of the review will be to ensure that Fire Safety activities still support the Service Plan.
Protection Strategy

Introduction

Our aim is to reduce the risk and impact of fire on the community, safeguarding firefighters, heritage and the environment, reducing the loss of life, injuries, commercial, economic and social costs. Consequently our statutory duty to enforce fire safety law and promote fire safety is based on risk to provide the community with value for money.

The primary focus of the Fire Protection Strategy is to support business such that all employers and places of community access meet their legal duties and maintain the safety of all those who may be present and in doing so assist the economic growth of West Yorkshire.

Premises that present the highest risk will be audited and visited most frequently. Premises considered to be lower risk will be audited primarily in response to complaints, following incidents or on a randomly sampled basis to verify their lower risk classification and to confirm that the Responsible Person is complying with their statutory duty and requirements of fire safety legislation.

Operational personnel will engage in risk reduction work appropriate to their level of expertise and their role. All personnel will collect risk data about premises as part of their normal role. This data will enable us to target our prevention, protection and response functions in an effective, efficient and verifiable manner.

The following elements form the Fire Protection Strategy:

- Structure
- Enforcement
- Business Audits
- Operational Risk Visits
- Petroleum and Explosives
- Licensing
- Consultation
- Business Support
- Operations Liaison
- Fire Protection Audits
- Training
- Performance Monitoring
- Fire Protection Information
- Fire Investigation
This Authority has agreed a Constitution which sets out how it operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local citizens.

The Officers Delegation Scheme stipulates the terms and limitations upon which the Authority has empowered “authorised officers” namely the Chief Executive Officer / Chief Fire Officer, the Corporate Directors (Directors of Strategic Development, Service Delivery, Service Support and Corporate Resources) and the Chief Finance Officer to act on behalf of the Authority and to exercise delegated powers on behalf of the Authority pursuant to the statutory scheme set out in the Local Government act 1972 and to all other enabling legislation including statutory instruments regulations and orders.

The Director of Corporate Resources is responsible for monitoring and reviewing the Constitution.

The Authority’s Fire Protection responsibilities are detailed in a document entitled ‘Discharge of Duties and Powers Policy’. If acting responsibly and in good faith the Authority makes a decision, which has unfortunate or even disastrous consequences upon members of the public, it incurs no legal liability in damages, even if a Judge is of the opinion that the decision was wrong. The decision was for them (the Authority), not for him (the Judge).

It follows that in order to satisfy a Court of Law the Authority must use its discretionary powers responsibly. As a result, there are clear guidelines laid down for inspecting officers to follow and it will not be left to individual officers of any rank or grade to make policy, or indeed, to substitute custom and practice for policy.

It is clear that in order to be able to prove that policy decisions were followed, and the Authority used its discretionary powers responsibly, policy statements are available which state in some detail the relevant legislation under which inspections are carried out, the duties of the Authority and the manner in which those duties are performed. This is the prime purpose of the document ‘Discharge of Duties and Powers Policy’. It is the responsibility of the Area Manager (Fire Safety) to keep this document under review. This document should be read in conjunction with the Enforcement Policy and the policy and procedures for the appointment and authorisation of fire protection inspectors.
**Structure**

The Fire Protection department is led by the Fire Protection Manager and is separated into three distinct functions as detailed in the organisational chart below:

Each functional team has a number of Fire Protection inspectors who deliver the technical and detailed support in order to deliver the Fire Protection service.

**Enforcement Strategy**

The Authority’s Enforcement Policy Statement is in accordance with the Regulators’ Compliance Code and the regulatory principles required under the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006. It sets out the general principles and approach which the Authority’s officers take when enforcing both fire and health and safety.

The appropriate use of enforcement powers, including prosecution, is important, both to secure compliance with the law and to ensure that those who have duties under it may be held to account for failures to safeguard health, safety and welfare.
The ultimate purpose of enforcing authorities is to ensure that duty holders manage and control risks effectively, thus preventing harm. The term 'enforcement' has a wide meaning and applies to all dealings between enforcing authorities and those on whom the law places duties (employers, the self-employed, employees and others).

The purpose of enforcement is to:

- Ensure that duty holders take action to deal immediately with serious risks;
- Promote and achieve sustained compliance with the law;
- Ensure that duty holders who breach health and safety requirements, and directors or managers who fail in their responsibilities, may be held to account.

The enforcing authorities have a range of tools at their disposal in seeking to secure compliance with the law and to ensure a proportionate response to criminal offences.

**Business Strategy**

Poor fire safety standards can lead to serious risks / hazards to persons occupying the premises should they become involved in fire. We aim to reduce this risk to the community of West Yorkshire by not only carrying out inspections and audits but by providing advice to those who ask. Our inspectors will be mindful of the need to achieve ‘compliance’ rather than simply discharging the acknowledged ‘duty to enforce’.

A competent and transparent service offering timely and accessible advice to those willing to comply is more likely to result in a safer and more prosperous community, as opposed to the rigid application of hard enforcement measures.

This does not preclude the need, where necessary, for each Responsible Person to ensure a competent person carries out a risk assessment. This is especially pertinent where specialist or professional advice may be required. The enforcement sanctions we use still continue to be subjected to the principles set out within the Enforcement Management Model (EMM).

The process for premises inspection in West Yorkshire is determined by our Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP) as required by the current National Framework and is based upon guidance given by Chief Fire Officers’ Association (CFOA) in partnership with the department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).
The RBIP will be presented each year to the Community Safety Committee for approval on behalf of the Fire and Rescue Authority.

The RBIP enables the Authority to demonstrate that it is meeting its enforcement responsibilities in respect of the Fire Safety Order (FSO). The development of this inspection programme allows us to demonstrate that we are focusing our resources on those premises that represent the greatest risk in the event of fire.

Audits of premises are carried out to:

- Ensure the safety of persons residing there.
- Ensure compliance with the provisions of the Order.
- Assist organisations to comply with their legislative responsibilities.
- Give advice regarding appropriate standards of fire protection and potential sources of information for the Responsible Person.
- Gathering of risk information to ensure that resources can be appropriately allocated and to ensure accurate integrated risk management planning, including the transfer of information to operations.
- Fire protection audits will be completed using the CFOA model; this will ensure a consistency of approach throughout the Service and ensure that decisions made are transparent and auditable.

The intended outcome of an audit is that those who resort to where the Order applies are safe from the risk of fire.

**Operational Risk Visit Strategy**

In order to promote compliance with the Order operational crews will carry out a significant number of visits to commercial premises which will support specialist fire protection personnel; these visits are termed Operational Risk Visits (ORV).

Crews carrying out an ORV will collect both fire protection and operational risk information during every possible visit, this will increase the overall amount of information gathered and provide WYFRS with a greater visible presence within the business community of West Yorkshire.
Operations Support and Fire Protection will develop an annual risk based programme of visits and inspection that will encompass the requirements of risk, compliance and firefighter safety for the programme of ORV’s and identify fire protection inspection activity as per DCLG guidance.

The approach of operational crews carrying out risk visits to premises focuses fully on a risk based methodology and to support business by only visiting them once to collect data. Visits to premises by operational personnel are a combination of safety critical risk information and fire safety brought together into a single Operational Risk Visit (ORV) no matter what the premises use. This is designed to improve crew’s familiarity with higher risk premises and collect accurate risk information which is based on:

- Hazards/ risk to firefighters should the premises be involved in fire
- Hazards/ risks to occupants (relevant persons) in the premises should they be involved in fire
- Building information and control measures unique to the premises (i.e. fire engineered solutions)
- Recognition of the use of the premises and the relative risk it may present should it be involved in fire.
- Adoption of Chief Fire and Rescue Advisors Unit (CFRAU) / DCLG guidance

To ensure the best match of resources against risk it is essential that the premises visited are of a higher risk than the generic, to gain value from the visit programme.
So crews are not disadvantaged and can maintain their skill level a fixed target has been set based on available pumping appliances. The fixed target will be reviewed annually and take in to consideration the number of whole time stations, the number of RDS stations and the number of appliances available during any given year.

The programme of Operational Risk Visits will be determined each year as part of the Risk Based Inspection Programme.

**Petroleum and Explosives Strategy**

The Authority (Licensing Authority) is responsible for enforcing all or some of the provisions of the following legislation, which impose controls on the safe keeping of explosives and petroleum-spirit. In the context of the relevant legislation, the term 'safe' means safe from the risks of fire and explosion.

**Explosives**
- Manufacture and Storage of Explosives Regulations 2005 (MSER)
- Explosives Act 1875

**Fireworks**

**Petrol**
- Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002 (DSEAR)
- The Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road Regulations 1996
- Petroleum Spirit (Plastic Containers) Regulations 1982
- Public Health Act 1961, Section 73
- Petroleum (Liquid Methane) Order 1957
- Petroleum-Spirit (Motor Vehciles etc.) Regulations 1929
- Petroleum (Mixtures) Order 1929
- Petroleum (Consolidation) Act 1928

Implementation of the Petroleum and Explosives Policy fulfils the Authority’s statutory obligation under section 17 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 for the enforcement of the licensing and registration requirements of the Petroleum (Consolidation) Act 1928 (PCA) and the Manufacture and Storage of Explosives Regulations 2005 (MSER).
Under the provisions of the PCA, MSER and the Fireworks Regulations 2004, the Authority has a statutory duty to grant, renew, transfer and vary licenses and registrations.

The Authority adopts all the relevant approved codes of practice and guidance documents for the purposes of ensuring that sites storing explosives or petroleum-spirit are designed, constructed, maintained, operated and decommissioned so as to achieve a recognised standard of safety. Where the design of a site does not fall within the scope of current guidance, a method of third party certification and accreditation will always be sought.

**Licensing Strategy**

The Authority is a “Responsible Authority” as defined within the Licensing Act 2003 (the Act). The responsibility for licensing functions under the Act is the Local Authority (LA). Responsible Authorities must be notified of applications for the grant, variation, or review of a premises license or club premises certificate.

The Fire Engineering, Planning and Licensing Team examine licence applications on behalf of the Authority and the applicant will be advised of their responsibilities under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (the Order). The Order is the primary piece of legislation for achieving satisfactory standards of general fire precautions in licensed premises. Applicants are referred to national guidance on how to comply with the Order. The duty to comply with the Order rests with the Responsible Person and the Authority will not provide detailed advice to individual applicants. It will be exceptional for the officers to make representations at the application stage.

Licensed premises are visited periodically as part of the risk-based inspection programme. The Authority conducts a programme of inspections of high-risk premises whilst licensable activity is taking place (During Performance Inspections). Staff will continue to support Licensing Authorities and/or Safety Advisory Groups in fire safety matters relating to licensed open air events and venues.

The team will work together with the Licensing Authorities to encourage satisfactory standards of fire safety in licensed premises. WYFRS staff are available to sit on Local Authority licensing groups to advise on fire safety matters in licensed premises and to share information in the public interest. This does not preclude the use of enforcement measures by the Authority where it is considered necessary and appropriate.
Consultation Arrangements and Joint Protocols

The prime responsibility for ‘general fire precautions’ in places other than domestic dwellings rests with this Authority. In some cases, other enforcing authorities may have responsibilities for certain fire precautions under more specific legislation. In such cases, we have effective and agreed consultation procedures with those relevant statutory authorities. The agreed consultation procedures are made available on the intranet.

The majority of statutory and non-statutory consultations, with the exception of enforcement work carried out under the Order, is the responsibility of the Fire Engineering, Planning and Licensing Team.

Owing to the overlap of certain responsibilities for fire precautions the Authority will establish and maintain close links with the authorities enforcing the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

There is a statutory duty for the Authority to consult with regards to the application of Building Regulations and structures are established to ensure that this duty is met, although there is no requirement for the Authority to be consulted during the Local Authority planning process. Officers will however, wherever possible, seek to consult on those planning applications which would have a material effect on the level of risk within the county.

Through effective consultation with ‘building control bodies’ the Authority will ensure that buildings are adequately protected from the effects of fire as required by the Building Regulations. In order to facilitate the consultation process the ‘building control body’ will take the co-ordinating role with this Authority and, where appropriate, with other regulatory bodies. Any recommendations and advice given will be channelled through the ‘building control body’ to the applicant. Consultations will comply with the current national ‘Building Regulations and Fire Safety Procedural Guidance’ document.

Once a building is occupied and in use the Authority will take over the co-ordinating role where it has enforcement powers for general fire safety matters under the Order.

The Authority and its Officers actively promote and recommend the installation of sprinkler systems or other Automatic Water Suppression Systems (AWSS) in all premises where their inclusion will support our aim of ‘Making West Yorkshire Safer’. We work to achieve a greater acceptance of the benefits of AWSS at national and local level. To this end protocols have been
developed with Local Education Authorities to install AWSS in new build schools or major refurbishment.

Before serving an enforcement notice under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 which would oblige a person to make an alteration to premises, the Authority will consult fully with other relevant enforcing authorities in accordance with article 30(5) of the Order.

Consultation arrangements and ‘Joint Protocols’ are applied consistently throughout West Yorkshire. National guidance and agreements are adopted where they exist.

The Authority actively supports the principle of Lead Fire Authority Partnership Schemes (LFAPS), Retail and Fire Key Authority Partnership (RAFKAP) and Primary Authority Schemes (PAS) as a means of promoting consistency of enforcement among organisations with multiple premises in different brigade areas.

**Business Support Strategy**

The Authority is ideally placed to make a wide and valuable contribution in support of a safer society and to support businesses to comply with fire safety regulations. It also allows us to better focus and target our resources on areas where the risk from fire is greatest. By supporting businesses within West Yorkshire we are promoting the regeneration of the economy within our local communities.

We will assist businesses by:

- Following the principles of better regulation set out in the Statutory Code of Compliance for Regulators, and the Enforcement Concordat
- Setting out our commitment to priorities and planned interventions
- Operating systems to train, appoint, authorise, monitor, and maintain a competent inspectorate, including operational personnel
- Using interventions, including enforcement action, in accordance with our enforcement policy and within the principles of proportionality, accountability, consistency, transparency and targeting
- Our enforcement action will be achieved through the use of an Enforcement Management Model (EMM). Fundamental to this is the principle that enforcement action should be consistent and proportional to the fire safety risks and the seriousness of the breach
• We will take account of ‘earned recognition’ when planning inspection programmes
• Providing fire safety advice to businesses
• Supporting and recognising Partnerships

A key element of the Business Support Strategy is the West Yorkshire Fire Prevention Panel. WYFRS work within the Panel to protect people’s safety by ensuring that fire risks in a changing environment are properly controlled. This reflects the need to constantly identify and address new challenges to fire safety in the built environment.

Through its membership of the Panel, WYFRS endeavour to develop new ways to establish and maintain an effective fire safety culture in a changing economy, so that all employers take their responsibilities seriously, workforces are fully involved and fire risks are properly managed.

**Operations Liaison Strategy**

It is critical that close links exist between Operations, Fire Protection and Training to facilitate and assure the exchange of knowledge and risk information.

To this end a multi-discipline group called the Fire Safety/Operations Liaison Group has been established to ensure a joint approach is taken in the development of risk control measures and to ensure a two way flow of information between the two departments and where necessary the training department.

The availability of relevant and timely information is recognised as critical to the successful management of all operational incidents attended by any member of the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service.

The Authority is responsible for the health, safety and welfare of its employees. This runs parallel to a responsibility to mitigate the risk from fire (and other emergencies) to the community and to the society that it serves, and the environment within which it operates.

As part of these responsibilities, the Authority has in place appropriate policies and procedures to address the issues concerned in achieving these objectives and, through training and development, to provide appropriate knowledge, skills and understanding to enable its employees to operate safely.
Fire Protection Inspectors provide valuable information for Operations in order to assist them in tactical planning however, it is not necessary to provide Operations with information obtained as a result of every fire safety inspection. In the majority of cases such information is not considered essential, as suitable tactical planning may be achieved via generic assessments. Each station has nominated inspectors to ensure that liaison takes place at a local level and this includes the delivery of training to increase technical knowledge of all parties.

Identifying and managing risk is at the heart of the role and responsibility of our Service, whether this is risk to its employees, the environment in which it operates, or the society that it serves. The gathering, providing, sharing, maintaining and protecting of operational risk information is considered a significant challenge and the commitment and leadership of the strategic managers within WYFRS is essential to the success of any management system.

**Training Strategy**

The Fire Safety Support and Performance Team are responsible for ensuring that training programmes are developed for both Fire Protection and Operational staff, which are delivered in conjunction with the Training department.

A competent workforce sits at the heart of this strategy. When advice is offered it will be targeted and transparent using the national guidance documents as a benchmark in terms of ‘standards’. When dealing with businesses which do not possess the technical expertise to derive a range of acceptable outcomes, which satisfy the standard required, our officers will provide a level of advice that enables the business to understand what is required by the law, but will not extend into the field of ‘consultancy’.

We recognise the importance of training and development towards the success of fire protection work and are committed to continuous professional development providing competence based training at appropriate career and development points. Personnel completing fire protection duties whether they are operational officers or specialist fire protection inspectors will be provided with the correct level of training and development required for the level of work they undertake. They will work to National Occupational Standards and adhere to the policies and procedures laid down by the Fire and Rescue Service.
Performance Monitoring

The Fire Safety Support and Performance Team are responsible for developing the systems that monitor performance in relation to the delivery of fire protection whilst the application of these systems falls to the relevant Assistant Fire Protection Managers for Fire Protection staff or Station Commanders for Operational staff.

Ultimately, the Area Manager Fire Safety is responsible for performance management of Fire Protection to the Director of Service Delivery, Service Delivery Board and Community Safety Committee.

Qualitative and quantitative elements form a critical element of performance management and performance monitoring systems. Whilst both of these elements have well developed systems to support them, they are regularly reviewed in order to strive towards continuous improvement.

Fire Protection

Through the implementation of robust performance monitoring and management procedures we ensure that we continuously improve the service we provide to the communities of West Yorkshire and develop the skills and abilities of our staff in the performance of their roles.

This enables Fire Protection to:

- Effectively manage the department, its services and people.
- Measure, monitor and evaluate performance.
- Continuously improve the service we provide.

Irrespective of the role which an inspector fulfils, procedures are in place to ensure that we achieve and maintain a service to the community that is professional, fair and consistent, and takes into account the principles of the compliance code, enforcement activity will be subjected to regular scrutiny via the implementation of our performance monitoring process. This is a continuous programme and covers:

- Enforcement Inspectors
- Planning/Engineering Inspectors
- Licensing Inspectors
- Petroleum and Explosives Inspectors
Station Personnel

Procedures are in place to ensure that ORV’s are checked by the Station Commander (SC). Additionally any referrals that are sent through to Fire Protection for further action will be subject to additional scrutiny and feedback will be provided from the inspector dealing to the referring crew.

Station Commanders are supported by both Fire Safety Support and Performance Team and the Operational Risk Management Team in the monitoring of performance by Operational staff.

Fire Protection Information Strategy

The overall Information Strategy for Fire Protection is to ensure that wherever possible modern developments are used to enhance rather than restrict the delivery of service, with that in mind the goal is to minimise the level of administrative burden that is associated with the delivery of Fire Protection.

The shape and size of the Service is ever changing but the need to provide high levels of service to our community will remain and be set against a backdrop of reduced budgets. With these new challenges will come new opportunities; using ICT to enable the Service to achieve efficiencies, providing the infrastructure to support and keep pace with citizens’ changing needs and expectations.

ICT is no longer just a support service; it has become a critical service. If it is unavailable, the organisation cannot operate. It has the ability to transform the way services are organised and delivered. It has a fundamental role to play in improving efficiency, reducing cost across the organisation and underpinning the organisational change programme.

We will continue the process of standardisation and simplification based on the premise of a common infrastructure designed to enable local delivery suited to local needs.

We place a strong emphasis on providing choice in the way people access services. This ensures maximum choice to respond to individuals’ circumstances and preferences, and the provision of quick and effective responses.

Our programme of embracing modern working practices, rationalising office accommodation, eliminating unnecessary bureaucracy and administration, and supporting community based service delivery drives efficiencies.
Investing in our people is a high priority. We continue to improve the ICT skills of our workforce, equipping them with the skills they need to enhance their community.

We continually review the replacement and upgrading of ICT hardware and systems to ensure that our workforce has the right solutions for their work.

Information security is a critical focal point within the strategy given the increase in the amount of malware and the diverse ways that information can be shared. We place great emphasis on protecting our systems against threats and continue to invest in training and education for our users, to raise awareness of security risks and to promote good data security practice.

**Fire Investigation Strategy**

The Authority will adopt procedures for conducting the investigation of fires in line with Fire and Rescue Circular 1/2006. Guidance is available for all those officers undertaking such activities. The Regional Fire Investigation Policy (Yorkshire and Humberside) model framework provides the underpinning structure to enable fire and rescue authorities within the region to work together to enhance fire, explosion and arson investigations.

The Service Delivery Directorate will coordinate the activities of fire investigation officers in West Yorkshire.

All personnel likely to investigate fires have received relevant training in line with National Occupational Standards and are authorised in writing as required by the Fire and Rescue Service Act. An appropriate number of officers have received additional training to enable them to undertake more complex investigations.

Arrangements are in place to call upon the police, forensic or other fire investigation expertise where a need is identified.

Arrangements exist to pass appropriate information gathered during the course of fire investigations to other departments of the Authority. Such information is used to identify trends and issues to assist in the targeting of campaigns that seek to reduce the number of fires and their associated risks of death and injury.
PREVENTION STRATEGY

Introduction

The Prevention Strategy is completely aligned to the delivery of Integrated Risk Management Plans (IRMP) and Service Delivery Framework as outlined in the Community Risk Management Strategy. Annual targets for risk reduction outcomes are based on the risk reduction aims within the IRMP. They are set by Service Delivery Board and using these targets, local plans for each district are developed. Within each district, priority areas are identified, and detailed plans prepared for reducing specific risks within community. Within the Community Risk Management Strategy the Prevention of fires and other emergencies from occurring is viewed as the first step of the Service Delivery hierarchy. This may be achieved, for example by effective education through a variety of delivery methods, both in the home, at various events and venues and many other fire prevention activities.

In the event of a fire occurring, prevention activity is there to ensure that people are protected in properties by undertaking home fire safety checks and the fitting of smoke alarms, and so people can either remain safe within the property until rescued or can escape through development of escape plans.

The active involvement of all key functions within the Service Delivery Directorate enables interdepartmental working to flourish and the use of a wide range of staff and partners lies at the core of the delivery of the Authority’s Prevention Strategy. This is evident in the joint working undertaken to produce targeted, risk based District Risk Reduction Plans. The District Commander (DC) and District Prevention Manager (DPM) manage the implementation of the district plan and uses a range of information to manage and monitor risk locally. The DPM has a key role in implementing locally the service wide policies and strategies developed within the Prevention Team. The Fire Prevention Team develops individual action plans for each District to outline and monitor progress on areas of support provided to ensure the delivery of the IRMP priorities of the District Risk Reduction Plans.

The Authority’s Prevention Strategy is predicated on operational crews delivering prevention activities supported by the Fire Prevention Team who are able to deal with individuals or communities at a higher level of vulnerability. The Fire Prevention Team is also responsible for ensuring the continued training of WYFRS personnel in prevention activities, as well as the development of policies and procedures, and providing the strategic direction of the function as a whole.
The following elements will form the Fire Prevention Strategy:

- HFSC
- Partnerships
  - Formal Partnerships
  - Friendship Schemes
- Arson Reduction
- Post Incident Intervention
- Children and Young People
- Vulnerable Adults
- Road Safety
- Training
- Communications
- Performance Monitoring
- Fire Prevention Information

**Structure**

The Fire Prevention Team is led by the Fire Prevention Manager and is separated into two distinct functions as detailed in the organisational chart below:

These teams provide the vital support for the district structures. Within each District the District Commander is responsible for the delivery against outcome targets and is supported by a District Prevention Manager and District Prevention Assistants.
Home Fire Safety Check Strategy

Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSC) form the very backbone of the Prevention Strategy as they provide the community with very focused education regarding preventing fires in the home and what to do in the event of fire, furthermore a significant part of the check is ensuring that people have fitted and working smoke detection in their properties. Without doubt the increased ownership of smoke detectors has led to massive increases in terms of public safety as fires are detected earlier and can be dealt with quickly or they give occupants sufficient warning to make good their escape from any developed fire. Since 1996 West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service (WYFRS) has undertaken an intensive programme of HFSCs aimed primarily at reducing the impact of domestic dwelling fires in terms of injury, death and damage to property and increasing smoke detector ownership. In 2004 the plan introduced was to carry out a HFSC in 450000 homes across West Yorkshire. The objective was to complete this by April 2013, but was so successful that it was achieved by April 2012. This means that WYFRS have provided safety advice in over half the homes in the county.

Despite the overwhelming successes in reductions in house fires and associated injuries and deaths as a result of this strategy, it is clear from the WYFRS research, that there is more to do in terms of targeting those at most risk. Those properties that continue to be targets include those at the higher end of risk. This has led to the development and introduction of a points-based strategy that targets these higher levels of risk.

The points-based strategy identifies different ways of highlighting those in greater need of our service and reduce risk amongst West Yorkshire’s most vulnerable households. The strategy adopts a targeted approach based upon individual and geographical risk. Through the allocation of points, there is an incentive for personnel carrying out prevention activities to identify those most at risk and reduce this risk to the maximum extent within those households. This is carried out in a planned and targeted way within areas of greater geographical, incident related and lifestyle factor risk. This strategy ensures that resources are maximised and reduces risk to the same degree as the previous volume based strategy.

Research has demonstrated that three factors influence the level of risk and associated risk reduction and subsequently, the points awarded for a particular HFSC within the strategy are based on a combination of:

- Likelihood – The probability of having a fire.
- Severity – The risk factors of the individual based on lifestyle.
- Outcome – The interventions put in place to reduce the risk.
The three elements of the points-based strategy are added together to provide an overall points total for each completed HFSC.

Whilst the system appears to be complex, in nature it is actually very simple and is built upon three basic concepts:

- Carrying out HFSC in areas of highest risk or with vulnerable individuals will attract the highest number of points
- Accurate recording of risk and activity is important to truly reflect the difference that our activities are making to the Community.
- Working with partner and volunteer agencies will support the achievement of our objectives in relation to HFSC.

The Performance Management System is used for the monitoring of activity and of success. It records all activity within an area, whoever that activity is carried out by, be it, Operational staff, Prevention personnel or partner agencies. This ensures that effective performance is taking place.

Targets are based upon the resources available and the level of risk in a specific area. These are calculated using each year’s HFSC activity to predict the expected number of points which will be achieved. This points total is then divided proportionally by risk amongst the Districts.

District numerical targets as such are not set; however, guidance is provided to assist with achieving the number of points required. It is anticipated that a minimum of 42000 HFSC will be carried out in any given year.

Where IRMP changes to response provision are made, Prevention Team resources will be used to a greater extent. It is important to recognise that whilst the number is lower than previous targets the level of vulnerability where they are carried out is expected to be greater.

HFSC activity will be closely monitored through PMVs and the District Prevention Managers Quality Sampling Audits.

Due to the period since the commencement of HFSC’s, several batteries in the ten-year smoke detectors that were fitted early in the campaign are now becoming worn out. This has led to a risk assessed process of revisit or providing additional literature to the occupier where required, as an alternative, rather than a simple replacement of the detector. This principle will be
extended to new referrals in the future, where the level of risk in the property is already minimal and resources would be better used elsewhere.

**Partnership Strategy**

The Authority’s Service Plan provides details of what WYFRS intend to do over the forthcoming years to meet the challenging needs and risks within our communities. Achievement of this plan will be through risk based planning and ensuring prevention strategies are effective and delivered to the right areas. It is essential for us to work with a wide range of external agencies and organisations to be able to effectively identify and locate those who are vulnerable to fire and deliver against these priorities.

The Partnership Strategy supports the overall Prevention and HFSC Strategy and adopts a target based approach, focusing on individual and geographical risk, identification of those most at risk with the view of generating referrals and reducing risk to the maximum extent within those households.

The Partnership Strategy supports the Service Plan in areas where there is planned change in service delivery, for example a change in response provision or station move through the IRMP.

Essentially partnerships do one of two things; they either provide referrals in relation to high risk individuals (referral partnerships), or they actually deliver activities on behalf of WYFRS, such as HFSC carried out by voluntary agencies (delivery partnerships).

Due to the nature of partners and their relative governance structures, it has been necessary to adopt two styles of partnership:

- Formal partnerships
- Friendship schemes

**Formal Partnerships**

Formal partnerships tend to be instituted with larger more established agencies or organisations, such as Local Authorities, Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships and large volunteer organisations. It should be noted that the Fire Authority is a statutory member of local Crime and Disorder Partnerships (which are known in each District by a range of names).
One theme of the partnership strategy is to focus on vulnerable individuals and generate quality targeted referrals, supporting the points based strategy in identification of those in greater need of our service and reducing risk amongst West Yorkshire’s most vulnerable households. This enables the Fire Prevention Team to deliver enhanced HFSCs for these identified vulnerable individuals; provide appropriate and tailored education, advice and interventions.

The Fire Prevention Team support Districts in the development of joint ways of working with agencies to reduce the impact on resources within the service, and therefore continue to provide the service externally to communities.

Volunteer partnerships provide WYFRS with the opportunity to work in areas classed as low risk through the IRMP and still provide quality fire safety education to households in these communities. Volunteers are trained by Prevention trainers to be able to fully carry out a HFSC on behalf of WYFRS.

Targeting partnership activity appropriately is key to ensuring WYFRS continue to deliver an effective and efficient service. WYFRS efforts are targeted at those individuals or groups that are deemed high risk, or in areas identified to be at greater risk and this philosophy is an equally important aspect of partnership working.

Fire Prevention provides support to District and local priorities by developing or supporting the development of specific partnerships; providing specialist skills, knowledge and experience or developing resource or educational packages required for targeting individuals or groups. These groups include:

- older people
- younger people
- people with mobility issues
- people with mental health issues
- drug or alcohol users
- people living alone

The Partnership Board provides an arena to discuss and share ideas and the different challenges being experienced within each district, in addition to ensuring performance of partnerships is managed and they continue to focus on targeting vulnerable individuals and achieving HFSC Strategy and Service Plan objectives.

In order to support the principles of partnership working, the following methodology is applied:
1. **Plan** a way forward
   a. Identify what you want to achieve, with a shared understanding of why and agreement over the issues to be addressed
   b. Decide on the most appropriate spatial level and what will work in different circumstances and areas
   c. Decide on who should contribute (including possibly the public)
   d. Develop a plan

2. **Get on and Do it**

3. **Review**, perhaps with an overall light touch monitoring of the various programmes

4. **Revise** objectives or methods accordingly, sharing what works within agencies, across the partnership and more widely

5. **Giving an account** of the achievements and outcomes to stakeholders, including the public

Partnerships must be able to evidence how they are contributing towards the achievement of the Service Plan, HFSC Strategy and District Risk Reduction Plans. It is therefore important to ensure all partnership activity is recorded. Partner organisations may also need to evidence how, by working in partnership, it is helping their organisation or agency to achieve their own performance targets and measures which they have in place.

The Prevention database enables feedback of all referrals made to WYFRS by the referring organisation, as well as, any interventions that are subsequently carried out.

A critical element of any formal partnership is the ability to leave the partnership if it is no longer providing the required outcomes, hence at development stage, an exit strategy will always be considered.

Formal partnerships are maintained on the Partnership Register, which is regularly updated and are overseen by the Policy, Partnership and Volunteering Supervisor. The review of partnerships is monitored through the Partnership Board and reported to Service Delivery Board.

**Friendship Schemes**

The Friendship Scheme is a way to identify and target vulnerable members within our communities through a different informal partnership method. Friends can include local community groups, befriending schemes, local newsagent, corner shop or even the local off-licence and can be used as a method of identification of vulnerable individuals or households in areas classed as lower risk through IRMP. The likelihood is these groups have dealings with
individuals who may be at increased risk of fire and can make referrals to WYFRS to reduce the potential risk of fire.

Rather than signing up as a formal partnership, the ‘Friends’ are given a friendship pack, which includes an informal signed agreement, guidance on what constituted an individual at greater risk of fire, and information on how to make a referral to WYFRS.

The advantages to signing up Friends of the Fire Service include;

- Access to individuals who may otherwise not be identified or refer themselves
- Access to High Risk cases that may have not been recognised otherwise
- Lowers the risk of fire within areas covered by Friendships
- Educates people of the risk of fire and how to keep safe
- Builds up a good relationship between stations and local community groups
- Builds up a level of trust with local communities
- Enables community groups access to services they may not have known was available
- Promotes the work of the Fire Service within the community

Whilst a relatively new phenomena, Friendship schemes are developing and demonstrating good return on investment.

**Arson Reduction Strategy**

Deliberate fires constitute the largest single cause of major fires in the United Kingdom. WYFRS statistics show that deliberate fires accounted for 73% of all fires attended by WYFRS over the 3 years from 2009/10 to 2011/12.

Deliberate fires impact directly on the residents and business owners whose properties are damaged or destroyed. Arson also indirectly affects communities by adversely impacting on the reputation and image of the area. Negative perceptions of an area gained by the constant visible aftermath of deliberate fires presents a barrier to inward investment, impacting on regeneration, businesses and housing stock.

WYFRS works with partners to reduce the incidence of deliberate fires by increasing awareness about consequences of criminal damage, malicious and hoax calls, arson and car crime. The aim is to reduce the potential of individuals becoming or remaining involved in such activities.

Arson reduction work within West Yorkshire is delivered in a number of ways depending on the precise issues of an individual case or in response to an increasing trend in particular locations. Specific issues are dealt with through the use of a range of interventions, which include:
- Removal of Fly-tipping
- Days of Action
- Arson Threat Referrals / Target Hardening
- Securing Empty Properties

**Removal of Fly-tipping**

Fly-tipping ranges from small amounts of household rubbish in gardens to large quantities of commercial waste including tyres being dumped illegally. WYFRS has links with Environmental Action Teams, Local Authority cleansing departments and housing estate caretakers to ensure a fast removal of the waste. In areas where fly-tipping is a recurring problem, covert cameras have been installed in order to obtain prosecutions.

Fly Tipping will be dealt with at a local level and operational crews, Fire Prevention Assistants and Advisors will be vigilant during their community work utilising the links with external partners to ensure areas of concern are reported and action taken.

**Days of Action**

Multi agency “Days of Action” have been well established in each of the five West Yorkshire local authorities. These operations have brought together the Fire and Rescue Service, Police, Housing, Community Safety, Anti- social Behaviour Units, Education Welfare, Environmental Enforcement and Streetscene Services. The objectives of these operations are to:

- Tackle priority crimes in the designated area.
- Reduce incidents of anti- social behaviour.
- Provide re-assurance to residents that their problems are recognised and being addressed.
- Address underlying environmental issues.

WYFRS play an important role in these operations; this may include carrying out pre-operation educational talks within schools located in the target area or addressing local issues relating to deliberate fires. Local fire stations and Prevention Team also provide support in the form of Home Fire Safety Checks and leafleting. Days of Action continue to deliver immediate and short term results but may also provide longer term results which coincide with WYFRS priorities.
**Arson Threat Referrals and Target Hardening**

In a number of instances where a credible threat or significant risk of arson exist WYFRS have adopted a strategy of “target hardening” aimed at reducing that threat.

For domestic properties, where a credible threat of arson exists, referrals are accepted from West Yorkshire Police when approved by a Police Inspector and are submitted via a web referral. Should this warrant any target hardening intervention, a referral will then be submitted by the investigating police officer. WYFRS assist the police through this policy by providing an enhanced HFSC, giving tailored fire safety and arson reduction advice as well as installing specific protection measures.

For commercial or public buildings, Fire Protection Inspectors will consider areas of vulnerability of the particular premises and will provide advice to mitigate the threat as far as is possible.

**Securing Empty Properties**

Empty properties quickly become a target for anti-social behaviour and often attract those engaged in drug taking and fire setting behaviour. Homeless people may also take up residence and be involved in unsafe heating and cooking practises. These insecure properties are often in a state of poor repair and present many operational fire fighting problems, including missing floorboards and deliberately set traps. It is essential that when any property, both residential and commercial, becomes unoccupied, that it is effectively secured as soon as possible.

Good links have been established with Environment Action Teams in order to identify property owners. Where owners cannot be identified or they are not co-operative, then properties can be secured by the Environmental Action Teams and recharged against the owner or the property. This intervention if taken early can prevent a property becoming a nuisance to the Fire Service and a danger to the public. However it may be the case that priority should be given to those properties presenting the highest risk or creating recurring issues and mounting costs to the Fire and Rescue Service.

Empty properties will be dealt with at a local level and operational crews, Fire Prevention Assistants and Advisors will be vigilant during their community work utilising the links with external partners to ensure properties of concern are reported and action taken.
Post Incident Strategy

Following a fire in a residential area, an after-incident response or “Hot Strike” is undertaken within the local area in the hours and days immediately following the incident and may involve resources from the Fire Prevention Team to assist operational crews in covering a larger area. This involves talking to residents, leafleting, carrying Home Fire Safety Checks and giving arson reduction and fire safety advice to households. The purpose of Hot Strike is to ensure that the impact the incident has had locally can be utilised to heighten the awareness of the danger of fire. This means targeting people who may not have been involved in the original fire, but who may have witnessed it or become aware of an incident in their local community.

Following a fire-related death, serious injury or serious near miss, a Serious Incident Review Panel (SIR) is in place to review and learn any lessons from the incident, and gives an opportunity for wider learning from accidental dwelling fires. Immediately following an incident, an interim meeting is convened to gather all immediate findings relating to the incident, to agree an action plan for managing the immediate impact and to ensure lessons learned are captured. The process assists in delivering the risk reduction priorities of the Service Plan and District and Local Area Risk Reduction Plans. The SIR Panel then meets on a quarterly basis to consider the outcomes of all interim meetings in the previous quarter and to ensure that best practice is disseminated and lessons learned.

Children and Young People’s Strategy

Engagement with children and young people is a vital part of the Prevention Strategy. The strategy aims to deliver an approach to children and young people through two strands. Firstly, general education to children and young people to keep them safe from fire and fire related accidents; and secondly, programmes and interventions which deliver effective reduction of anti-social fire crime behaviour (including attacks on firefighters) and engage with children and young people who are on the cusp of offending or have already offended.

The Youth Training Team are responsible for leading and advising on activities involving children and young people. This work is both re-active and proactive encompassing preventative education for young people at risk of falling into anti-social or criminal behaviour referred by other agencies and intensive programmes for young people already in the criminal justice system.
Work with Children and Young People within West Yorkshire is delivered in a number of ways depending on the specifics of an individual case or in response to an increasing trend in incidents in a geographical location and may include adopting a tailor made approach to a specific need. Interventions are deployed in a broadly hierarchical way dependent the level of the issue in a locality or with an individual and include:

- School Talks
- Child Fire Awareness Programme
- Young Firefighters Scheme
- Engagement with Young Offenders

**School Talks**

Year 5 talks are provided to schools across West Yorkshire by operational personnel and cover both fire and road safety messages to encourage safe behaviours. These talks are provided to all Year 5 pupils each year and are supported by a wide range of educational resources. In order to ensure the greatest benefit, school talks are also used to help educate young people about the risks of fire during specific periods, for example bonfire and firework safety messages delivered prior to the bonfire period.

Arson specific school talks are targeted to areas experiencing a high number of deliberate fires. These are especially appropriate where local intelligence points to the involvement of children and young people.

**Child Fire Awareness Programme**

This programme aims to address fire setting behaviour by children and young people. It offers one to one education with young people by trained Fire and Rescue staff, usually within their own home and in the presence of a parent or guardian. Referrals to the Fire and Rescue Service are usually from the parents or guardians of the child, although this is often prompted by schools or other professionals working in the community. This work is coordinated by the Youth Training Team and delivered by trained staff across the Prevention Team.

**Young Firefighters' Scheme**

The Young Firefighters' Scheme is the primary method used by WYFRS for medium term engagement with young people. The content of the course includes practical lessons in the use
of a variety of operational equipment, community safety, the function and structure of the Fire and Rescue Service and other general life and employability skills.

Successful completion of the two-year course results in students achieving a BTEC (Business and Technology Education Council) Level Two Qualification in the Fire and Rescue Service in the Community. This has gained approval from the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (OFQUAL) and is included on “the register of regulated qualifications” for both pre- and post-16 year olds.

The target audience for the full BTEC is young people attending formal education who are between 14 and 16, who have been identified as being able to benefit from a practical element to their learning that takes place outside the traditional school environment.

A strategic review of the Young Firefighters’ Scheme has been carried out and based existing provision and anticipated future need, the following locations are listed for YFF activities. Where new fire stations are built as a result of IRMP interventions to replace any of the stations listed, Young Firefighters’ facilities will be incorporated into these locations.

Wakefield District
- Castleford, (relocated to Normanton during the refurbishment)
- Wakefield
- Ossett

Bradford District
- Fairweather Green
- Keighley

Kirklees District
- Dewsbury
- Huddersfield

Leeds District
- Gipton
- Stanningley

Calderdale District
- Halifax.

In addition to the full 2 year course a number of short courses are also in operation to meet the diverse needs of the agencies and young people WYFRS engage with. All courses are externally funded by the participating schools and agencies.
**Engagement with Young Offenders**

The Youth Training Team also work with targeted young people who benefit from a range of schemes and work with the Youth Offending and Probation Services to educate and rehabilitate those individuals convicted of arson or vehicle related crime. The overall objective of this work is the stabilisation and rehabilitating of offenders both in the community and prior to release, thereby reducing risk in the area and helping to integrate offenders back into the community.

**Vulnerable Adults’ Strategy**

The philosophy throughout the Prevention Strategy is that resources will be committed to those areas or individuals who are at the greatest level of risk. A significant amount of research has been carried out both locally and nationally to identify those groups at greatest risk and the methods. This subsequently leads to a wide range of interventions that can be applied in order to reduce the level of risk to an individual.

The individuals with the following characteristics or behaviours may be considered to be at heightened risk from fire:

- People who have poor mobility
- People who undertake unsafe smoking practices
- People who have mental health issues
- People who undertake unsafe cooking practices
- People who have an alcohol or drug dependency
- People who have specific housekeeping issues
- People who are living alone
- People who have medical oxygen systems in their homes
- People with visual or aural impairment
- People for whom English is not their first language

WYFRS has available a wide range of interventions which assist with improving the safety of vulnerable adults, these include specific “deaf alarms”, fire resistant bedding and portable sprinkler systems, however, in many instances the preferred risk reduction measures involve working with partners and developing plans that will assist in supporting the individual or in changing their behaviours.
A significant part of the Vulnerable Adults Strategy which also links to children and young people is the Safeguarding policy and its associated procedures. WYFRS actively promotes its commitment to preventing abuse and safeguarding children and vulnerable adults by reporting concerns of abuse and being proactive in its work with other agencies to stop abuse occurring.

WYFRS personnel are often in a position to identify at risk vulnerable children and adults and can ensure concerns of abuse or neglect arising in the course of their duties are reported appropriately.

The designated persons in WYFRS for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults are the relevant District Prevention Manager or First Call Area Manager. The Fire Prevention Team provide support and guidance on the implementation of this procedure and the process for feeding data into the Partnership Board and Service Delivery Board.

**Road Safety Strategy**

No single agency can be solely responsible for reducing the number of Road Traffic Collisions (RTC) or their impact and so, the Road Safety Strategy focuses on working with partners to reduce the number of incidents. West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service are represented on the West Yorkshire Safer Roads strategy and delivery groups playing a vital role and sharing intelligence, developing resources and promoting road safety education. This is supported by district Prevention teams being represented at local sub groups. This means that positive working relationships have been developed with each local district authority and road safety professionals including West Yorkshire Police, Yorkshire Ambulance Service and the Local Authorities.

RTCs do not affect all groups to the same level and certain demographic groups are affected more than other groups. RTCs are the highest cause of death amongst the 15-24 age group and drivers under the age of 25 are seven times more likely to be involved in an accident, especially during their first two years of driving. For this reason this group provides a very specific focus for Road Traffic Collision reduction activity.

In developing this strategy WYFRS has considered and supports the Key Themes of the Government’s “Strategic Framework for Road Safety”.

The response to RTC reduction is very clearly one that involves a wide range of approaches in terms of Prevention, Protection and Intervention activities:
Prevention
- Education focusing particularly on young drivers and their passengers
- Specific input as part of youth engagement programmes
- Use of specific media messages

Protection
- Lobbying for improved vehicle safety design
- Assist, identify and improve high risk locations on roads
- Development of specific tactical plans for specific changes to road network (eg managed motorways)

Intervention
- Improved extrication techniques
- Improved extrication equipment
- Improved working with police and ambulance
- Improved data collection and information sharing
- Scene preservation
- Training

Liaison is vital between partners to collaborate and develop appropriate initiatives in education, engineering and enforcement. The objective is to achieve a reduction in road related death and injury across West Yorkshire.

WYFRS will continue to work with partners to maximise the publicity and awareness of road safety issues to all members of our communities and targeted community groups.

Training Strategy

The Fire Prevention Training Team are responsible for ensuring that training programmes are developed for both fire prevention and operational staff, which are delivered in conjunction with the Training department.

A competent workforce sits at the heart of this strategy. WYFRS recognise the importance of training and development towards the success of fire prevention work and are committed to
continuous professional development providing competence based training at appropriate career and development points. Personnel completing fire prevention duties whether they are operational officers or specialist fire prevention staff will be provided with the correct level of training and development required for the level of work they undertake. They will work to professional standards and adhere to the policies and procedures laid down by the Fire and Rescue Service.

**Communications Strategy**

In terms of communications, WYFRS will be required to engage with a wide range of stakeholders. The Fire Prevention Team, District staff and Corporate Communications will work together to ensure that engagement is optimised.

There will be, primarily, two types of communication:

- Those communications that are proactive in nature, planned and focused around a particular campaign or known coming event, such as any of the Fire Kills campaigns, Christmas or Bonfire campaigns.

- Those communications that are reactive in nature, which generally relate to an incident and may give rise to the opportunity to deliver a specific message.

In the development of communication messages consideration should be given as to the stakeholders who are being targeted by the message.

**Performance Monitoring**

Performance monitoring for the departmental objectives and the management of personnel will continue to operate within the Performance Management Framework and will utilise the Performance Management System. The Management will use the following management tools to report on departmental performance:

- The Prevention Database
- PMS (Performance Management System)
- SAP
- Quality Sampling
Ultimately, the Area Manager Fire Safety is responsible for performance management of Fire Prevention to the Director of Service Delivery, Service Delivery and Community Safety Committee.

To achieve consistently high standards of data quality in our performance information a comprehensive management and accountability framework is required. To support this, it is critical that the following are in place:

- Staff knowledge of data to be provided
- The procedures in place for data recording and reporting
- The responsibilities of staff to achieve the data quality standards
- The systems and processes in place to ensure data quality
- The arrangements and controls in place for monitoring and review of data
- The guidelines for presenting information to a variety of audiences

Data quality is the responsibility of every member of staff entering, extracting or analysing data from any of the Authority’s information systems. Every relevant person should therefore be aware of his or her responsibilities with regard to data quality.

As part of the Performance Management framework, quality sampling will be undertaken by the Prevention Department to ensure a standard and consistent approach is being maintained. The Quality Sampling of operational personnel will be the responsibility of District Prevention Managers (DPM). The Quality Sampling of Prevention personnel will be overseen by the Fire Prevention Team Officer (FPTO). Both DPM’s and the FPTO will feedback to the Partnership, Policy and Volunteering Officer (PPVO) who will ensure that appropriate action is taken.

External agencies perform HFSC on behalf of WYFRS. In these circumstances, quality sampling will be carried out at the discretion of the District Prevention Manager and PPVO. Any issues arising as a result of the quality sampling will be referred to the relevant agency and further training may be offered as part of the partnership agreement.

**Fire Prevention Information Strategy**

The overall Information Strategy for Fire Prevention is to ensure that wherever possible modern developments are used to enhance rather than restrict the delivery of service, with that in mind the goal is to minimise the level of administrative burden that is associated with the delivery of Fire Prevention.
The shape and size of the Service is ever changing but the need to provide high levels of service to our community and our partners will remain and be set against a backdrop of reduced budgets. With these new challenges will come new opportunities; using ICT to enable the Service to achieve efficiencies, providing the infrastructure to support and keep pace with citizens’ changing needs and expectations.

WYFRS will continue the process of standardisation and simplification based on the premise of a common infrastructure designed to enable local delivery suited to local needs.

We place a strong emphasis on providing choice in the way people access services. This ensures maximum choice to respond to individuals’ circumstances and preferences, and the provision of quick and effective responses.

Wherever possible we will support the use of web-based interactions with partners in order to simplify processes.

Our programme of embracing modern working practices, rationalising office accommodation, eliminating unnecessary bureaucracy and administration, and supporting community based service delivery drives efficiencies.

Investing in our people is a high priority. We continue to improve the ICT skills of our workforce, equipping them with the skills they need to enhance their community.

We continually review the replacement and upgrading of ICT hardware and systems to ensure that our workforce has the right solutions for their work.