

## SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

## CABINET



**DATE:** 28 JANUARY 2025

**REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER:** KEVIN DEANUS, CABINET MEMBER FOR FIRE AND RESCUE AND RESILIENCE

**LEAD OFFICER:** DAN QUIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR COMMUNITY PROTECTION & EMERGENCIES (CHIEF FIRE OFFICER)

**SUBJECT:** COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN (CRMP) 2025-2030

**ORGANISATION STRATEGY PRIORITY AREA:** SURREY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE (SFRS)

<b>Purpose of the Report:</b>
-------------------------------

This report is being delivered following extensive and robust staff and public engagement and consultation on the next strategic plan for SFRS as attached in (**annex 1**). This plan, known as the CRMP, will replace the current strategic plan known as the Making Surrey Safer Plan (MSSP) (2020-2024) (**background paper A**). The MSSP expired at the end of 2024, therefore we must have a CRMP agreed and in place for 2025 onwards.

All Fire and Rescue Authorities are required (under the Fire and Rescue National Framework 2018) to produce a CRMP of a minimum three-year duration. This should clearly identify the existing, new and emerging risks as well as outlining how the fire and rescue service will mitigate these risks and respond to fires and other emergencies. It should be produced in consultation with the public, staff, local partners and Trade Union/representative bodies and must reflect current risk information known to the service.

For an understanding of risk, the service uses the Community Risk Profile (CRP) (**annex 2**), which outlines the known and emerging risks for SFRS. SFRS also asked residents and staff in their Community Survey about their perception of local risk and their views of SFRS.

The aim behind the CRMP is to develop a holistic approach to managing risk across Surrey, understanding our communities and being able to influence behaviour to reduce risk through prevention and protection activities, whilst still ensuring the service continues to respond to emergencies.

As stated, this plan was consulted on with both the public and staff from 6 May to 6 September 2024, with a pause in the public consultation for the pre-election period from 27 May to 4 July 2024. The feedback gained during the consultation has shown

that there is a majority positive 'approval rating' for the six proposals requiring an agreement/disagreement level, ranging between 62% to 76%. The analysis report (**annex 3**) was created by Surrey County Council's (SCC) Research Intelligence Unit (RIU) following the consultation period.

Some key themes included:

- Emphasis on data-driven decisions: This is already supported by SFRS's annual review of the risk assessment of Surrey – the Community Risk Profile.
- Suggestions of cost cutting measures: This CRMP is based on risk and not predicated on any cost savings. In the last three financial years, SFRS's budget has increased by £8.7m.
- Focus on Banstead Fire Station and Camberley Fire Station proposals: regardless of any review or changes, SFRS's ten-minute Surrey-wide response target to critical incidents and our fire engine availability target (of 16 fire engines in the night and 20 in the day) remain unchanged.
- Misunderstanding around how SFRS operates: providing a service-wide response - balancing resources across the county to ensure we can attend all emergencies. Moving resources around to meet the risk at any given time. This approach ensures that all emergencies receive an appropriate response to incidents, based on risk, regardless of their location within the county. This is the way the service has operated for many years now and there is no change to that within this plan.

#### **Recommendations:**

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Approves the CRMP for 2025-2030, ensuring that SFRS can begin implementing the service-wide strategy from April 2025 in a staged approach.

#### **Reason for Recommendations:**

- SFRS has consulted both its staff and the public on the seven CRMP proposals, details of which were shared with them via a thorough communications and engagement campaign.
- The plans set out how the service will prevent, protect and respond to emergencies during 2025-2030, aligning resources to the right locations, ensuring vital equipment is appropriate and effective, and supporting the wider health and wellbeing agenda.
- The feedback gained during this consultation has shown that there is a majority positive 'approval rating' for the six proposals requiring an agreement/disagreement level, ranging between 62% to 76%. The analysis report (**annex 3**) was created by Surrey County Council's (SCC) Research Intelligence Unit (RIU) following the consultation period.
- An audit of SFRS's CRP (**annex 2**) has been conducted by Nottingham Trent University (NTU) to ensure accuracy and robustness. NTU are leaders in public research who led on the National Fire Chiefs Council's (NFCC) National Risk Methodologies, reviewed the data and evidence used to

develop the CRMP's strategic aims and proposals. They confirmed that "...Surrey FRS has undertaken a robust process to develop the CRMP for Surrey".

## **Executive Summary:**

### **CRMP 2025-2030 proposals:**

1. The proposals address the findings in the CRP 2024 (**annex 2**) as well as the response from communities, stakeholders and staff following the Community Survey and a series of engagement and focus groups completed as part of the CRMP planning process. The CRMP will focus on three pillars of activity from which there will be seven overall proposals for change along with a series of commitments across all of the main areas of the service.
2. The three overarching pillars and subsequent proposals are:

### **Balance our prevention, protection, and response resources to ensure that Surrey is a safe place to live, work and do business.**

#### **Proposal 1.1: Relocate the current Banstead fire engine and crew to Godstone Fire Station in 2026, following an updated and extensive review of any options within the Whyteleafe area.**

3. Relocating Banstead Fire Station is required due to the lease on the site ending in 2026 (during the consultation it was confirmed by Surrey Police that the lease duration could be extended by a further year, from 2025), and no appropriate alternative location had been found by SCC's Land and Property Team. The current Banstead site is also not fit for purpose, in that crews cannot train there, which results in them needing to visit other fire stations regularly to do so. There are also issues surrounding contaminants management and ensuring that the building has facilities of a modern workplace.
4. Whilst reviewing options for this change, it was noted that the most appropriate location for Banstead Fire Station would be the Whyteleafe area to manage risk. However, as previously mentioned, a review of options in this area found that no appropriate location is available. Therefore, the most appropriate deliverable option is to relocate the crew and fire engine to Godstone Fire Station, which gives a good balance of cover across Surrey.
5. This will see an overall reduction in the number of fire stations in Surrey (from 25 to 24). However, this will not see a decrease in fire engines, as the crew and fire engine will be relocated to Godstone Fire Station.
6. As a result of the consultation and a desire to ensure all potential sites could be considered, a one-year extension to the Banstead Fire Station lease, to 2026, has been agreed with the owners of the site to allow for an updated and extensive review of any options within the Whyteleafe area to be undertaken again by SCC's Land and Property team (in collaboration with SFRS). After this time the site will be sold by the owners and if no appropriate and affordable site has been found, the relocation to Godstone Fire Station will

continue towards the end of 2026. Works to upgrade the facilities at Godstone Fire Station will continue during this time, should an appropriate and affordable site in Whyteleafe not be found.

7. If a potential site is found in the Whyteleafe area this will initiate a process to explore the planning requirements and seek capital funding approval.
8. Key themes from the consultation include: querying the response time accuracy, requests to check alternative solutions in Banstead as well as other local fire stations, community and social impact of removal of a fire station, transparency of the consultation/funding and requests to renew the lease. None of which pose appropriate solutions or options for SFRS to take forward. Questions relating to the proposals will be answered in a separate Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) document to be released to the public prior to Cabinet (EG: requests to check alternative solutions in Banstead).

**Proposal 1.2: Review the capability and locations of specialist vehicles and equipment to ensure they match the current and potential risks effectively.**

9. Reviewing specialist vehicles and equipment will enable us to analyse where resources are located and how they are crewed, ensuring it's in the right place at the right time.
10. The service can therefore then identify whether investment into new technology and innovations is needed.
11. As a result of the consultation, the proposal gained a 76% approval score.
12. Key qualitative feedback included: emphasis on equipment modernisation, response, accessibility and traffic, specialist equipment placement/locations, Learning and Development of specials, evidence-based decision making. All of these points will be taken through to support the project and development of this review, should this plan be approved, none of the key feedback impacted the proposal being seen through as it is.

**Proposal 1.3: Review current resources at Camberley Fire Station and consider relocation options within the boroughs of Spelthorne, Elmbridge and Runnymede.**

13. Camberley Fire Station, which currently has a 24/7 fire engine and a day-time fire engine (7am-7pm) will change to a single 24/7 fire engine only. The staff that make up the current day-time fire engine will be relocated to a fire station in either Spelthorne, Elmbridge or Runnymede (Fordbridge, Painshill, Walton or Egham) to support additional night-time availability at that location.
14. This is in line with risk and demand throughout the county and balances cover.
15. The CRP 2024 (**annex 2**) identified 'high risk' property clusters in Spelthorne, Elmbridge, and two areas within Runnymede (around Egham and Englefield Green). To address this heightened risk in the north of the county, as well as fire stations in Spelthorne and Elmbridge, we propose including Runnymede

as an option for additional night-time fire and rescue cover. Feedback from the CRMP consultation also supported Runnymede as a suitable option.

16. To ensure our resources align with risk, we will continue to review the CRP (**annex 2**) annually to guide our approach to community safety and the allocation of resources.
17. As a result of the consultation, the proposal gained a 62% approval score.
18. Key qualitative feedback included: concerns about response times (particularly during wildfire season), impact on community safety, perception of cost-cutting, support for data-driven decisions and suggestions for alternative locations (inc. Runnymede/Egham) as well as 'bids' for some of the stations already listed. As per paragraph 20, the key feedback to be included in the proposal was in relation to adding Runnymede into the list of stations. The other questions are to be picked up in the previously mentioned FAQ's document.

**Ensure we have the right resources in the right place and at the right time by better understanding risks that face our communities.**

**Proposal 2.1: Develop a response model which responds to changing risk and seasonal demand.**

19. Developing a 'seasonal response model' in addition to our current response requirements means that the service would look at where risk and demand data shows we need more support during heightened periods, such as the summer wildfire period and winter flooding.
20. This will potentially also enable the service to deliver additional resources aligned to the review of specialist vehicles.
21. As a result of the consultation, the proposal gained a 76% approval score.
22. Key qualitative feedback included: concerns about resource for this, perception of cost-cutting measures, climate change and lack of understanding around how this might work. None of which impact the proposal as it is, however will be picked up within the FAQ's document previously mentioned.

**Proposal 2.2: Adapt our On-Call weekend plan to better respond to risk.**

23. Data shows that risk and demand doesn't change per day of the week, yet the current plan (the MSSP background paper A) allows five On-Call fire engines (Chobham, Dunsfold, Gomshall, Guildford and Lingfield) to be made available at weekend days, when they are not needed to support fire engine availability.
24. The on-call weekend proposal is that these fire engines can be 'switched off' during the daytime weekend hours. Data shows that in the period 2022-23, on average these fire engines were only made available 12% of weekend days. Due to the technology which allows the service to dynamically crew the county, the service utilises assets from across Surrey to maintain cover. Therefore, the service's view is that this will better align to the county risk

whilst ensuring a balance of resources. This change will therefore focus the contractual hours of those On-Call firefighters into the evening time when they are most needed.

25. As a result of the consultation, the proposal gained a 64% approval score.

26. Key qualitative feedback included: impact on on-call firefighters at these stations, cost for on-call firefighters being low and data/evidence-based decision making. None of which impact the proposal to be seen through as is, however will be picked up within the FAQ's document previously mentioned.

**Proposal 2.3: Adapt existing prevention, protection and response arrangements in Haslemere to ensure the most appropriate allocation of resources.**

27. Haslemere Fire Station is historically low risk which is matched by lower incident demand when compared to similarly crewed fire stations. Therefore, the proposal is to review how to efficiently and effectively crew Haslemere, whilst maintaining a 24/7 fire and rescue resource. This could include an increase in On-Call staff, the development of part time contract options, and utilising existing daytime operational staff from other areas of the service who can undertake prevention and protection activities whilst supporting fire engine availability.

28. As a result of the consultation, the proposal gained a 66% approval score.

29. Key qualitative feedback included: concerns about response times, support for maintaining 24/7 cover, scepticism around on-call staffing, impact on community safety activities, need for local knowledge and suggestions to close cluster of stations and build one in the middle. None of which impacted the proposal being seen through as it is, however all points will be included in the project (should this plan be approved) and questions answered in the FAQ's document.

**Identify and develop more opportunities to keep our communities safe through prevention, protection and partnership activities.**

**Proposal 3.1: Working with our health partners to respond to those who are most vulnerable in Surrey.**

30. We want to expand the number of programmes that we work on with health partners. These include keeping people safer in their homes, working with care partners in the community and supporting with homelessness and other vulnerable groups.

31. As part of our continued partnership approach the options developed will support our partners and will not impact our ability to respond to fire and rescue emergencies. The intention is to review how we work with partners to maximise prevention and protection benefits.

32. This could see SFRS supporting health partners with the discharging of vulnerable patients from hospital to ensure their homes are safe for their return, and options to offer greater support to our partners in South East

Coast Ambulance Service in responding to medical emergencies and/or non-emergencies.

33. As a result of our consultation, the proposal gained a 74% approval score.

34. Key qualitative feedback included: Recruitment and retention challenges with these new elements, impact on morale, need for a comprehensive review, operational effectiveness and overall support. None of which impact the proposal being seen through, however will be included in the project if approved.

#### Consultation:

35. The service undertook a three-month statutory consultation (with a brief pause due to the General Election). This included a wide range of communications and engagement tactics both via traditional and modern media.

36. 511 responses were gained via consultation (69.1% were not staff members, 28% were SFRS staff members and 2.9% were family members of staff). A full breakdown of demographic breakdown and responses can be found in **annex 3**). Through social media adverts, 67.6k people were reached which resulted in 2.3k link clicks to the consultation hub. SFRS's Chief Fire Officers press article gained 852 views.

37. Trade Union engagement throughout this CRMP has been vital. We have worked closely with all Trade Unions (the Fire Brigades Union, Unison and the Fire Officers Association) as part of regular meetings and information sharing. This was to ensure that they all had the opportunity to comment on our proposals. As part of this process the Fire Brigades Union has written to SFRS and elected members stating their position.

38. To ensure accuracy and robustness, NTU, leaders in public research who also led on the NFCC National Risk Methodologies, reviewed the data and evidence used to develop the CRMP's strategic aims and proposals. They then developed a report outlining key findings (**annex 4**), which was accessible and focussed the review of their processes ahead of the public consultation for the CRMP which started in May 2024. The NTU confirmed that "...Surrey FRS has undertaken a robust process to develop the CRMP for Surrey".

39. The Consultation Institute (tCI) were contracted to ensure a transparent and open process for communication, consultation and engagement. SFRS achieved a Certificate of Consultation Readiness, which was a thorough review of all of the pre-consultation activities and processes allowing SFRS to demonstrate they have met tCI's standards to proceed to consultation. This was a result of their specialist knowledge within the industry at the time.

40. Two Members Development Sessions and one Member Drop-In session were held during, before and after the consultation. Some members also took the opportunity to attend one of the 38 roadshow events held in all 11 district and

boroughs as part of the wider communications and engagement campaign. 20 member questions were answered throughout this period.

41. SFRS joined the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee Meeting on Thursday 5 December. Recommendations were that the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee:

- I. Welcomes the use of technology to ensure a dynamic and agile fire service across the county.
- II. Welcomes the robust process undertaken to develop the Community Risk Management Plan including external validation by the NTU.
- III. Recommends that the Fire Service continues to explore closer working relationships with Health partners and promotes a preventative model to risk where possible.

#### **Risk Management and Implications:**

42. The CRMP provides mitigations against the risks identified in our CRP (**annex 2**) which is updated and published annually. The CRP (**annex 2**) provides an up-to-date picture, across the county, of the changing risk landscape. It uses new methodologies to understand and highlight areas of concern, thereby enabling SFRS to identify the best options for risk mitigation across Surrey as a whole, looking at the impact of geography, demographics, lifestyle and emerging risks to the community. In assessing these risks, we consider various factors. The CRP (**annex 2**) incorporates data on the population of Surrey, past incidents, the natural environment, and buildings.

43. We identify the trends and take account emerging challenges including the increasing population within Surrey and the development on new technology such as electric vehicles. The CRP (**annex 2**) identifies not only the risks but also the impact which may affect Surrey residents, those who work in Surrey as well as those who pass through or visit as well as the potential impacts to our SFRS staff.

44. In addition, a People Impact Assessment (PIA) has been created (**annex 5**) and updated following consultation to identify the impact of SFRS's proposed changes on our staff and communities and details any required mitigations. This will support the delivery of the CRMP during 2025-2030 and further PIAs may be developed.

45. The delivery of this CRMP will take place in a staged approach to ensure that any lessons learnt can be seen and taken on board, allowing thorough evaluation of our implemented changes. This will be overseen by members of SFRS's Service Leadership Team.



### **Financial and Value for Money Implications:**

46. This CRMP has not been developed to meet any cost efficiencies. Any additional costs required to implement the plan will be considered as part of future decisions, through normal governance processes.
47. The CRMP focuses on providing an efficient and effective service across Surrey taking into account risks and the expected demand, especially with regards to our seasonal variations regarding wildfire and flooding.
48. This CRMP has a focus on making better use of our existing resources and locations allowing us to continue collaborating with other emergency service partners and relevant agencies, without having to reduce frontline service delivery and supporting our partners in health.

### **Section 151 Officer Commentary:**

49. The council continues to operate in a very challenging financial environment. Local authorities across the country are experiencing significant budgetary pressures. Surrey County Council has made significant progress in recent years to improve the council's financial resilience and whilst this has built a stronger financial base from which to deliver our services, the cost of service delivery, increasing demand, financial uncertainty and government policy changes mean we continue to face challenges to our financial position. This requires an increased focus on financial management to protect service delivery, a continuation of the need to deliver financial efficiencies and reduce spending in order to achieve a balanced budget position each year.
50. In addition to these immediate challenges, the medium-term financial outlook beyond 2024/25 remains uncertain. With no clarity on central government funding in the medium term, our working assumption is that financial resources will continue to be constrained, as they have been for the majority of the past decade. This places an onus on the council to continue to consider issues of financial sustainability as a priority, in order to ensure the stable provision of services in the medium term.
51. The CRMP will improve efficiency, aligning resources with need. Its approval will not in itself result in additional costs, instead any future decisions arising from the CRMP will be considered in the normal way including any financial implications arising.

### **Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer:**

52. The Fire and Rescue Service National Framework is the means by which the Government sets out its priorities and objectives for Fire and Rescue Authorities in England. Pursuant to the Framework all Fire and Rescue Authorities must produce a publicly available Community Risk Management Plan covering at least a three-year time span which reflects up to date risk information and how services can be best used to mitigate that risk. Cabinet is being asked to approve a new plan for SFRS known as the Community Risk Management Plan "CRMP" which is intended to replace the previous plan known as "Making Surrey Safer."

53. Cabinet will note that the CRMP contains a number of proposed changes to service provision which could be perceived by some residents as being a significant variation to the way in which services are provided. This report sets out details of the consultation that has taken place around those changes together with a summary of the consultation feedback and SFRS response. In considering whether to approve the CRMP, the Cabinet must take account of the outcome of the consultation.

54. The council is required to consider the impact of its decisions on those residents with protected characteristics. An assessment has been carried out and the outcome is set out in the paragraphs below. Potential negative impacts have been identified, and the mitigations have been set out for Cabinet to consider.

### **55. Equalities and Diversity:**

56. Most proposals present a neutral impact on protected characteristics. The most significant proposal from an equalities and diversity perspective, involves relocating the fire engine from Banstead Fire Station to Godstone Fire Station, outlined below:

### **Disability (Mental, Physical, and Carers of Disabled People)**

57. The relocation of Banstead's fire engine to Godstone will increase average critical response times in Reigate and Banstead by 40 seconds, though still within the 10-minute target. This may impact residents with disabilities.

58. Reigate and Banstead: 6.2% of residents aged 65+ have dementia.

59. Tandridge: 28% of households have someone with a disability; 7.9% of residents aged 65+ have dementia. Response times will decrease by 10 seconds.

60. A People Impact Assessment (PIA) has been created considering all proposals for change. However, SFRS will develop dedicated PIA's for specific areas of change before implementation. These will assess community impacts and consultation feedback. A mitigation for this specific impact is to ensure a full and thorough programme of prevention and protection activity continues to be delivered to the communities of Banstead, aiming to stop incidents from happening in the first place.

61. Another notable item within the overarching PIA is changes to staff ways of working. This may have potential impacts due to family commitments and caring responsibilities. Therefore a specific PIA for projects where this is noted will focus on consultation feedback to identify impacts based on personal circumstances. EG: fair transfer process, engagement to focus on the optimum shift patterns.

## Age (People of all ages)

62. The relocation of Banstead fire engine to Godstone will increase average critical response times in Reigate and Banstead by 40 seconds, though still within the 10-minute target. This may impact age as a protected characteristic.
63. Reigate and Banstead: 18% of the population is aged 65 and over.
64. Tandridge: 21% of the population is aged 65 and over; response times will decrease by 10 seconds.
65. As mentioned in paragraph 62, dedicated PIA's will be created for projects whereby people of all ages may be impacted by the proposals for change. A mitigation to be included for this specific project/proposal is to ensure a full and thorough programme of prevention and protection activity continues to be delivered to the communities of Banstead, aiming to stop incidents from happening in the first place.

### Other Implications:

66. The potential implications for the following council priorities and policy areas have been considered. Where the impact is potentially significant a summary of the issues is set out in detail below.

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications arising from this report.
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	<p>Surrey continues to experience relatively low numbers of fatalities and injuries from fires.</p> <p>Our aim is to continue to reduce these small numbers through the accurate identification and working with those most vulnerable in our communities.</p> <p>We will also continue to work with partners to reduce the Killed or Seriously Injured (KSI) on the roads of Surrey with a focus on young drivers.</p>
Environmental sustainability	No significant implications arising from this report.
Compliance against net-zero emissions target and future climate compatibility/resilience	No significant implications arising from this report.

Public Health	<p>Our plan aligns to an increased integration and collaboration with health partners and other emergency services to assist them with the ongoing increase in demand for health care provision.</p> <p>This will be most noticeable where we can assist with ensuring people can return to their homes following a hospital stay through coordinated Safe and Well Visit (SAWV). Also looking at how we can contribute to falls assist calls and possible co-responding (national conversations are ongoing).</p> <p>We will continue to educate the public through community safety campaigns, Domestic SAWVs and Business SAWVs.</p>

#### What Happens Next:

- a. Once approved, the report will be published on SCC's website and promoted to all residents.
- b. Implementation will begin as of April 2025 in a staged approach across the five years.

-----

**Report Author:** Dan Quin, Executive Director Community Protection & Emergencies (Chief Fire Officer), dan.quin@surreycc.gov.uk, 07989 160 117.

#### Consulted:

Communities (12-week consultation and promotional campaign).

SFRS staff (18-week consultation and promotional campaign).

SCC staff

Trade Unions

Members

**Annexes:**

- 1 - Surrey Fire and Rescue Service's Community Risk Management Plan 2025-30.
- 2 - [SFRS Community Risk Profile 2024](#). Please follow the link, printed copy available on request.
- 3 – SFRS/SCC Analysis Report of the CRMP consultation.
- 4 – NTU report of SFRS's CRP.
- 5 – People Impact Assessment for SFRS's CRMP.

**Sources/background papers:**

- A - [Making Surrey Safer Plan 2020-2024](#)
- B - [SFRS Community Risk Profile 2023](#)

This page is intentionally left blank