

Full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Report

If you include anything on this form that requires protective marking, please annotate accordingly. Sensitive information will have to be removed prior to publication on the SCC website.

A full Equality Impact Assessment is a systematic process of evidence-gathering and analysis for the purpose of ensuring that public authorities are fulfilling their legal duty to promote equality.

Full EIAs follow the same format and process as an EIA screening but **require greater resources of time and commitment and a wider range of evidence**. This extra commitment should be allowed for at the policy planning stage.

The evidence you collect must inform your assessment. This will help demonstrate that you have met the general duty and have shown due regard to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality and fostering good relations.

Much of your analysis will be to identify differences between groups in need and experience, and in the barriers they face. You should also seek to identify multiple disadvantages. For example, an Asian woman could have difficulties accessing services because of factors related to both gender and race. You may choose to compare your evidence with that from similar or national organisations and from within SCC.

Where practical, carry out further research or consultation, concentrating on the main objectives and keeping the workload proportional to the task in hand. Look for practical outcomes and focus on identifying gaps in the current provision. If it is not possible to get this information easily or immediately, highlight the fact in the final action plan.

See the “Guidance to staff Equality Impact Assessment” on Colin for further information or contact the Equalities Lead Adviser in Business Development.

Department: Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service	
Lead Person: DCFO Mark Sanderson	Date: 17-03-2016
1. Policy or service assessed:	
Proposals to shape the future of the Fire and Rescue Service in Suffolk (SFRS).	
2. Introduction: <i>Aim of the new or revised policy/service, including context and scope.</i>	
Since 2010 Government grant funding for fire and rescue services has been reducing. Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) has changed to become more efficient, but has continued with the same number of fire engines and fire stations during this time.	
Further grant funding reductions are expected by April 2020 . Provision estimates by the Government indicate funding for Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service will reduce by around £2.4m per annum by 2020. Plans are in place to make savings to the revenue budget of approximately £1.34m by 2018.	
Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service Authority is committed to continuing to provide	

an effective fire and rescue service across the county which is accessible to all. In order to plan for the grant funding reductions and be able to meet statutory responsibilities a number of proposals have been developed and those which may impact on service delivery are contained within the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2015-18. The IRMP has been the subject of a 14-week formal consultation, which closed on 22 February 2016. Once the feedback from this has been properly assessed and considered then final proposals, developed taking the feedback into account, will be presented to Cabinet on 17 May 2016.

Principles of Delivery:

Currently Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service operate 35 fire stations in Suffolk. 6 stations are full-time crewed. 4 of these are operated around the clock on a 24-hour basis and 2 are day-crewed stations which operate from Monday to Friday between 8am and 6pm. When the stations are not permanently crewed they revert to on-call status. 29 fire stations are solely crewed by on-call firefighters. These stations are not permanently crewed and rely on firefighters responding to the station from their permanent employment, from home or leisure.

In order to develop proposals which reflect the funding challenges ahead officers followed a structured process based on national fire and rescue service guidance:

Step 1 – What create risks in Suffolk

People, Housing/Heritage, Deprivation/Employment, Transport, Environment and Special risk.

Step 2 – What does this risk mean for Suffolk

Fires, Transport Incidents, Flooding, Marine, Water Rescue and Industrial Incidents – Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and other emergencies.

Step 3 - How is this risk assessed:

National, County and Service levels.

Step 4 – People and equipment to manage risk

Prevention, Protection, Emergency Response, Fire engines, Equipment and National Resilience.

Step 5 – Monitor, audit and review

Managing performance, peer challenge, Statement of Assurance, Outturn report.

Risk in Suffolk is managed by, Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service, through a balanced approach of Prevention, Protection and Emergency Response activity:

Prevention: Promoting community safety by focussing on vulnerable people such as the elderly, those with limited mobility, families with young children and young drivers who, in the latter case, are at greater risk of being involved in road traffic collisions. In the last 5 years, SFRS has carried out 13,965 safer home visits focused on improving fire safety in people's home.

Protection: Ensuring that businesses and building owners are meeting their legal fire safety responsibilities. Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service enforces the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, which focuses on ensuring people are safe from fire when at work or in public buildings. In the last 5 years officers carried out 4,261 audits of buildings across Suffolk to ensure that these have adequate fire risk management arrangements in place.

Emergency Response: Providing a 24/7 999 emergency response for the communities of Suffolk and its visitors.

The Service responded to 4,780 emergencies in 2014-15, which included fires; in domestic dwellings, in the open and in businesses; rescuing people from road traffic collisions and other incidents; dealing with wide-scale flooding, responding to chemical incidents and a wide range of other emergencies.

Our speed of response standards (RS) are:

RS1. The first fire engine to attend a property fire within 11 minutes

RS2. The second fire engine to attend a property fire in 16 minutes

RS3. The first fire engine to attend a road traffic collision within 13 minutes

SFRS aims to achieve these standards on 80% of occasions. Response standard performance for the last two years is below. Further information on response standards can be found in the IRMP document – link in section 8 on page 24.

Response Standard	2014/15 in %	2015/16 in % (11 months to March 2016)
RS 1	64.81	73.10
RS 2	71.98	78.21
RS 3	77.85	74.84

On 10 November 2015, Suffolk County Council's Cabinet agreed to initiate the formal consultation process for the IRMP 2015-18 and the proposals for change laid out within the plan.

In developing the proposals set out in the plan officers followed the process highlighted above and carried out a review of all 35 fire stations and the 47 fire engines in Suffolk to identify the consequences and risks associated with any likely changes. Options were selected which had the least impact, when taking a range of factors into account, along with professional judgement.

Considerations included factors such as:

1. The type of fire station – fire engines, specialist fire engines and firefighter crewing arrangements.
2. The risk profile of Suffolk and in specific places of the county.
3. Examination of at least 5 years 999 emergencies and any trends and patterns in this and the foreseeable emergencies which need to be planned for.
4. The changing demand on the Service and in specific areas and places.
5. The impact of any proposals, and alternatives, on communities and the

ability to respond to emergencies.

6. The location of the next nearest fire stations, were resources to be reduced, and the availability of the nearest alternative fire engines.
7. Looking at future developments and likely future changes in demography in Suffolk and in specific places.
8. The likely financial resources available in the future and the scope for savings derived from the various options for change and other possible options, and
9. Identifying any constraints and/or opportunities for change.

The IRMP proposals are laid out below:

Bury St Edmunds:

Current Position

There are 3 fire engines at Bury fire station, 1 crewed by full-time firefighters and 2 crewed by on-call firefighters. 1 of these fire engines doubles as an enhanced rescue tender. There are 3 specialist response vehicles; water rescue/aerial ladder platform and a 4x4 off-road vehicle.

In 2014/15 there were 465 emergencies in the Bury area; of these 270 (58%) were false alarms. Crews had an additional 169 deployments; some of these were outside of the Bury area, making a total of 634 deployments to emergencies in Suffolk in 2014/15.

Proposal

To remove 1 on-call fire engine, leaving Bury fire station with 2 fire engines, 1 full-time fire engine and 1 on-call crewed fire engine.

Ipswich:

Current Position

There are two 2 fire stations in Ipswich:

1. Ipswich East fire station, Ransomes Europark, Ipswich, and
2. Princes Street fire station, Central Ipswich

Ipswich East fire station

There are 3 fire engines, 1 crewed by full-time firefighters and 2 crewed by on-call firefighters. There are also 3 specialist response vehicles - aerial ladder platform/operational support unit/incident response unit.

Princes Street fire station

There are 3 fire engines, 2 crewed by full-time firefighters and 1 crewed by on-call firefighters. 1 of the 3 fire engines is also equipped as an enhanced rescue tender. A specialist water rescue vehicle is also based at the station.

In 2014/15 Ipswich crews responded to 1,285 emergency callouts within the Ipswich response area; 624 (49%) of these were false alarms. The vehicles detailed above were deployed on 1,992 occasions; some of these deployments were outside of the Ipswich response area.

Proposal

The proposals are to retain the 2 fire stations in Ipswich but remove 3 of the 6 fire engines. This would provide Ipswich with a full-time fire engine at Princes Street fire station and 2 fire engines at Ipswich East fire station; 1 permanently crewed by full-time firefighters and 1 crewed by on-call firefighters.

Redevelopment or re-provision of the Princes Street fire station is also proposed due to the opportunity which exists to improve the fire station building. Reprovision would provide the opportunity to build a new station in the centre of Ipswich, part-funded by central government finance. Both options would be based on sharing the station with other blue-light partners.

Lowestoft:**Current Position**

There are 2 fire stations in Lowestoft:

1. Lowestoft North, and
2. Lowestoft South

Lowestoft North fire station

1 fire engine is based at the station and this is crewed by on-call firefighters.

Lowestoft South fire station

3 fire engines are based at the station; 1 is crewed by full-time firefighters and 2 by on-call firefighters. 1 of these fire engines doubles as an enhanced rescue tender. There is also a specialist water rescue vehicle, rescue boat and 4x4 off-road vehicle based at the station.

In 2014/15 there were 575 emergency callouts in the Lowestoft area, of these 343 (60%) were false alarms. The fire engines in Lowestoft were deployed in total on 792 occasions in Lowestoft, the surrounding area and occasionally further afield.

Proposal

The proposal is to remove 1 on-call fire engine from Lowestoft South fire station. This would provide Lowestoft with 1 full-time crewed fire engine and 2 on-call fire engines.

Sudbury:**Current Position**

There is 1 fire station in Sudbury which houses 2 fire engines, both of which are crewed by on-call firefighters.

Over a 5 year period the 2 fire engines at Sudbury have been deployed to emergencies on 1,366 occasions in Sudbury, the surrounding area and occasionally further afield. This is an average of 273 deployments per year. The deployments made by the second fire engine account for 29% of this total or an average of 79 each year.

Proposal

To replace 1 of the 2 fire engines in Sudbury with a rapid response type firefighting

vehicle. This would provide two firefighting vehicles in the town.

Wrentham:

Current Position

There is 1 fire station in Wrentham which houses a single fire engine, crewed by on-call firefighters. In the last 5 years there have been 171 emergencies in the Wrentham area. The fire stations at Lowestoft South and Reydon & Southwold are able to provide effective emergency response to the Wrentham area.

Proposal

To remove the fire engine and close Wrentham fire station. Emergencies in the Wrentham area would continue to be dealt with by the surrounding fire stations, predominantly from Lowestoft South and Reydon and Southwold fire stations.

3. Impact identified: *Set out the potential or negative impact(s) that arose from the initial screening, i.e. the reason for the full EIA.*

The initial screening was undertaken in July 2015, when the Government identified its expected grant funding reductions. At the time the formal IRMP proposals had not been finalised. Therefore, it was not possible to fully ascertain the potential impact.

However, it was clear that Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service would continue to be able to provide an effective emergency service throughout Suffolk and be able to manage future changes in a way which had the least impact on Suffolk's communities. Given the uncertainty at this time it was agreed that a full impact assessment would be undertaken once the scope and extent of future changes had been identified and before proposals to reduce fire-fighting resources in Suffolk went forward for decision.

4. Approach: *Describe the consultation and research undertaken: the methods used; who was consulted, why and how; and sources of data/evidence collected. Please consider the protected groups: Disability, Age, Sex (gender), Gender reassignment, Marriage/civil partnership, Pregnancy/maternity, Race, Sexual orientation, Religion/belief*

Prior to formulating the IRMP 2015-18, 2 pre-consultation events took place in June and July 2015 in Ipswich. A number of key stakeholders were invited to participate and feedback their views regarding the financial challenges ahead and the opportunities which may exist to reshape the Service. The ideas and feedback received, together with professional judgement, helped to shape the approach taken to developing the IRMP proposals.

Following Cabinet approval on 10 November 2015 a formal 14-week public and staff consultation was commenced on 16 November 2015. This closed on 22 February 2016. The consultation period included a 2 week extension to take into account the consultation extending over the Christmas and New Year periods.

The consultation strategy and related arrangements were developed with the help of the Consultation Institute, which has also been quality assuring the arrangements throughout. In addition, Opinion Research Services were contracted to support the consultation arrangements, hosting an online consultation questionnaire, providing advice and guidance and collating all the feedback from the consultation exercise and, when ready, publishing an independent report on the feedback received.

The IRMP 2015-18 and supporting information for the consultation exercise was published online, on the Council's website. In addition, key stakeholders, identified through a stakeholder analysis, were written to making them aware of the consultation arrangements and how to find out more information.

The consultation documents were developed having regard for the audience to ensure these were clear, concise, factual and understandable. The consultation welcomed alternative proposals to the ones laid-out in the IRMP and the impact of the proposals was also identified.

The IRMP booklet was published by Design & Print having regard for people who may have wanted the information contained in another language, an alternative format, large print or in audio.

The proposals took into account the current 'English Indices of Deprivation' (2010) for specific areas and other community information to recognise the risk factors associated fire and other emergencies. Subsequently, a revised Indices of Deprivation has been published and this is being considered at this time. Where any significant variances are identified for the delivery of services these will be taken into account.

The IRMP proposals are not expected to have a significant negative effect on protected groups. The Service will continue to target prevention and protection activities to those who are most vulnerable in Suffolk in order to reduce the risk of fire and other emergencies, alongside the work of partners.

As part of the consultation there were 5 public meetings in the affected areas of Bury St Edmunds, Ipswich, Wrentham, Sudbury and Lowestoft. The meetings were open to members of the public and staff. Officers also attended other public meetings on request to explain the IRMP proposals and seek feedback from those present - see section 5 for further details.

Officers also visited fire stations and support departments to provide information regarding the proposals and to encourage feedback regarding these.

Trade unions representing fire and rescue service staff have been engaged informally and formally over and beyond the formal consultation period. There is regular dialogue between trade union representatives and officers and this has helped to identify staff feedback and the concerns they may have regarding the proposals.

Extensive use of social media was made to communicate the IRMP proposals and consultation events as was the Council's website. A dedicated email account was also established for the communication of feedback and queries. This was monitored and officers responded as quickly as possible to these.

Senior officers and the Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Protection were interviewed several times by the media (TV, radio and print). Use was made of these arrangements at key times to publicise the consultation arrangements to secure feedback from consultees and provide information. A communications strategy and action plan, including a stakeholder analysis, helped to shape and time the communications and identify the most suitable media for the audience in question.

Final proposals and associated recommendations, taking into account the feedback received from the formal consultation process, will be reported to the Council's Cabinet on the 17 May 2016. No decisions have yet been made regarding these.

The consultation questionnaire included a section for the recording of the socio-demographics of those completing questionnaires. These included sections on age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, gender reassignment and religion (see section 5 for responses).

5. Findings: *Describe the key issues that arose and the expected impact on groups by protected characteristic through analysis of all relevant quantitative data and qualitative information. Also include an explanation of missing data.*

During June and July 2015 the pre-consultation exercise took place and the feedback received was used to help shape and develop the IRMP proposals and other plans. The main themes arising from the pre-consultation were:

- ***The Service should seek out further opportunities for blue light integration and further partnership working*** - Currently the Service shares 6 stations with the Police and 4 with the Ambulance Service and there are plans in place to increase this number over the next 2-3 years. One of the IRMP proposals is to create a 'blue light hub' in the centre of Ipswich to replace Princes St fire station. A third Emergency Services Cadet Scheme will be launched in March in Bury, in partnership with the Police. Officers are currently working with the Ambulance Service to implement a pilot of co-responding with the Ambulance Service, so that people suffering life threatening medical events will receive help faster.
- ***Speed of response to 999 emergencies is important and should be considered carefully with regard to the impact of potential changes to the service provided*** – Officers continuously monitor response times and work is underway to further improve on-call availability levels, recruitment and the retention of on-call firefighters, which can impact on response times, particularly in rural areas. The IRMP proposals have been developed having regard for the current agreed response standards, which will not change as part of the consultation.
- ***The service should consider the extent to which it can raise income or charge for services*** – Further work will be taking place to examine scope for raising income. Currently, income is generated from the shared

use of Council buildings (fire stations) by blue light partners and an increase in blue light collaboration should see this rise. Cost recovery takes place from the shared use of the Services training centre by some neighbouring fire and rescue services and scope to increase this further will be examined as will other opportunities for the generation of income.

Other feedback received within the pre-consultation period included:

1. Maintaining a balance between the emergency resources available, demand for services and the county's risk profile is important.
2. Continuing to focus on improving the availability of on-call firefighters to respond to emergencies is key.
3. Enhancing the Service's prevention work, in order to reduce the numbers of emergencies that occur, is important.
4. The Service should structure teams and use the skills within them to achieve the best outcomes for Suffolk communities.
5. Recognising the positive results achieved by firefighters delivering proactive prevention and protection initiatives.

A flavour of the comments made at pre-consultation events are detailed below:

1. *"Acknowledgement that Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service is already a lean and low-cost organisation"*
2. *"Concerns raised over attendance times increasing if reductions in fire engines and fire stations are made"*
3. *"Suggestion made to install more fire suppression sprinklers in premises to prevent fire deaths"*
4. *"Request made for incident data for the Leiston area"*
5. *"Query made regarding the break-down of emergency incidents provided at the event. Why were only 5 years of emergency calls being used? What about those prior to 2010?"*
6. *"Concerns were raised over maintaining Mildenhall fire station in the event that a large emergency happened at the base".*

Community engagement activities during the consultation period:

The table below provides a summary of all the events and responses during the course of the consultation period. The embedded Word document provides specific dates and comments:

Number of letters sent out to Parish Councils, Community groups (including hard to reach groups) and key stakeholders	540
Public meetings (Pre-consultation)	2 events
Public meetings (formal consultation)	5 events
Public meetings (Organised by Opinion Research Services)	5 events
Freedom of Information requests	10
Other public meetings attended following a request for an IRMP	14

presentation and information	events
Staff meetings	Over 50 events
IRMP online questionnaires	1,603
IRMP hard copy questionnaires	51
Sudbury IRMP photocopied questionnaires	4,090
Letters received	20
Telephone enquiries	7
Social Media enquiries received (specific questions)	74
emails received	127
Petition sponsored by the Suffolk Fire Brigades' Union (FBU)	5,255 signatures
Petition sponsored by Bury fire station's on-call firefighters	6,184 signatures
Postcard campaign against IRMP proposals sponsored by the Suffolk Fire Brigades' Union (FBU)	1,699 post cards
Formal responses received from trade unions (FBU, RFU and the Fire Officers Association)	3
Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service consultation webpage hits	3,105



22 March

Consultation activity Uj

Consultation activity and information received

The comments below are typical of, but do not form a detailed report on, the responses received from the public consultation events held. This and more detailed feedback will help inform and shape future proposals and recommendations.

Public events hosted by Suffolk Fire and Rescue

Bury St Edmunds – West Suffolk House on 6 January 2016.

Number of attendees: 50: Feedback forms returned = 15 (28%)

Type of Comments made:

1. *"I was pleased to be asked for my views as a young person"*
2. *"You told us, you cannot guarantee surrounding fire station availability"*
3. *"Concerns raised over employers not being able to allowing their staff to respond to emergencies in their role as on-call firefighters"*
4. *"How does the IRMP take into account the future increase in housing and new families?"*

Ipswich – Endeavour House on 14 January 2016

Number of attendees: 50: Feedback form returned = 14 (25%)

Type of Comments made:

1. *"Concerns raised over on-call fire station availability and the potential loss of firefighters"*
2. *"How long will it take the fire service to respond to a high-rise incident following cuts?"*
3. *"If Princes Street is cut, what would be the arrangements for crewing the Rescue appliance?"*

Wrentham – Wrentham Village Hall on 28 January 2016

Number of attendees: 120: Feedback forms returned = 15 (11%)

Type of Comments made:

1. *"The decision has already been made to close us"*
2. *"We knew that as soon as Reydon and Southwold fire station was built, they no longer needed Wrentham"*
3. *"We would be happy to pay more to maintain our fire station – we pay more for green bins, why not for the Fire Service?"*

Lowestoft – Riverside Centre on 1 February 2016:

Number of attendees: 90: Feedback forms returned = 17 (19%)

Type of Comments made:

1. *"The plan did not recognise the large increase in new build housing predicted for the Lowestoft and Wrentham areas"*
2. *"How much would be added to my council tax to maintain the fire service?"*

Sudbury – Town Hall on 3 February 2016

Number of attendees: 200: Feedback forms returned = 52 (26%)

Types of Comments made:

1. *"What is plan B, if these proposals are rejected?"*
2. *"Why can't we pay more council tax to maintain fire cover in Sudbury?"*
3. *"How come Nayland had a new fire station but were off the run for 6 days last week?"*
4. *"Why can't Nayland have the new rapid response vehicle instead of Sudbury?"*

The questions and responses recorded at the public meetings were collated and fed back to those who indicated they wanted feedback, as indicated above.

Public Forums hosted by Opinion Research Services

Opinion Research Services used an accepted research selection method to identify people from the electoral register to attend the public forum meetings. An officer attended each of these meeting to help provide any technical support, where needed, to facilitate discussions.

Location	Number of attendees
Bury St Edmunds – 8 February 2016	11
Lowestoft – 11 February 2016	11
Ipswich – 10 February 2016	14
Wrentham – 11 February 2016	5
Sudbury – 9 February 2016	9

Voluntary and Community Sector meetings

Two meetings organised at Eye on the 26 January 2016 and in Ipswich on 10 November 2015 provided the opportunity for officers to speak to members of Suffolk's voluntary sector organisations and provide a briefing on the IRMP proposals.

Online

Webpage activity was monitored and assessed using google analytics. This indicated how people were engaging online with the consultation information provided there. The attached document below illustrates how the online information was accessed.



Analytics SCC
Website.pdf

Staff

The IRMP proposals have the potential for a reduction in operational posts over the period 2016-20. However, every effort will be made to manage any reductions through natural wastage, where this is achievable and practicable.

In assessing the potential impact on people the workforce profile was examined to identify whether any proposals would impact or affect specific staff groups. It was noted that the largest staff group that could be affected fell into the category of white heterosexual males in the age group 25-54.

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service Staff Profile

Ethnic Origin (Top-Line Categories)	Total %
Not Stated	27.6%
Black or Black British	0.40%
Mixed	0.80%
Other Ethnic Groups	0.60%
White	70.6%

Gender	Total
Female	6%
Male	94%

Sexual Orientation	Total
Bisexual	0.8%
Heterosexual / Straight	42.8%
No Sexuality	0.2%
Not Stated	50.9%
Prefer not to say	5.1%
Gay Women / Lesbian	0.2%
Gay Man	0.0%

Age Band	Total
18 to 24 years	7%
25 to 34 years	22%
35 to 44 years	27%
45 to 54 years	35%
55+ years	9%

Disability (Desc)	Total
Data Missing	70.13%
No	28.09%
Yes	1.78%

Source: Provided by HR – Suffolk County Council

Community activities designed to engage those most at risk - to reduce risk

Prevention (community safety) and Protection (fire safety) activities across Suffolk will continue to help reduce the risk of fire and other emergencies by targeting the most vulnerable groups to work with to provide advice and support and where relevant intervention. Prevention activities focus on vulnerable people such as: the elderly, those with limited mobility, families with young children, specific groups such as Gypsies, Travellers and young drivers, young drivers are particularly at greater risk of being involved in road traffic collisions.

In the last 5 years, SFRS has carried out 13,965 safer home visits focused on improving fire safety in people's homes. Road casualty reduction initiatives are also in place (i.e. young drivers and road safety for motorcyclists); this often forms part of a multi-agency approach.

Initiatives in developing, supporting and educating young people will continue to be rolled out throughout Suffolk i.e. School Fire Liaison Officers, year 6 Crucial Crew, Firesetter Intervention Scheme (Stopping a child's interest in fire), the firefighting fit & healthy scheme and Emergency Service Cadets. SFRS is also actively engaged in "prevent", which works specifically with those at risk of radicalisation, again many of these activities are part of a wider multi-agency approach.

Protection activities are generally focused on premises such as residential care homes, hospitals/medical care centres, educational establishments and businesses. SFRS carries out a yearly reviewed risk based inspection plan (RBIP). The RBIP considers the greatest risk in the event of fire, current priorities for inspection include residential care homes and hospitals, these generally house vulnerable people.

As from 1/4/16 a new initiative known as "Impact days" will start.

There will be 10 impact days each year which will focus on residential accommodation above shops (particularly above high risk premises); each impact day will be in a different location across the towns and villages in Suffolk. The objective of the impact days will be to provide; advice and support to both business owners and those living in residential accommodation above shops. SFRS Protection team will attend and co-ordinate the impact days whilst the Prevention department officers and environmental housing officers will also attend on each day. Where relevant members of the public will be referred to other agencies for advice and support.

Potential Impact on Communities and members of the public receiving a 999 emergency service

In order to ascertain whether any IRMP proposals could affect groups with protected characteristics in communities, officers examined emergency information gathered on Incident Reporting Forms for a 5 year (2010-2015) period showing the characteristics of those who had received a 999 service. The largest group of people who could be affected are in the category white British and male. The incidence of persons over the age of 60 also has a slightly higher number when compared to other age groups. See the table overleaf:

NB Links to the IRMP and station documents are contained within section 8 for this document.

Snapshot of Ethnicity and age groups involved in 999 Emergency Incidents (Suffolk) extracted from IRS (Incident Reporting System)

Ethnicity	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Black or Black British - African	2	2	1	1	3
Any Other	2	1	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi	0	2	1	0	1
White - British	523	404	426	404	445
Caribbean: Black or Black British	2	4	2	2	1
Chinese:	1	1	1	0	2

Indian: Asian or Asian British	3	5	8	4	5
Irish: White - Irish	1	4	4	2	2
Not known/stated	97	71	98	84	79
Other Asian: Asian or Asian British	8	2	10	7	1
Other Black: Black or Black British	10	6	4	2	3
Other Mixed: Mixed	1	1	1	3	3
Other White: White	34	29	21	33	25
Pakistani: Asian or Asian British	0	0	0	0	0
White & Asian: Mixed	0	0	0	1	0
White & Black African: Mixed	3	2	2	0	1
White & Black Caribbean: Mixed	0	0	0	0	0

Age Groups	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Below 18	131	91	76	71	78
Age 18 – 24	105	58	80	74	65
Age 25 – 34	108	96	96	96	99
Age 35 – 44	109	90	72	64	62
Age 45 – 60	121	95	126	116	117
Above 60	113	104	130	122	150

Gender	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Not known	11	11	9	13	9
Male	375	283	282	325	310
Female	299	239	287	205	251
Not specified	2	1	2	0	1

Suffolk has a rising population of 728,000 which can increase during the summer months through tourism and migrant workers.

In formulating the IRMP proposals, each one has considered local demographics and risk. Specific information is contained within the related IRMP documentation.

IRMP questionnaire responses

IRMP consultation questionnaires were formatted to include sections for the recording of protected characteristics. The table below shows the information recorded by consultees:

Data Source	
Postal	51
Online	1603
Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?	

Organisation	48
Personal response	1606
Age	
Under 25	66
25 to 34	200
35 to 44	224
45 to 54	260
55 to 64	195
65 to 74	163
75 to 84	35
85 or over	6
Not known	505
Gender	
Male	556
Female	555
Not known	543
Sexual Orientation	
Bisexual	13
Gay man/same sex relationship with a man	15
Gay women/lesbian/same sex relationship with a woman	13
Heterosexual/straight	751
No sexuality	13
Other	14
Not known	835
Ever Identified as Transgender	
Yes	3
No	873
Not known	778
Disability	
Yes	108
No	1059
Not known	487
Ethnic Group	
Asian	6
Black	5
Mixed	7
White British	1032
White Other	18
Other	2
Not known	584
Religion or Belief	
Christian	455
No religion	373
Other	29
Not known	797
Employee of Suffolk FRS	
Yes	72
No	1046
Not known	536

6. Conclusion: Explain the outcome of the consultation and research; the mitigation options considered and decisions made. Include the risks, benefits and

social and economic cost analysis.

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service is valued by the communities and businesses across Suffolk.

Whilst formal detailed consultation feedback is due to be published in the first week in April, anecdotal feedback gathered during the consultation period from people attending public meetings and other events indicates that the majority of people do not want to lose a valuable local service or see this change.

However, there was also recognition for why the proposals had been brought forward.

In formulating and selecting the IRMP proposals officers have carefully assessed risks in Suffolk and examined foreseeable emergencies when planning future resources. The potential effect and impact of reducing fire and rescue service resources has also been taken into account and is documented within the IRMP and supporting documents (link to these available in section 8). The actions needed to mitigate risks have also been taken into account.

The mitigating factors influencing the risks are informed by 4 main factors:

1. Prevention and protection activities will continue to help reduce the risk of fire and other emergencies and target advice and support to those who are most vulnerable in Suffolk. (These activities are described in section 5 above)
2. Emergency response demand has fallen, over a 10 year period, by over 40%. A large proportion of the emergencies attended are false alarms, requiring no action. However, plans have taken into account foreseeable emergencies. Protected groups affected may be younger male drivers who are involved in a higher proportion of road traffic collisions and older people who are involved in fire proportionally higher than other age groups.
3. Fire and rescue service emergency response standards will not change as part of the proposals and where a fire engine is removed the next nearest will attend instead. The appropriate weight of response to emergencies will be maintained to ensure the right resources and right equipment are still sent to incidents. Our speed of response standards are for the first fire engine attending a property fire within 11 minutes, second fire engine to attend a property fire in 16 minutes and the first fire engine to attend a road traffic collision within 13 minutes on 80% of occasions.
4. Should all proposals be agreed and implemented Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service would retain 34 of the 35 fire stations and 41 of the current 47 fire engines located on stations across Suffolk. These fire engines would continue to provide for a resilient and effective emergency service to meet legal obligations and foreseeable risks and demand.

As part of the IRMP and this Full Equality Impact Assessment regard has been had for each IRMP proposal and the impact of the proposed changes, which have been examined. These are reported below:



IRMP-v32-2015-2015.
pdf

IRMP Document

Bury St Edmunds

Two fire engines and a range of specialist vehicles would be based at Bury fire station. 1 of the fire engines would be crewed by full-time firefighters and 1 by on-call firefighters. In the event of an incident in Bury requiring more than 2 fire engines, the next nearest fire engines would be sent. On average, the fire engine from Elmswell is normally able to attend incidents in Bury in less than 15 minutes. With fewer fire engines in Bury there would be an increased likelihood that both the fire engines would be committed to an incident for an extended period. If this was the case, a fire engine from a surrounding fire station would be sent to Bury to provide 'stand-by' cover in the event of a further 999 call.

A reduction in the number of fire engines in Bury would result in the remaining on-call fire engine being busier than is currently the case. The on-call fire stations surrounding Bury are also expected to attend more incidents if these proposals are agreed.

Over the last 5 years the average response time to all emergencies in Bury by the 3 fire engines based there was 10mins 08secs. The reduction in the number of fire engines would most likely increase response times for subsequent simultaneous incidents when the two Bury fire engines were already committed to an emergency. See page 3 for the speed of response standards.

The reduction in the number of firefighters would have an impact on the number of personnel trained to respond with the specialist appliances based at Bury. Arrangements would be made to ensure that an appropriate number of firefighters were trained to operate these vehicles and support emergencies. Where appropriate, alternative arrangements would be made for crewing these vehicles.

Reducing the overall number of firefighters and resources in Bury could, on occasions, impact on the Service's ability to deal with large emergencies in the county or a large number of smaller emergencies. This risk is mitigated by being able to call upon fire engines and firefighters from the remaining 34 fire stations across the county. Further support is available from neighbouring fire services in Norfolk, Essex and Cambridgeshire, and firefighters work regularly with neighbouring services.

Financial Impact

Removing 1 on-call crewed fire engine from Bury fire station would result in an estimated saving of £72,000 per annum.

[Station Document](#) (Click link for Bury St Edmunds)

Ipswich

Three fire engines and a range of specialist vehicles would be based across the 2 fire stations in Ipswich. 2 of the fire engines will be crewed by full-time firefighters and 1 by on-call firefighters. In the event of an incident in Ipswich requiring more than 3 fire engines, resources from the next nearest fire stations would be sent. The nearest four fire stations surrounding Ipswich are able to attend incidents in Ipswich in less than 20 minutes.

Fewer fire engines in Ipswich mean that there is an increased likelihood that all of the fire engines would be committed to an incident. If this is the case then a fire engine from a neighbouring fire station would be sent into Ipswich to provide

'stand-by' cover in the event of a further 999 call.

The on-call firefighters in Ipswich attend relatively few incidents; less than 150 in 2014/15. A reduction in the number of fire engines will result in the remaining on-call fire engine being busier than is currently the case. The on-call fire stations surrounding Ipswich are expected to attend more incidents if these proposals are agreed.

Over the last 5 years the average response time to all emergencies in Ipswich by the town's six fire engines was 9mins 35secs. The reduction in the number of fire engines would most likely increase response times for subsequent simultaneous incidents when the two full-time fire engines were already committed to an emergency.

The reduction in the number of firefighters would impact on the number of personnel trained to respond with the specialist appliances based at the two stations. Arrangements would be made to ensure that an appropriate number of firefighters were trained to operate these appliances. Where appropriate, alternative arrangements would be made for the crewing of these vehicles.

The third full-time crewed Ipswich fire engine is often used to provide fire cover in areas of the county where on-call fire stations may not be available. This facility would no longer be available and the 3 fire engines would remain in Ipswich. Alternative arrangements are being made to improve the availability of on-call firefighters across the county.

Reducing the overall number of firefighters and resources in Ipswich could, on occasions, impact on the Service's ability to deal with large emergencies or a large number of smaller emergencies. This risk is mitigated by being able to call upon fire engines and firefighters from the remaining 33 fire stations across the county. Further support is available from neighbouring fire services in Norfolk, Essex and Cambridgeshire, and national resilience networks. Firefighters already work regularly with neighbouring services.

Financial Impact

- Removing one on-call crewed and one full-time crewed fire engine from Princes Street fire station would result in an estimated saving of £854,900 per annum.
- Removing one on-call fire engine from Ipswich East fire station would result in an estimated saving of £61,400 per annum.
- The combined proposals would result in an estimated annual saving of £916,300.

[Station Document](#) (Click link for Ipswich station document)

Lowestoft

Two fire engines and a range of specialist vehicles will be based at Lowestoft South fire station. 1 of the fire engines will be crewed by full-time firefighters and 1 by on-call firefighters. In the event of an incident in Lowestoft requiring more than 2 fire engines then the next nearest fire engines would be sent. Lowestoft

North fire station is just 2.9 miles from Lowestoft South fire station.

With fewer fire engines in Lowestoft there is an increased likelihood that all of the fire engines will be committed to an incident. If this is the case then a fire engine from a surrounding fire station will be sent to a fire station in Lowestoft to provide 'stand-by' cover in the event of a further 999 call.

The on-call firefighters in Lowestoft attend relatively few incidents – less than 175 in total in 2014/15. A reduction in the number of fire engines will result in the remaining fire engines being busier than is currently the case. The on-call fire stations surrounding Lowestoft are also expected to attend more incidents if this proposal is agreed. It should be noted that there is a further proposal to close Wrentham fire station which is 6.1 miles from Lowestoft South fire station.

Over the last 5 years the average response time to all emergencies in Lowestoft by the 3 fire engines based at Lowestoft South was 9 minutes and 32 seconds. For the majority of emergencies the time taken for the first and second fire engines to arrive will remain unchanged. The reduction in the number of fire engines in the town would mean that it would be likely there will be an increase in response times when the three remaining fire engines are already committed to an emergency and a further fire engine or engines are required in Lowestoft at the same or a different incident. The reduction in the number of firefighters will have an impact on the number of firefighters trained to respond with the specialist appliances based at Lowestoft South. Arrangements will be made to ensure that an appropriate number of firefighters are trained to operate these appliances and support emergency incidents. Where appropriate alternative arrangements will be made to crew these vehicles.

Reducing the overall number of firefighters and resources in Lowestoft could, on occasions, impact on the Service's resilience and ability to deal with large emergencies in the county or a large number of smaller emergencies. This risk is mitigated by being able to call upon fire engines and firefighters from the remaining 33 fire stations across the county. Further support is also available from neighbouring fire and rescue services.

Financial Impact

Removing one on-call crewed fire engine from Lowestoft South fire station would result in a saving of approximately £62,000 per annum.

[Station document](#) (Click link for the Lowestoft station document)

Sudbury

It is not possible to assess the operational impact of the proposal until a considerable volume of analysis has been undertaken to determine optimum crewing and operational response arrangements. If a decision is made in May 2016 to accept this proposal, after having regard for the public consultation, a working group will be established to consider these details. This group will include representative bodies and firefighters from Sudbury.

The operational impact of a rapid response vehicle will be informed by learning from fire services across the country that operates similar arrangements.

A smaller vehicle has the potential to improve initial response times to some incidents; it could be flexibly crewed with fewer firefighters, allowing a faster response once a call is received. It could then be supported by other fire engines sent to the scene if more resource was required.

The Service will consider provision of new and innovative firefighting and rescue equipment to maximise the vehicle's effectiveness. This would be the first vehicle of its type in Suffolk.

With Long Melford fire station less than 3 miles from Sudbury, and 2 fire engines being maintained in the town, Sudbury would continue to be provided with 2 fire engines and a rapid response vehicle within 3 miles. The average speed of response for all three vehicles is likely to remain at less than 13 minutes.

Financial Impact

The extent of the financial savings that will be derived from this proposal will be confirmed as part of the future work to design the vehicle, equipment and associated crewing arrangements.

For the purposes of this consultation the financial saving from replacing one of the fire engines at Sudbury with the rapid response vehicle is estimated at £35,000 per annum.

[Station document](#) (Click link for the Sudbury Station document)

Wrentham

Over the last 5 years there has been, on average 34 emergencies in Wrentham each year, with one in four of these found to be false alarms. Emergency calls in the Wrentham area will continue to be dealt with by the surrounding fire stations, predominantly the fire engines from Lowestoft South and Reydon fire stations which are 6.1 and 3.4 miles away respectively.

The first fire engine from Lowestoft South has attended 94 emergencies in the Wrentham area over the last 5 years, taking an average of 9:55 minutes, many of these as the first fire engine in attendance at the emergency.

The fire engine from Reydon & Southwold has attended 18 emergencies in the Wrentham area over the last 5 years, taking an average 13:30 minutes, some of these as the first fire engine in attendance at the emergency.

The fire engine from Wrentham has attended 79 emergencies in the Wrentham area over the last 5 years, taking an average of 14:30 minutes. This shows that over the last five years Lowestoft South (by 2:35 minutes) and Reydon & Southwold (by 1 minute) have attended emergencies quicker in Wrentham than the Wrentham fire engine. During 2014/15 the Wrentham fire engine attended only 4 of the 32 emergencies within their area as it was either not available or another fire engine was identified as being able to attend the emergency quicker on the other 28 occasions.

Whilst the call data from the last 5 years shows that the response times of the fire engine from Lowestoft South into Wrentham is very good, there will be occasions when the response time would have been quicker from the Wrentham fire engine

when it was available and the firefighters responded quickly to the fire station in the event of a call.

The cumulative impact of removing the fire engine from Wrentham alongside the other proposals in the Integrated Risk Management Plan could, on occasions, impact on the Service's overall speed of response and resilience and ability to deal with large emergencies in the county or a large number of smaller emergencies. This risk is mitigated by being able to call upon fire engines and firefighters from the remaining 34 fire stations across the county; the availability and regular use of fire engines from the neighbouring fire and rescue services of Norfolk, Essex and Cambridgeshire to support firefighters at larger incidents and also at incidents close to the border; and, the work underway to improve the availability of on-call fire engines, particularly during the day Monday to Friday.

Financial Impact

Removing the Wrentham fire engine would save approximately £79,049 per annum. This is lower than the total yearly running costs of £82,819 as the cost associated with attending emergencies within the Wrentham area would be passed to other neighbouring fire stations.

Significant future investment in the station to improve the condition of the building would also be avoided. However, there is a one-off cost that relates to the clearance and decommissioning of the site - this is estimated at approximately £25,000.

[Station document](#) (Click link for the Wrentham Station document)

999 Combined Fire Control

Both Cambridgeshire and Suffolk share a common 999 Fire Control based at Hinchinbrooke in Cambridgeshire. The fire control database holds a variety of information to assist firefighters with risks and hazards in communities and buildings and information to assist them respond safely to emergencies. Building safety information such as showing the location of oxygen tanks in the homes of vulnerable people with medical problems is one example of the information held on these systems. These arrangements will not change.

Staff

With the staff profile of Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service being predominantly white male and with the average age of uniformed operational staff being 42 years of age and Christian it is likely that these groups of people will be most affected more than any other groups.

Dialogue with staff and trade unions will continue in the future with the view to establishing implementation arrangements for any changes which have been carefully assessed as to their likely impact on staff and specific staff groups. Formal consultation with staff and trade unions would only commence once decisions have been made regarding the future shape of the Service. This will be carried out in line with the Council's Organisational Change Management Policy.

Communities

Responses have been received from specific communities i.e. parish councils and individuals from ethnic/minority groups (see page 14 for IRMP questionnaire breakdown). Following all the feedback Opinion Research Services will publish a detailed full report.

Data

Decision making has been informed by factual information gathered over a five year period or longer. This includes 999 emergency incidents attended. Consultation feedback will not be ready for consideration until early April, once this has been collated. When received, this will be fully taken into account in shaping the recommendations and proposals. Any specific issues identified by people will be investigated.

The proposals have taken into account "The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2010" data as well as other data sets. In March 2016, we are aware that the Department for Communities and Local Government published the 2013 edition of the IMD and this information will be taken into account when considering future options.

7. Proposals: *Set out the next steps that will be taken including the systems set up to monitor any adverse impact; timetable for action; how the findings will influence policy and practice; how systems will be policed internally.*

A decision on the final proposals and associated recommendations will be made at the 17 May 2016 Cabinet meeting. Where any changes to fire and rescue service resources are agreed then officers will continue to work closely with and formally consult staff and trade unions and work closely with key stakeholders and communities to implement any changes in a sensitive and structured manner.

Decision makers will be made aware of this Equality Impact Assessment together with the IRMP consultation feedback prior to making any future decisions.

8. List any attached supporting documents: *E.g. action plan*

[Link to IRMP and supporting station information](#)

[Link to Bury St Edmunds Station document](#)

[Link to Ipswich Station document](#)

[Link to Lowestoft South Station document](#)

[Link to Sudbury Station document](#)

[Link to Wrentham Station document](#)

[Link to Summary of Fire Station options](#)

[Link to Motorcyclist reduction initiatives](#)

[Link to Fire Safety for Businesses](#)

[Link to Supporting, Developing and Educating Young Persons](#)

9. Publication of full EIA: *Describe how this will be done and interested parties informed (legal minimum is publication on the SCC website). If this cannot be published at this time, please give a reason (for example: protected data or commercial sensitivities).*

The full assessment will be published on the County Council's website.