

Fire Productivity and Efficiency Plan for Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service

Primary Information

BUDGET (£000)					
Revenue Expenditure	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029
Direct Employee	31011	33439	36301	37833	39279
Indirect Employee	522	583	777	760	785
Premises	2217	2110	2056	2097	2141
Transport	720	707	759	774	789
Supplies and Services	5708	5741	5908	6144	6400
Capital Financing	469	548	745	1240	2034
Other	1850				
Total	42497	43128	46546	48848	51428
Income	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029
Actual Received from Precept	25243	27083	29072	30842	32761
Local Government Finance Settlement	13534	13636	15370	16099	16779
Other Grants	1927	1428	1203	1204	1204
Income Raised Locally	1793	981	733	703	684
Total	42497	43128	46378	48848	51428

The budget for 2025/26 was set assuming inflationary pay increases of 2%, whereas the actual pay increases were 3.2%. The gap in the budget was funded from additional grant income which was not budgeted and in-year reduction in spend in other areas. With inflation having remained above 3% throughout 2025/26, we have assumed 3% inflation in most areas of expenditure for 2026/27, 2% inflation has been assumed for future years for pay and non-pay elements.

The Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) is the Service's overarching strategic plan that sets out the aims and objectives for the future. The financial strategy must consider and support the delivery of these aims and actions. We have continued with a zero-based budgeting approach, reviewing the individual cost drivers which make up the budget, taking into consideration what needs to be delivered as per our CRMP and how we can deliver those plans.

For 2026/27, the Service is focusing on growth, particularly investing in our people ensuring we can meet current and future demands on the Service. On top of last year's increase of eight firefighters, we will further increase firefighter numbers by nine next financial year. Of these nine, three will join the training centre to provide additional capacity to train the new recruits, while the remaining six will be frontline firefighters.

Other areas of the service will also grow to ensure appropriate support is in place. Our digital and data teams will see small increases, along with investment in a service-wide assurance programme. The budget also includes funding to continue the on-call weekend working programme, which has enhanced the operational

availability of appliances and improved the skills of our on-call workforce through training, risk visits and community safety visits.

RESERVES (£000)					
	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029
General Reserves	2756	2695	2695	2695	2695
Earmarked Revenue Reserves	1783	1783	1445	1445	1445
of which MRP reserve					
Earmarked Capital Reserves	823	0	0	0	0
Other Reserves					
of which revenue	1992	1500	1500	1500	1500
of which capital					
Total	7354	5978	5640	5640	5640

The Authority maintains a General Reserve to cushion the impact of uneven cash flows and avoid unnecessary temporary borrowing. It acts as a contingency to be used in the event of unexpected emergencies or unforeseen spending. In recent years, the Authority added a Finance Business Continuity Reserve from revenue savings from 2021/22 and 2022/23, in anticipation of new budgetary pressures and unpredictable funding in the medium term. This reserve has recently been used to fund pay awards that were above those budgeted.

As at 31st March 2025, the Authority's usable General Reserve balance was £2.5m, and £3.3m including the Finance Business Continuity Reserve. The General Reserve will be used in accordance with the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

The Authority also maintains three earmarked reserves to fund known or predicted liabilities. These reserves are a Property Development Reserve to finance the future capital programme relating to properties and avoid borrowing or poor return on investments; a Pension Reserve to fund ill-health retirements above those budgeted; and a Wholetime Recruitment Reserve to allow for fluctuations in firefighter establishment figures.

The Property Development Reserve at 31st March 2025 was £860k (£1.4m at 31st March 2024); this has been used for the upgrade of St Neots Fire Station which commenced in 2024/25 and was completed in July 2025. The Service received £700k from Huntingdon District Council in respect of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding specifically allocated to the refurbishment of St Neots Fire Station. Following receipt of this funding, the Authority re-allocated some of the Property Development Reserve to fund other smaller upgrades at various stations.

The Wholetime Recruitment Reserve is £400k. This reserve will be used to ensure any fluctuations in our establishment can be maintained. The cost of borrowing continues to be greater than the return on cash investments, it is therefore more cost effective to borrow internally, using funds currently held.

Efficiency

EFFICIENCY DATA (£000)											
Cambridgeshire	Actual 2024-25		Actual 2025-26		Forecast 2026-27		Forecast 2027-28		Forecast 2028-29		
Opening Revenue Expenditure Budget (Net)	40,704		42147		45645		48145		50744		
Less Total Direct Employee Costs	31,011		33439		36301		37833		39279		
Non Pay Budget	9,693		8708		9344		10312		11465		
Efficiency Savings	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	
Direct Employee											
Reduction in Prevention/Protection/Response Staff	-	81		30							
Reduction in Support Staff	-	90									
Indirect Employee (e.g. training, travel etc.)											
All Indirect Employee Costs	0	53	3		7		9				
Premises											
Utilities	0	201	50								
Rent/Rates	0	0									
Other Premises Costs	0	0			4	24					
Shared Premises	0	0									
Transport											
Fleet	0	0									
Fuel	0	77	35								
Other Transport Costs	6	10			5						
Supplies and Services											
National Procurement Savings	10	0									
Local Procurement Savings	0	0	3	13	8						
Other Technology Improvements	0	0									
Decreased Usage	0	0	82	18	13						
Capital Financing											
Revenue Expenditure Charged to Capital	0	0		42							
Net Borrowing Costs	0	21									
Other											
Other Savings 1 (Please Specify)	0	23		12		4					
Other Savings 2 (Please Specify)	20	0									
Other Savings 3 (Please Specify)	0	0									
Total Efficiency Savings (excluding direct employee savings)	421		258		65		9		0		
Efficiency Savings as a Percentage of Non-Payroll	4.34%		2.96%		0.70%		0.09%		0.00%		

INCOME											
£000											
	Actual 2024-25		Actual 2025-26		Forecast 2026-27		Forecast 2027-28		Forecast 2028-29		
	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	
Income generated from charging policies	236	50	57		57		59		60		
Income generated from trading operations	61		64	39	97		98		101		
Income generated from shared premises	6		11		11		11		11		
Income generated from interest on investments	70	388	150	318	150	70	150	30	150	0	
Income generated from other sources	1610	209	513	595	348		355		362		
Total	1983	647	795	952	663	70	673	30	684	0	

Efficiency Narrative

Direct Employee

Within direct employee costs, a review and subsequent change to the pre-arranged overtime process has been implemented. This improvement has resulted in a reduction in overtime payments. As a result of this change, savings of approximately £30,000 have been realised.

Indirect Employee

Within indirect employee costs, efficiencies have been achieved through a change in the type and supply of personal protective equipment (PPE). Specifically, the move

from disposable gas-tight suits to reusable alternatives has delivered improved value for money while maintaining required safety standards. This change has generated savings of approximately £3,000.

Premises

Reductions in gas and electricity consumption have been achieved through a combination of infrastructure improvements and service-wide behavioural change. Investment in more energy-efficient systems has included the installation of LED lighting across the estate and the replacement of outdated gas boilers with air-source heating systems. These upgrades have significantly improved the efficiency of energy use while supporting environmental sustainability objectives.

In addition, a service-wide focus on reducing energy consumption has been reinforced through active monitoring using energy dashboards. This approach has enabled timely identification of abnormal usage patterns and potential system faults that could drive increased costs. Early detection has allowed issues, such as faulty or malfunctioning boilers, to be quickly rectified, preventing prolonged inefficiencies. We have also benefited from a reduction in pricing following a period of sustained high inflation.

Collectively, these measures have delivered an overall efficiency saving of approximately £50,000 in our utilities budget.

Transport

A continued focus on reducing unnecessary travel has contributed to improved cost efficiency, supported by increased use of virtual meetings and online conference attendance. This approach has reduced both travel demand and associated costs while maintaining effective collaboration and engagement.

Further efficiencies have been achieved through the expansion of the hybrid and electric vehicle fleet, resulting in reduced fuel consumption. In addition, a collaborative trial of hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) fuel has contributed to lower fuel costs and supported wider sustainability objectives.

Easing inflationary pressures have also had a positive impact in this area. Collectively, these measures have delivered an efficiency saving of approximately £35,000 in 2025/26.

Supplies and Services

A range of efficiencies have been delivered through strengthened procurement activity and service redesign. Savings have been achieved through contract renegotiations, alongside the cancellation of some external contracts and their replacement with effective in-house solutions. These actions have reduced ongoing costs while maintaining service quality.

Additional process improvements have also contributed to cost reductions. For example, changes to Home Fire Safety visit processes have removed the need for routine postal correspondence, significantly reducing postage costs. Similarly, efficiencies within communications equipment expenditure have been achieved by adopting a more targeted, needs-based replacement approach rather than undertaking full replacement programmes, and by utilising alternative cost-effective solutions where appropriate.

Further savings have been realised through the reduction in external counselling services because of the introduction of a dedicated in-house counselling post. This change has delivered a significant efficiency while ensuring continued access to appropriate support for staff.

These efficiency's add up to £116,000 in this area.

Capital Financing

Additional savings have been achieved through procurement efficiencies in the purchase of vehicles. By utilising an established procurement framework and undertaking a bulk purchase, the service secured improved pricing and economies of scale. This approach has delivered a saving of approximately £42,000, while ensuring vehicles continue to meet operational requirements.

Other

The insurance renewal charge was successfully contained and did not increase in line with inflation for the period. This was achieved through collaborative savings generated by membership of the Fire and Rescue Authorities' insurance arrangements (FRIC), with efficiencies shared collectively among member organisations.

In parallel, continued work by Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service to reduce the volume and cost of claims, alongside improved performance in reporting claims within agreed target timescales, has strengthened the service's overall risk profile.

Together, these measures have resulted in a cost reduction of approximately £12,000 at insurance renewal.

Future Efficiencies

Further efficiencies have been identified through the review and refinement of existing contracts to ensure they more closely align with operational requirements. This includes changes to contracts such as the learning pool provision, where revised specifications are expected to improve value for money while continuing to meet service needs.

Additional savings will be delivered through more strategic procurement of supplies. This includes reviewing the range and volume of consumables purchased, with opportunities to buy selected items in bulk. These changes are expected to reduce unit costs while also supporting environmental objectives, including reduced CO₂ emissions through increased reuse and refilling of plastic containers.

Planned capital investment across the service's property estate is also expected to generate long-term efficiencies. By investing upfront in asset condition and resilience, future reductions in repairs and maintenance expenditure are anticipated.

In addition to internal efficiencies, the service continues to make effective use of external levies and funding opportunities to support premises development and refurbishment. This includes working with partners and local planning authorities to harness growth and development across the county, ensuring that appropriate contributions are secured to mitigate the impact of increased demand on service infrastructure.

By aligning estate development plans with wider housing and commercial growth, these funding mechanisms help ensure that facilities are modern, resilient, and appropriately located to meet the needs of a growing population. This approach supports the delivery of fit-for-purpose premises while reducing reliance on core revenue and capital budgets, thereby improving long-term financial sustainability and value for money.

New contracts are being developed for the provision of vehicles, with negotiations undertaken to improve vehicle quality and extend the operational life and retention period of the fleet. These changes are expected to reduce capital expenditure over the life of the contracts and improve residual values at the point of resale. This

approach will deliver better outcomes for users while providing increased efficiency and value for money for the service overall.

The service is also progressing a programme to redesign and automate key processes and improve the way data is transferred and managed across the organisation. This includes bringing both the technology and associated skills in-house, reducing reliance on external suppliers and generating efficiencies in future years.

Moving to more readily available and widely adopted toolsets will improve the speed of development, enhance system resilience, and strengthen the service's ability to source and retain skills to support ongoing delivery. Collectively, these changes will support more efficient operations and improved long-term sustainability.

Assessment of Efficiencies

Technology remains a key enabler in the delivery of efficiencies across the service. Significant progress has been made in implementing planned digital solutions, with a balanced approach taken between the procurement of established toolsets and applications and the in-house development of bespoke systems tailored to specific operational requirements.

A major investment has been made in the development of the Vision 2030 Resource Modeller, which represents a substantial step forward in analytical capability. This tool will significantly reduce reliance on external data modelling support, while improving both the speed and frequency with which modelling can be undertaken. As the county continues to grow, the resource modeller will be pivotal in understanding changes in risk profile and informing evidence-based decisions on the most effective deployment and location of resources to meet demand.

Further investment has been made in tools that support more detailed evaluation of contracted hours of cover and their operational impact. These capabilities enable a more precise assessment of staffing requirements and provide improved insight into the value and contribution of individual roles. This, in turn, supports better decision-making and enhances overall service availability and resilience.

In parallel, significant effort is being directed towards the development of digital operational assurance processes. This includes reviewing how operational data is

collected, processed, and monitored to improve data quality, visibility, and transparency across the service. These improvements are expected to deliver operational efficiencies while strengthening governance and assurance.

The recent budget settlement, alongside the effective use of additional funding sources, has enabled modest growth in professional support service capacity. This investment allows the service to develop and embed these digital efficiencies, ensuring they directly support and enhance core operational delivery over the medium to long term.

Devolution continues to have an impact on the service's ability to collaborate as effectively and at the pace previously anticipated. As key milestones and implementation deadlines approach, it is expected that increased organisational focus will be required to support necessary changes to governance arrangements and to work closely with regional and local partners. This may, at times, affect the speed at which some elements of the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) can be progressed. The service will continue to monitor the evolving devolution landscape closely and will adapt its plans as required to ensure ongoing alignment with statutory responsibilities and partnership arrangements.

Productivity

Collaboration

Description	Date initiate	Cost savings/efficiencies d/ duration
ICT Shared Service with Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service providing joint information technology internal support	2013	Provides resilience and enables greater resourcing at the same cost
Gazetteer managed service for Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service providing a managed database service and specialist skill sets provision to Bedfordshire.	2011	£72k income and shared contract managed by CFRS.
Safeguarding resources and services, provision of safeguarding oversight and support to CFRS from Essex Fire and Rescue Services	2021	£28k per annum cost to CFRS
Drone and Operational joint training in collaboration with Cambridgeshire Constabulary.	2019	Allows for training of pilots to be shared with Police and shared governance of drone use provides significant

		savings on costs to train and certificate.
Shared space - Use of meeting rooms between Cambridgeshire Constabulary and CFRS		Allows greater flexibility and reduces room and venue hire costs through allowing use and access to other service's facilities.
Co-responding - Currently nine stations delivering co-responding working with East of England Ambulance Service	2008	Cost recovery for co-responding activities, allowing the EEAST to use capacity and at no extra cost to CFRS.
Internal Audit - Joint contracting of internal audit programme with Bedfordshire and Essex fire and rescue services	2016	Knowledge shared, endorsing best practices. Procurement cost savings for other services.
Shared network contract for internal network provision with Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service	2019	£500K over the 5-year contract period for CFRS.
Fire and Rescue Indemnity Company (FRIC) - Insurance consortium - mutual management of risk, provide discretionary cover and purchase external insurances. This is operated with 12 other fire and rescue services	2019	Savings on insurance premium tax (5-7%), enhanced management support and risk management. Aims to optimise each member's risk transfer programme and reduce costs. Reserve pool surpluses are distributed back to members.
Incident command and cross-border working - Common basis for the actions of FRSs undertaking their responsibilities as a result of agreements made under S.13 and 16 of the Fire Rescue Services Act 2004. Working with Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk Fire and Rescue Services.	2021	No cost saving but increased resilience
Specialist operational equipment sharing across all three emergency services working with Cambridgeshire Constabulary and East Ambulance Service		Allows greater access to resources if the service requesting does not have the resources available. Cost saving of recalls to duty and increased asset availability.
Supporting the most vulnerable. Working with Adult Social Care teams to support services through Safe and Well visits. Identify data that will assist our	2015	Improved targeting of activities

vulnerable risk profiling. Working with Peterborough Plus, Solutions for Health, Everyone Health, Insight, Leap (local energy assist programme), Health and Wellbeing network, Peterborough County Council, Camquit.		
Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), working together on safeguarding concerns in the following key areas: Child Protection, Vulnerable Adults and Domestic Abuse. Working with Cambridgeshire constabulary, Probation Service.	2010	Improved safeguarding
Share information from Anglian Water on vulnerable individuals in order to provide support.	2021	Improved success rate for Home Fire Safety Checks.
Shared use of HVO fuel between Huntingdon District Council and CFRS for operational vehicles	2024	Permanent arrangement in place with an MOU from Q1 2025/26.
United States Air Force (USAF) MoU with USAF Alconbury	2014	Provides access to 2 x water carriers for operational response, joint training opportunities and sharing of sites for exercising. Shared resource for driver training which provides CFRS with additional capacity to deliver driver training courses and refreshers
Community Wellbeing Officer x2 posts made permanent	Apr 2024	In place – shared costs with East of England Ambulance Trust (EEAST)
Ely and March station parking 5-year agreement signed with EMED to facilitate patient transport parking 3 vehicles at the station	New Oct 2024	£8k per annum income
Soham EV charger - the Town Council are utilising the station pod point for 1 vehicle during the day.	New Oct 2024	In place
Use of CFRS premises by EEAST for community first responder training EEAST had previously hired venues for training. The EEAST training team now have access to CFRS premises to enable training across the county.	2024	Cost savings for EEAST

Tall building remediation. Collaboration between CFRS, County Authorities and Local Authorities to develop and complete the Local Remediation Action Plan	2024	Ensures a joined approach to building inspection
Multi-agency training with other services, shared JESIP/MAGIC and Tactical command training with other services.	New	In place
Building Safety Regulator - Regional multi-disciplinary team 2 x fire protection officers supporting the regional multi-disciplinary team	New Apr-2025	
MAGPAS meeting room - Use of meeting room free of charge	2025	Circa £200-£400 per meeting
CIA (Finance System) System Customer Community Sharing knowledge on how to resolve system issues and/or configure elements with other CIA finance system customers (all public sector).	2024	Knowledge sharing and not needing to pay for consultancy resource
CIA Advocacy Programme CFRS are flagged as being an advocate customer where other potential or existing customers can reach out to for advice (typically other UK fire services)	2025	Benefit to CFRS - any CFRS cases logged are given priority. Benefit to other fire services is they get the benefit of our knowledge of the system and tips on a successful implementation (Contacts to date with three other Fire and Rescue Services)
Magpas training - event hosting the Magpas National training event, use of Huntingdon training facilities and engagement in training activities	New	Hosted as a trial in 2025 and running again in August 2026
Police rope rescue. Police use of CFRS accredited trainers, assessments and assessors. Looking to expand to share resources to support rope rescue work	New	In discussion
Feasibility study for combined Fleet planned (shared premises)	Pending	Shared facility for fleet and maintenance workshop hub with another organisation, study being carried out early 2025 for conclusion by end of Q1 2025/26.
Strategic Interoperability Board (SIB) – Facilitate the sharing of best practices and innovative ideas among	2024	Best practice and data sharing

the emergency services within Cambridgeshire, specifically Cambridgeshire Constabulary, Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue and East of England Ambulance Service.		
Access provided for touch down point for roaming appliances at East of England Ambulance Melbourn site.	2022	Enhanced operational cover and reduced property estate cost through sharing.
Collaboration as members of eastern region Hazardous Detection Identification and Monitoring (HDIM) team	Ongoing	Enhanced skills within county
Cambridgeshire County Council – Alconbury Weald – use of meeting rooms	2023	Allows greater flexibility and reduces room and venue hire costs through allowing use and access to other service’s facilities.
Blood donating sessions – Blood UK use Wisbech Fire Station to hold blood donating sessions.	In place	Station given for free to save Blood UK money on venue costs. CFRS employees attend to give home safety advice to donors while they wait.

Collaboration activities across the organisation continue to be influenced by the ongoing Devolution process. At present, there is a natural pause in the level of strategic focus that Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS) can dedicate to new or emerging partnership initiatives. This reflects the wider uncertainty regarding the future structure and governance of organisations involved in the Devolution programme. As greater clarity emerges, CFRS will be better positioned to reassess priorities and re-engage with partners to identify opportunities that deliver meaningful benefits for our communities and our workforce.

Despite this period of uncertainty, several established areas of collaboration remain active and continue to progress. The joint work on Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) fuel has now been successfully embedded into operational practice. Further work is underway to explore whether this can be extended to additional partners, supporting collective efforts to reduce environmental impact and contribute to sustainability goals.

CFRS has also continued to strengthen its collaborative approach to community safety and prevention. The Community Wellbeing Officer roles, initially introduced as a pilot, have now been made permanent in recognition of their positive impact. Plans

are in development to expand this provision by an additional two posts, further enhancing the Service's ability to support vulnerable residents, work alongside partner agencies, and deliver improved outcomes through early intervention and targeted community engagement.

Asset Management and IT Investment

During this financial year, Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS) will progress work to strengthen its approach to asset management through the introduction of a new asset database. This project has been in development for some time, focusing on gathering detailed requirements and assessing suitable systems on the market. Once implemented, the new solution will enhance the visibility and management of assets across their whole life cycle, support more informed decision-making regarding repair and replacement, and streamline defect reporting processes. These improvements are expected to create efficiencies and reduce turnaround times for maintenance activities.

Looking ahead to 2026/27, CFRS will also introduce a new Applicant Tracking System (ATS). This upgrade aims to modernise and simplify recruitment processes, reduce manual administrative workload, and enable recruitment teams to dedicate more time to value adding activities such as candidate attraction, engagement, and retention.

In parallel, the Service is preparing to decommission its externally hosted process automation platform. Over the past year, CFRS has undertaken a comprehensive review of its approach to digital integrations and workflow automation. With an updated strategy now in place and a proof of concept successfully trialled, work is underway to transition these activities inhouse using existing tools and capabilities. The financial savings generated through this shift will be reinvested to strengthen digital skills and enhance technical support across key areas. Planned work for 2026/27 includes digitising operational forms and workflows, delivering a Health and Safety recommendations tracker, and improving digital processes that support the Training Centre. These initiatives are designed to reduce administrative burden, strengthen transparency, and improve the quality and accessibility of data.

Further work is also planned to complete 3D mapping of high risk sites. This will enhance operational training, exercises, and risk familiarisation, and in the future, this data will be accessible to crews in the field to support informed and safe incident response.

Work is underway to explore and trial a range of technological solutions aimed at enhancing operational effectiveness. This includes the use of digital devices in the field, improved satellite navigation systems for emergency response, and enhanced vehicle telematics. Together, these developments will support faster and more informed response, reduce administrative burdens, and strengthen opportunities for operational learning and continuous improvement.

As part of our ongoing commitment to sustainability, the Service will be investing in the replacement of all wooden doors across our sites to improve insulation and energy efficiency. In addition, we are exploring the implementation of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) fuelled generators combined with fuel pumps to strengthen our business continuity arrangements while reducing our environmental impact. In addition to the HVO generators we are looking to expand our HVO collaboration currently with Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) to include Peterborough City and East Cambs District Councils.

Planning is progressing to refresh the operational vehicles used by Officers. Discussions during 2025/26 have focused on extending vehicle lifespans and improving the overall quality and suitability of the fleet whilst also improving sustainability with an increased EV range. This proposal has been formally accepted by CFRS Officers and is expected to deliver financial savings of £244,930 over a four year period.

As part of the Service's Vision 2030 programme, CFRS will also introduce a tool to support dynamic decision making around the movement of resources, ensuring the most effective operational cover is provided in real time. This tool is scheduled for implementation by April 2027 and will be particularly beneficial during periods of high operational demand. In addition, the broader Vision 2030 project will deliver a set of recommendations on future approaches to delivering operational cover, with a focus on improving resilience, enhancing efficiency, and exploring innovative models of service delivery. These recommendations will be presented during this financial year, with implementation subject to appropriate consultation and approval processes.

Resourcing

From 2025/26 onwards, the service will continue to progress its Vision 2030 programme, which focuses on understanding and responding to the long-term growth and development of the county. This programme is designed to ensure that resources are utilised in the most effective and efficient way to meet future demand, taking account of changing risk profiles, population growth, and emerging community needs.

As part of this programme, the service will also review how it contracts with, deploys, and utilises its workforce, exploring opportunities for new and more flexible ways of working. This includes assessing how staffing models can better reflect fluctuating risk, with the potential to increase available resources at specific times of day or periods of the year where demand is known to rise.

In particular, the service will consider seasonal and environmental risks—such as flooding events and periods of increased summer activity—and how resources can be dynamically aligned to respond to these pressures. By matching workforce availability more closely to patterns of risk and demand, the service aims to enhance resilience, improve responsiveness, and ensure the most effective use of public resources.

Collectively, these initiatives will support evidence-based decision-making, strengthen operational readiness, and help ensure the service remains adaptable, sustainable, and well positioned to meet future challenges.

Income Generation

The service will continue to actively seek opportunities to utilise external grants, levies, and funding contributions to support service growth and development, particularly where these align with planned growth across the county. This approach helps ensure that investment in infrastructure, capability, and capacity is proportionate to emerging demand.

In parallel, the service remains committed to pursuing collaborative opportunities where they deliver clear benefits. This includes working with partners where collaboration can generate efficiencies, enhance operational resilience, or improve outcomes for the communities we serve. All such opportunities are assessed carefully to ensure they align with strategic priorities and deliver tangible value for the service and its stakeholders.

Outcome-based Activities

A comprehensive range of activities is measured to ensure effective performance management across both wholetime and on-call firefighters. For wholetime firefighters, this includes training, operational duties, Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs), community engagement, technical fire safety activity, operational risk work, completion of Personal Development Reviews (PDRs), mandatory course

completion, all response performance metrics, and any activities undertaken outside of core administrative functions. Similarly, performance measurement for on-call firefighters covers training, operational duties, HFSVs, community engagement, recruitment activity, operational risk work, completion of PDRs and mandatory training, as well as all relevant response metrics. Together, these measures provide a holistic view of contribution, availability, and service delivery across the workforce.

Targets are set for each wholetime station, day crewed station and roaming appliance as detailed in the table below.

	A14	A16	A27	B01	A20	B05	B13	Roaming
TRAINING	8hrs per tour	8hrs per tour	8hrs per tour	8hrs per tour	8hrs per week	8hrs per week	8hrs per week	14hrs per week
OPS RISK	20 per year	20 per year	20 per year	30 per year	20 per year	20 per year	20 per year	20 RPN 20 RPS
TFS JOBS +L3 FSA	33 per year	33 per year	33 per year	33 per year	66 per year	66 per year	66 per year	
CFS JOBS (HFSV) +20% from 2025	120 per year	120 per year	120 per year	168 per year	240 per year	204 per year	204 per year	876 per year
Community Engagement in Watch Wards	Minimum of 8 events	Minimum of 8 events	Minimum of 8 events	Minimum of 10 events	Minimum of 8 events	Minimum of 8 events	Minimum of 8 events	Minimum of 8 events

Process improvements to Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs) have delivered efficiencies of approximately 6–8 hours per month at each wholetime station. This has enabled a proportionate uplift of 20% in prevention activity targets from 2026, while still retaining the majority of the efficiency gains to support wider service priorities.

As part of the 2026 performance framework, enhancements will also be made to Technical Fire Safety (TFS) activity. With 23 Level 3 Fire Safety Inspectors currently based across wholetime stations, full Level 3 fire safety audits will be introduced alongside existing TFS performance measures. This capability will be further strengthened as additional Level 3 Inspectors come online during 2026.

For on-call firefighters, operational risk visits continue to be measured, with the established baseline of two visits per crew per year. In addition, on-call staff who also undertake wholetime shifts at weekends have increasingly supported the delivery of HFSVs and wider community engagement activity. This represents a new and emerging area of contribution, and associated performance measures are currently being developed to ensure this activity is appropriately captured and recognised.

We have worked to significantly increase the number of on-call operational risk visits completed each year, as detailed in the table below.

Station	Ops Risk Jobs			
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
On-Call	2	6	29	95

The tables below detail the increases that we have seen in productivity for both our wholetime and our on-call firefighters over the Spending Review Period.

Station	CFS - HFSV				Year on Year Percentage Change		
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Wholetime	3376	3860	3760	3932	14.3%	-2.6%	4.6%
On-Call	244	160	194	262	-34.4%	21.3%	35.1%

Station	CFS - Other Engagement				Year on Year Percentage Change		
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Wholetime	194	207	201	226	6.7%	-2.9%	12.4%
On-Call	0	12	19	24	100.0%	58.3%	26.3%

Station	TFS Jobs				Year on Year Percentage Change		
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Wholetime	734	641	718	723	-12.7%	12.0%	0.7%
On-Call	9	0	0	2	-100.0%	0.0%	100.0%

Station	Ops Risk Jobs				Year on Year Percentage Change		
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Wholetime	234	365	450	476	56.0%	23.3%	5.8%
On-Call	2	6	29	95	200.0%	383.3%	227.6%

The service records and analyses activity data through a range of established systems, including the mobilising system, CFRMIS, and the Learning Hub. In

addition, each wholetime watch uses an exception reporting application to capture activity that takes staff away from performance-measured duties. This ensures a comprehensive understanding of how time is allocated and supports informed performance and resource management.

The quality and outcomes of activity are actively monitored and assessed. Technical Fire Safety (TFS) work is subject to audit by Protection Officers, while assurance roles within Prevention provide oversight and quality assurance for Community Fire Safety (CFS) activity. Learning Hub outcomes are assessed and reviewed on a quarterly basis, and local quality assurance is also undertaken by line managers. For on-call firefighters, operational commanders review standby activities and carry out spot checks to ensure quality, consistency, and compliance with expected standards.

There are plans to increase several areas of activity. Home Fire Safety Visit (HFSV) output has already increased by 20% this year, alongside further increases in Technical Fire Safety activity. Productivity measures are reviewed annually each October to ensure they remain appropriate and aligned with service priorities. A new performance measure for community engagement has recently been embedded, with ambitions to increase this activity further as additional Community Engagement Officer support becomes available. In addition, measured activity for on-call crews may increase through the use of weekend-working appliances, subject to further development and implementation of associated performance measures.

Workforce Capacity

The service measures the workforce capacity of both wholetime and on-call firefighters through a structured and evidence-based approach. A full wholetime workforce capacity review was completed in 2023, providing a comprehensive theoretical assessment of how time is allocated across operational requirements. This review was used to identify efficiencies within the wholetime function and informed subsequent increases to performance measures.

Wholetime performance measures are developed by allocating time against each core requirement. For example, a detailed review of operational competence determined the time required for training activity. This is then balanced alongside other operational and prevention duties to ensure an achievable and sustainable workload. This approach provides assurance that crews are operating at consistently high levels of performance while meeting all statutory and service expectations.

For on-call firefighters, training requirements remain substantial and continue to occupy all allocated drill nights. In 2025, the service introduced on-call roaming appliances, and crews have since been trained to undertake Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs). The wholetime status of this activity enables crews to complete a wider range of duties, all of which are recorded on shift returns and reviewed centrally by an on-call officer to ensure consistency and oversight.

The data underpinning workforce capacity and productivity reporting is well embedded, comprehensive, and robust. Operational activity is one of the most extensively reported areas within the service, covering attendance, incident types, equipment usage, and both domestic and commercial prevention and protection activity.

Operational metrics are accessible across a range of dashboards and self-service reports, including those aligned to the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) and station level CFRMIS screens. These enable operational staff to review performance and plan engagement activity effectively. In the past month, the service has launched three new operational dashboards, providing enhanced visibility of activity across watch, station, and group (wholetime and on-call) levels. These dashboards allow users to drill down through the organisational hierarchy to identify trends, variations, and areas of focus.

The dashboards draw on multiple data sources, many of which are supported by dedicated administrative data stewards who work closely with the Business Intelligence and Performance Team. Data is quality assured through custom audit reports and is managed via a central data warehouse overseen by the internal Development Team. Continuous improvements are being made to extract, transform, and load (ETL) processes to enhance early identification of data quality issues.

The service also contributes nationally through participation in the NFCC Data Quality and Data Literacy working groups. Looking ahead, a formal data maturity assessment is planned for 2026/27 to inform a structured improvement programme aligned with national best practice.

Measuring workforce capacity has directly enabled improvements in productivity. This work was first undertaken in 2016 and has been refined annually. A formal review of performance measures is conducted each October, allowing key stakeholders to refresh expectations and ensure alignment with evolving Community Risk Management Plan priorities. This regular review cycle ensures that performance

measures remain proportionate, relevant, and focused on areas of greatest risk and impact.

The structured review of capacity, combined with ongoing efficiency improvements, has released additional hours for both wholetime and on-call firefighters over successive years. These efficiencies have been achieved through process improvements, changes to response models, and refinements to training requirements.

Most recently, this released capacity has been reinvested into prevention activity, enabling a 20% increase in Home Fire Safety Visits. This uplift was made possible in part by reduced training demands identified through earlier reviews. In previous years, additional capacity has also been redirected following efficiency gains linked to changes in Automatic Fire Alarm response, revised processes, and operational efficiency reviews. Together, these approaches ensure that released capacity is consistently reinvested in priority activities that deliver the greatest benefit to communities.

Increasing Productivity

The service has delivered sustained improvements in productivity for both wholetime and on-call firefighters throughout the Spending Review period through a combination of workforce capacity assessment, efficiency reviews, and ongoing refinement of performance measures.

Productivity gains have been driven by annual reviews of how time is allocated across core activities, ensuring that performance expectations remain proportionate, evidence based, and aligned to Community Risk Management Plan priorities. These reviews have enabled the service to steadily increase outputs year-on-year while maintaining operational resilience and service quality.

In particular, a wholetime efficiency review identified opportunities to rebalance time allocated to certain activities, allowing more productive use of available hours across prevention, protection, and operational risk activity.

Where increased productivity has resulted in additional capacity, this has been purposefully reinvested into priority areas. In the most recent year, this has included a demonstrable uplift in Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs), with a 20% increase delivered, alongside expanded Technical Fire Safety (TFS) activity progressing into 2026.

Earlier in the review period, 2024 saw a significant increase in operational risk activity and Technical Fire Safety output. This was primarily driven by the wholetime efficiency review, which identified that excessive time had historically been allocated to individual operational risk visits. By refining these assumptions and standardising processes, additional capacity was released and redirected into increased volume and coverage of operational risk and protection work.

Across the Spending Review period, this structured approach to measuring capacity and productivity has enabled the service to consistently increase outputs, respond to emerging risk, and reinvest efficiencies into activities that deliver the greatest community impact.

The table below details the CFRS wholetime performance measures for 2024

	A14	A16	A27	B01	A20	B05	B13	Roaming
TRAINING	8hrs per tour	8hrs per tour	8hrs per tour	8hrs per tour	8hrs per week	8hrs per week	8hrs per week	14hrs per week
OPS RISK +50% RP +100%	20 per year	20 per year	20 per year	30 per year	20 per year	20 per year	20 per year	20 RPN 20 RPS
TFS JOBS +10%	33 per year	33 per year	33 per year	33 per year	66 per year	66 per year	66 per year	None
CFS JOBS (S&W)	96 per year	96 per year	96 per year	144 per year	200 per year +10%	180 per year	180 per year	730 per year
Community Engagement	2 Targeted engagements per month	2 Targeted engagements per month	2 Targeted engagements per month	3 Targeted engagements per month	2 Targeted engagements per month	2 Targeted engagements per month	2 Targeted engagements per month	2 Targeted engagements per month

The table below details the CFRS wholetime performance measures for 2025

	A14	A16	A27	B01	A20	B05	B13	Roaming
TRAINING	8hrs per tour	8hrs per tour	8hrs per tour	8hrs per tour	8hrs per week	8hrs per week	8hrs per week	14hrs per week
OPS RISK	20 per year	20 per year	20 per year	30 per year	20 per year	20 per year	20 per year	20 RPN 20 RPS
TFS JOBS	33 per year	33 per year	33 per year	33 per year	66 per year	66 per year	66 per year	None
CFS JOBS (S&W)	96 per year	96 per year	96 per year	144 per year	200 per year	180 per year	180 per year	730 per year
Community Engagement	Minimum of 8 events	Minimum of 8 events	Minimum of 8 events	Minimum of 10 events	Minimum of 8 events	Minimum of 8 events	Minimum of 8 events	Minimum of 8 events

Service Changes and Achievements

The service continues to progress the strategic journey set out within the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2025–2029. Activity during the year has remained focused on delivering the priorities and commitments within this plan, alongside the continued implementation of the service changes and efficiency initiatives outlined in the preceding sections. This sustained and disciplined approach ensures continuity, clarity of direction, and alignment between strategic intent and operational delivery.

One of the service's most significant achievements this year has been the successful securing of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding, supporting investment aligned to growth and development across the county. This has enabled progress on critical infrastructure projects, including the redevelopment of St Neots Fire Station, which has been designed to be carbon-neutral ready and reflects the service's commitment to sustainability, resilience, and future operational demand.

Significant progress has also been made in the use of technology to strengthen service delivery. The development of the Vision Resource Modeller represents a major advancement in the service's analytical capability, supporting evidence-based decision-making and improved resource planning. Alongside this, continued investment in technical solutions has enhanced operational systems and strengthened support for frontline delivery.

The service is also proud of the work undertaken to enhance its Learning Hub and the comprehensive review and evaluation of training provision. This has enabled a more focused approach to risk-critical training and improved support for on-call colleagues, ensuring training delivery is both proportionate and aligned to operational risk. These improvements support operational readiness while making more effective use of available capacity and resources.