

# FACT SHEET 1

## **LEICESTERSHIRE** **FIRE and RESCUE SERVICE**

### **Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service Introduction**

Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service, (LFRS) is responsible for protecting life and property within Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. We provide emergency cover to 2,550 square kilometres (984.5 square miles) with a resident population of 936,200.

### **Our history**

Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Combined Fire Authority was established as a on the 1st April 1997 by the Leicestershire Fire Services (Combination Scheme) Order 1996. The Authorities role being to provide an efficient Fire and Rescue Service within its area in accordance with the various legislative requirements.

The order established a Fire Authority for the combined area, specified its first Chief Fire Officer and the statutory appointment of a Treasurer. The Authority was also required by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to designate a Monitoring officer.

Also covered in the Combination Order are a number of issues in relation to the structure and financing of the Authority.

The most significant change to the original constitution of the Authority came into force in the Financial Year 2004/2005 when it became a "Precepting Authority". Funding is now received from two sources, the Formula Grant (which includes Revenue Support Grant and Business Rates) and the Precepting income i.e. the Council Tax that comes via the seven district and two unitary authorities.

### **Our resources and calls**

There are 20 fire stations across the services area, 4 are staffed with wholetime personnel, 11 with part-time personnel and 5 with a mix of both. Our front-line vehicle fleet currently comprises 40 pumping appliances and 32 'special appliances' such as Arial Ladder Platforms, Salvage and Rescue units. In 2005 we received more than 22,077 emergency 999 calls. Of these, over 4,241 were fires, nearly 2,605 were special services and nearly 5,741 were false alarms.

### **Our Responsibilities**

We must carry out the duties set out in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and take account of the objectives and guidance in the Fire and Rescue Services

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National Framework document (available at [www.dclg.gov.uk/fire](http://www.dclg.gov.uk/fire)). Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, we also work with other emergency services and agencies to deal with a wide range of scenarios - from local minor incidents (fires and floods) to national catastrophes (earthquakes and terrorist attacks). We are a 'category 1' responder, which means we have to protect the public by developing emergency plans, warning and informing people in an emergency, sharing information with other organisations and co-operating to support partnerships to enable the best possible response.

### **Responding effectively to emergencies**

One of our strategic priorities is to prevent emergencies from happening. As part of our overall performance framework, we will inspect and monitor our services. This includes making sure that staff are trained to professional standards and know the dangers they will face; putting in place systems for giving instructions to staff and controlling how they deal with emergencies they are called to; ensuring that staff leading our response have the appropriate training and experience; and making sure the right equipment is available.

### **Those most at risk**

Research has shown that the people most at risk from fire are those aged 60 and over, children under 18 and people living in areas of social or economic deprivation. In 2005, there were 7 fire deaths in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

### **Special services**

Special services cover a range of incidents including road accidents, releasing people trapped in lifts, dealing with flooded premises or making structures safe. The Service levies charges for some types of special services to recover costs and generate income. Charges are never levied if fire, risk of fire or other risk of serious injury is present.

### **False alarms**

Most false alarm calls are made with good intent but in 2005 more than 1,060 were hoax calls – almost 3 per day. Being called out to a hoax call could divert resources from a genuine emergency.



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## Preventing fire and managing risk

Since April 2003, we have worked with other agencies in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland to produce a local Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) that sets out our strategy to:

- reduce the number and effects of fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies;
- make injuries in fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies less severe;
- reduce the effect that fires and other emergencies have on businesses, the economy and the community;
- protect the environment and heritage (both built and natural); and
- provide value for money.

The IRMP sets out our assessment of risk to life in local areas and, in line with this assessment, how we will use resources to tackle these risks and improve safety for everyone. As part of the IRMP, we must produce an action plan every year to help us meet our priorities and aims

## Our staff

In total, we employ about 400 full time and 216 part time firefighters. A further 89 managers provide logistical and operational support including training, fire protection, operational risk management and contingency planning.

To provide a round-the-clock availability, the Service operates a two shift, four-watch system at stations - watches are referred to as red, white, blue and green.

The rank structure for operational staff have been recently replaced with role titles that better reflect the actual jobs carried out.

Control staff are currently based at Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters and receive emergency 999 calls, find out details of incidents, mobilise appliances and deploy Service resources. They also use a four-watch system. In response to a Central Government Initiative, plans are well advanced for the replacement of local control centres with regional centres. A control centre for the East Midlands (comprising Leicestershire, Derbyshire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire and Nottinghamshire) is currently under construction in Castle Donnington, Leicestershire.

In addition to the operational personnel, we employ about 130 support staff who carry out key functions in occupational health & safety, finance, human resources, administrative support, democratic services, fleet management, property maintenance and information technology.

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### Organisational structure

#### The Combined Fire Authority

The Leicestershire Fire Services (Combination Scheme) Order 1996 specified that the Fire Authority should be made up of elected members appointed by each of the three constituent authorities within its area of operations: Leicester City Council, Leicestershire County Council and Rutland County Council in proportion to the number of local government electors in its area and in relation to the overall number of electors in the Fire Authorities Area.

This gives the present structure of 5 City members, 11 County members and 1 Rutland member.

#### Meetings of the Authority

The Combined Fire Authority (CFA) normally meets on six occasions each year. The Annual Meeting takes place each June at which the Chair and Vice Chair are appointed. The composition of the CFAs committees and other bodies is also arranged at the Annual Meeting, together with appointments to the Local Government Associations Fire Forum and General Assembly.

#### Managing Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service

The Fire and Rescue Service is managed on behalf of the CFA by the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer. He is supported by four Directors responsible for Community Safety, Organisational Development, Corporate Resources and Finance and Corporate Risk.

Together they form the Corporate Management Board (CMB). The role of the Board is to consider the need for policy development arising from independent political, economic, sociocultural, technological, environmental and legal factors likely to have a medium to longer-term effect on the work of the CFy

Below CMB is the Senior Management Team (SMT), which comprises of all heads of department. SMTs role is to advise the CMB on future policy and strategy development. In addition, they are responsible for the delivery of the service development and improvement programme. Strategies, priorities and aims are communicated to the workforce through the staff appraisal system, the Integrated Risk Management Plan, the Best Value Performance Plan and strategic planning processes.

## **FACT SHEET 3**

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## **The Fire and Rescue Services Act**

### **Introduction**

Fire & Rescue Services in the United Kingdom are established under legislation which dates back to 1947.

The Government has recently undertaken an independent review of the Fire Service which resulted in a 'White Paper' titled 'Our Fire and Rescue Service'. The White Paper outlined the Government's modernisation agenda for the Fire Service. From it, 'The Fire and Rescue Services Bill' was produced which lays the foundation for the delivery of a modern and efficient service designed to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

In July 2004, the Fire and Rescue Services Act became law and it has brought about a number of reforms to achieve modernisation. The main reforms include:

### **Safer communities**

The Act provides a new duty on all fire and rescue authorities to promote fire safety which underpins a more prevention based approach aimed at saving more lives by reducing fires occurring in the first place.

### **Modern legislative framework**

The replacement of out-dated legislation with a new statutory framework that recognises the Fire and Rescue Service's existing role in responding to a range of incidents e.g. road traffic collisions alongside its traditional firefighting role. The Act also creates a new duty to respond to other emergencies for example; serious flooding and acts of terrorism.

### **National Framework**

The Fire and Rescue Services Act gives statutory force to the Fire and Rescue National Framework and places a duty on the Secretary of State to keep it up to date and report against it. The National Framework sets out the Government's requirements for the Fire and Rescue Service and the support it will provide. The Act provides the power to ensure that, if necessary, fire and rescue authorities are required to comply with the requirements.

### **The regional approach**

The Act strengthens and streamlines existing powers to combine fire and rescue authorities. Regional management arrangements must be agreed to deliver functions such as planning for serious emergencies, joint control rooms, procurement and training.

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### **Civil resilience**

The Act underpins the Fire and Rescue Service contribution to national resilience through new powers to direct fire and rescue authorities during particular emergencies to ensure a co-ordinated and strategic response where resources are focused where they are needed most.

### **Reinforcement schemes**

The Act updates existing powers to allow fire and rescue authorities to enter into reinforcement schemes with other authorities to provide assistance to each other.

### **Partnership**

Fire and rescue authorities' powers to delegate functions have been extended to cover their new powers and duties to enable partnership with others; for example, in the promotion of fire safety. An authority can only delegate its duty for fighting fires to another authority or others who employ firefighters.

### **Equipment power**

The Act provides powers for the Secretary of State to procure equipment and services for fire and rescue authorities, and to direct them about the use of their equipment to ensure uniformity of approach across the Service which is crucial to national resilience and in the interest of public safety.

### **Charging**

The Act maintains the existing ability for fire and rescue authorities to charge for particular services as occurs elsewhere in local government. The Act continues to exclude the possibility of charging for firefighting.

### **Negotiating bodies**

The Act reserves powers to set up new bodies to negotiate pay and conditions of service. Effective negotiating machinery is critical to modernisation.

### **Engaging stakeholders**

The Act has introduced effective and flexible stakeholder advisory and consultative forums to ensure advice from producers and users of the Service can inform future direction.

## Corporate planning and performance management

### Introduction

Our aim is to provide value for money for services and operate in an effective and efficient manner. However, delivering our services in an integrated and joined up way is not something that can be left to chance. We need to draw up strategies, make plans, set targets and then monitor how well we are doing.

#### “Our plan”

We have put together in one document our strategic plan, Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) action plan and parts of our Best Value Performance Plan. “Our plan” sets out our vision, our priorities and values, and how we will achieve them.

Where possible we have included the shared aims of local community plans and partners, for example, local strategic partnerships. After our comprehensive performance assessment (CPA), we put together a detailed improvement plan to look at the areas the assessment recommended we improve. We have already made improvements in some of these areas and we have included the longer-term priorities in the aims and action plan of this document.

This will make sure we achieve our goal of continuously improving and strengthening our performance in the delivery of services to the communities we serve.

We agree the plan and the associated budget in February of each year. Work towards the final plan and budget begins with a review in July. The draft plan is published in September/October and we consult many partners and stakeholders for 12 weeks before it is finalised.

Once the final plan is published, the Service Development Programme Board (SDPB) (made up of senior managers and an elected member of the Authority) monitors how we are putting the plan into practice every month. The Corporate Management Board (CMB) carry out performance reviews every three months, and we send reports on our progress to the Fire Authority Policy Committee and Scrutiny Panel.

We include our aims and targets in directorate, service, station and departmental plans, and make each member of staff aware of them when we give appraisals.

**Copies of “Our plan” are available from information services at fire and rescue service headquarters and on our website [www.leicestershire-fire.gov.uk](http://www.leicestershire-fire.gov.uk)**

## FACT SHEET 5

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## Paying for your Fire and Rescue Service

### Introduction

Every financial year, the Combined Fire Authority (CFA) must prepare and approve a budget. The budget must consist of amounts covering estimated revenue expenditure, contingencies, reserves to be raised and used, estimated generated income and the 'budget requirement'. The budget requirement is a calculation of the amount that is to be funded by non-domestic rates, grant and precept.

The 2004/05 budget was the first the CFA set using its new precepting powers. From the 1st April 2004 the CFA receives its funding from two main sources. The Formula Grant (which includes the Revenue Support Grant and redistributed Business Rates income. This comes direct from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). The precepting income, i.e. Council Tax, comes via the seven district and two unitary authorities.

It is important to ensure that the budget set by the CFA reflects and enables progress to be made against our corporate objectives. The medium-term financial plan needs to reflect our planning proposals. It also needs to reflect national strategies and policies.

The CFA has to set a budget within available resources and ensure that it has sufficient reserves to meet financial risks that might occur. The Authority has to live within its financial resources and there is a serious financial risk if the revenue budget is not managed appropriately. The CFA has to agree the use of any of the Financial Reserves set aside for this purpose in the annual budget.

### 2006/2007 budget

At the CFA meeting on 15 February 2006, we set a total budget of £31.092 million for 2006/2007 which includes a capital budget of £3.159 million. (The capital budget is for spending on large items like major building works).

Our total spending has gone up by 3.82%. However, the Government has only increased our grant by 2.6%, which has led to a Council Tax increase of 4.92% to fill the gap in funding. Council Tax pays for £13.921million (44.8%) of our budget. The other £17.171million (55.2%) is provided by the Government. The balance of funding has been changing gradually since we first began to use Council Tax in 2004/2005. More of our funding now comes from local residents and we expect this to continue. We believe that we will continue to have the lowest Council Tax for any CFA in the country.

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The table below compares our charge with our regional partners' charges.  
Band - D Council Tax

Our charge £45.23

Derbyshire £57.64

Nottinghamshire £60.85

In 2004/2005 and 2005/2006 we have done better than the savings targets set by the Government, and invested the saving back into our service.

**Full detail of the services budget can be found elsewhere on our website [www.leicestershire-fire.gov.uk](http://www.leicestershire-fire.gov.uk)**



## FACT SHEET 6

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### Fire safety

#### Introduction

Our statutory fire safety responsibilities fall into three broad categories:

- Enforcement of legislation:
- Consulting: and,
- Providing advice.

#### Enforcement

In 2001, UK fire services attended more than 30,000 fires in workplaces. These fires killed over 30 people and injured more than 2,000. The costs of a serious fire can be high, and many businesses affected by fire never re-open. The total cost of commercial fires in 2000 was £270,000,000.

Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service is responsible for the enforcement of the statutory fire safety regulations. We have appointed specially trained Fire safety officers who carry out risk based inspections aimed at reducing the risk of fire within the community.

The new statutory powers relevant to enforcing fire safety measures came into force on 1st October 2006. All previous fire safety laws have been replaced by this new legislation which covers almost all non-domestic premises. Fire certificates have been replaced with the requirement to carry out risk assessments and the need to keep them up to date. These new duties are supported with guidance documents published by the Department of Communities and Local Government and Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service applies the principles of the Enforcement Concordat when carrying out its work to ensure a balanced approach.

So far, we have been very successful in reducing the number of deaths and injuries caused by fire in buildings, and we will continue this work by making sure people keep to the new laws.

#### Consulting

We are consulted by a number of other enforcing authorities on fire safety matters. The main consultations are with:

- Building control: and,
- Houses in multiple occupation (HMOs).

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### Advice

We will provide fire safety advice on request free of charge about how to prevent and restrict fires in buildings and the means of escape from buildings and other property in case of fire.

Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service has a number of Fire Safety initiatives including:

### Home fire safety check

We carry out free home fire safety checks and fit smoke detectors if necessary. To arrange a home fire safety check please contact us.

### Arson task force

Formally established in June 2004, the Arson Task Force (ATF) is based within the Fire and Rescue Service and comprises a Fire Officer, Police Officer and a Researcher and Administrator. The teams aim is to prevent and reduce year on year, the number of arson related incidents.

### It achieves this by:

- **Identifying the contributing factor to arson**
- **Identifying arson trends**
- **Implementing projects to reduce arson**
- **Evaluating arson projects**

We use a problem solving strategy that locates the three main elements i.e. offender, target and motive. We are involved in many activities working with different organisations to identify and prosecute persistent arsonists, remove and secure potential arson targets and educate and divert existing and potential arsonists.



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### Firecare

'Fire setter' is a term that has come to us from the USA, to describe people who start fires deliberately. Children's natural fascination with fire can lead to devastating consequences if left unchecked.

We offer the free, confidential Firecare service to any fire setter up to 17 years of age. In most cases, Firecare involves only one or two home visits to the family by two advisors and we aim to educate the whole family about fire safety. However, for young people with more complex problems, there are structured programmes available. The sessions are delivered in conjunction with other city and county agencies e.g. The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Strategy, the Youth Offending Teams and the Child Behaviour Intervention Initiative. We will take referrals from anybody, but the permission of the parent/guardian must be given. Referrals can be made on 0116 2872241

### Websites for further information

[www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)

[www.leicestershire-fire.gov.uk](http://www.leicestershire-fire.gov.uk)

To contact us for more information, please telephone 0116 2872241



## FACT SHEET 7

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## Resilience

### New Dimension

The New Dimension programme was launched after 11 September 2001 to review fire and rescue service preparedness against a potential terrorist threat or other major emergency. Led by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, now Department for Communities and Local Government, it aims to make sure that the fire and rescue service is trained and equipped to deal safely and effectively with major chemical, nuclear, biological and conventional terrorist incidents.

Fire authorities across the United Kingdom have appointed staff to form regional implementation teams, and the government has provided funding for this. Initially, these regional teams analysed local risks in partnership with other emergency services, local authorities and agencies. Based on this information, a national strategy for the deployment of equipment has been developed.

### Leicestershire's Resilience

By resilience, we mean managing challenges like terrorist attacks, chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear emergencies, and events like major flooding. We fully support the Government's aim of protecting the public by taking practical steps to prevent emergencies from happening and responding quickly and effectively when they do. We are a member of the Local Resilience Forum which was formed to Plan for these kinds of emergencies in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

We are constantly looking at how we can improve resilience by developing the capacity to respond to, and work with, other agencies to cope with a variety of different emergencies, including environmental disasters and terrorist attacks.

Fire services across the region have been allocated vehicles and equipment to deal with a wide range of scenarios and arrangements have been put in place to ensure that all of our staff are trained to the highest standards.



## FACT SHEET 8

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## Protective fire kit for our firefighters

### Introduction

We are committed to identifying innovative ways of funding the services we provide. In 2002 we took a fresh look at the protective clothing of Leicestershire's firefighters and it was clear that we could reduce risk to our them - particularly the risk of exposure to heat.

Following detailed research, trials, scientific tests, risk assessment and evaluation, we introduced one of the most advanced fire kits in the world. The fully-integrated personal protection system (PPS) which includes helmets, gloves, fire coats and over-trousers. This was a unique and innovative step for the British Fire and Rescue Service and possibly the fire service worldwide

### TotalCare partnership

We introduced our current PPS in 2004 through a fully managed service. This is a partnership arrangement with Lion Apparel Incorporated of Dayton, Ohio, USA. The service is provided by Lion's wholly owned UK subsidiary, Lion Apparel. These are responsible for the management and full maintenance of the fire kit. This includes issue, stock holding, servicing, cleaning, repair, replacement and eventual disposal of items. The contract runs for seven years and is due to be renewed on 2011.



### Why Leicestershire picked TotalCare

TotalCare has a number of advantages for the Service, the main one being that the day-to-day management of the clothing is undertaken by the supplier, leaving officers to concentrate on the priorities such as community fire safety, attending incidents and training. In addition to the above, further advantages are:

- It spreads the risks associated with many aspects of the contract and servicing arrangements;
- Supply and contract arrangements are simplified via a single source - rather than five or six different companies;
- We no longer have to keep and manage expensive stocks of clothing. Day-to-day and emergency replacements are the responsibility of the supplier;

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- The cost is largely predictable for each of the seven years of the contract. This is particularly useful in times of tight financial control where precise budgetary forecasting is essential;
- The initial cost of the PPS was met by the supplier. The Authority therefore avoided the very significant 'up front' purchase costs associated with the traditional method of acquiring new firefighting kit.
- Each component is tracked throughout its life, making sure that a complete life history is maintained for each element of the system. This ensures that each item of kit continues to provide the necessary level of protection. It also enables us to analyse trends to assist with future development.

The TotalCare partnership has provided firefighters with a technically superior personal protection system consistent with the requirements of the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992. The partnership works because Lion Apparel takes responsibility for the parts of the service which utilises its expertise to the full and lets the Service get on with the things we are good at.

### **The next generation (Integrated Clothing Project)**

Following an initiative by the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority work has been carried out nationally to research and develop the next generation of clothing and personal protective equipment, (the Integrated Clothing Project-ICP) It is a long-term project looking at four sets of attire - sports wear, station workwear, operational wear (fire kit) and corporate wear (formal attire).

The future clothing, in addition to being fit for purpose must consider four themes best value (including compliance with standards and statutes), equality and diversity, community fire safety and corporate identity.

The research and development phase of this project started in the summer of 2001 and ran through to January 2002.

As part of the Fire and Rescue Service National Procurement Strategy the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has established a limited liability company (FiReBuy) to act as a national purchasing body and it is anticipated that the Integrated Clothing Project will deliver in 2007/8.