



# Fire and Rescue Annual Report 2022 – 2023

Helping you to be safe and feel safe in  
York and North Yorkshire

BE SAFE  
FEEL SAFE



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This report highlights how North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service (NYFRS) has progressed each of the outcomes under the five Fire and Rescue Plan priorities during 2002-23 and meets the requirements of the Fire and Rescue Statement, confirming the adequacy of arrangements and effective management of financial, governance and operational matters, as well as overall adherence to the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England.

# Foreword

Welcome to my Fire and Rescue Annual Report for 2022-23.

The past year has seen significant transformational change, alongside challenges. We consulted on changes to the way North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service (NYFRS) uses its resources to mitigate risk, planned for the impact of likely firefighter strike action and received local and national assessments by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS), highlighting the need for improvements in NYFRS and across the fire and rescue sector.

In April 2022, we welcomed the second inspection from HMICFRS and their report, published later that year, provided an independent assessment of NYFRS's efficiency, effectiveness and how it looks after its people. The report concluded that NYFRS requires improvement in its effectiveness and was deemed inadequate in its efficiency and how well it looks after its people. However, positively the report confirmed that NYFRS Service was good at preventing fires and other emergencies and good in its response to major and multi-agency incidents.

Together the Chief Fire Officer and I have implemented a rigorous ongoing programme for improvement. The Chief Fire Officer immediately put in place plans to address the two issues of concern raised following the inspection, rather than wait for the report. I was delighted when the Inspectorate's revisit in January 2023 recognised the progress made. This, and a robust action plan to address areas for improvement, have provided me with reassurance for the future.

In March 2023, HMICFRS published a report into the values and culture of all 44 fire and rescue services in England. The report found that bullying, harassment, and discrimination are, to varying degrees, still problems across the fire sector. The Chief Fire Officer and I are united in our focus to help address each of the report's 35

recommendations as quickly and robustly as possible. I have made it clear that I expect NYFRS to be an employer of choice with a people focus and welcoming culture that develops leadership, integrity, and inclusivity. The CFO's strategic vision is to create a pro-inclusion culture, through values-based leadership.

To support the improvements needed I have deepened my scrutiny and requirement for improved accountability. I have restructured my Office to ensure resilience and ensure my Fire and Rescue Plan outcomes are achieved. A new assurance model and framework sets out the ways I will hold NYFRS to account. It also describes how we will identify areas (because of public importance, risk, opportunity, or other drivers) that will be subjected to closer scrutiny, to ensure that we can effectively and formally evidence that positive progress and outcomes set out in my Fire and Rescue Plan are being achieved.

Between May and August 2022 my Office held a substantial public consultation on the Chief Fire Officer's proposed changes to how the Service uses its resources to identify and reduce risk. We engaged with over 1400 residents through 12 events across the County and City and received responses from over 1300 people and organisations through an online consultation survey. This provided understanding of the public's concerns and priorities. In September 2022, following the consultation, I approved the implementation of these proposals to be included in the Service's new Risk and Resource Model. This will continue to keep the Public safe whilst enabling sustainable investment in increased prevention and protection work across our communities, and transformation of the On-call model.

The Service had an incredibly busy summer in 2022 with an increase in fire incidents and calls due to the very hot weather. Staff put in a huge effort to keep our County and City and the



people who live and visit here, safe. The dedication of our On-call firefighters and of their employers who released their staff for consecutive days throughout July in particular, was outstanding. Although our resources were stretched, we were able to respond effectively to these incidents.

Months of complex planning throughout 2022 was necessary to ensure that, should national strike action take place, robust contingency plans devised through a data led approach, aligned to the RRM, would ensure a response to all emergencies across the County and City.

This Annual Report, which also serves as the Fire and Rescue Statement within the meaning of Paragraph 5 of Schedule A2 to the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, provides a good understanding of how the Service has delivered during the period April 2022-March 2023 against the outcomes set out in my new Fire and Rescue Plan 2022-25 and the areas where there is still room for improvement as the Service looks towards delivering against my new Plan.

Zoë Metcalfe

North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner



# Vision, Values, Principles and Priorities



## Our principles:

The four C.A.R.E. Principles set out what I believe is an exemplary fire and rescue service for our county based on what you have told me:

### Caring about the vulnerable

'Vulnerability' comes in many different forms and has many different impacts. Whether due to age, disability, financial circumstances, education, exploitation, mental health, or isolation, it is vital we understand what makes people vulnerable and in need of our services, and work to prevent that vulnerability emerging or turning into harm.

### Ambitious collaboration

Collaboration is more than just about partnership work. It is about actively seeking to join up services, close gaps and improve outcomes, working together to overcome our core problems. It is about creating a unified, person-centred experience of interaction with public services. It seeks to increase our contribution to broader society in our area by applying our skills, insight, and experience to wider issues.

### Realising our potential

How we realise the potential of our people and organisation to deliver the best possible services to our communities, is integral to achieving our ambition. We need to have the right people, with the right training, information, skills, and equipment, in the right place, at the right time. For this to work we need to have the right culture.

### Enhancing our service for the public

In all of this we must put the public that we serve first. Public services are services for the Public and we must do everything that we can to enhance their experience when they interact with us. We must be accessible and engaged, present where we are needed most, and able to provide the care asked of us.

## Mission and Vision:

To keep people safe and feeling safe to deliver an exemplary fire and rescue service.

## Our values:

Our values and culture - Making a positive difference for the Public, every day.  
With: Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty, and Leadership.

## Our Priorities:

The Fire and Rescue Plan considers what is achievable for NYFRS in working towards achieving the ambition set through the C.A.R.E. principles and sets outcomes that progress will be assessed against. This is the focus of this Annual Report.

- 1. Actively engage with all communities to identify need and risk and to reassure.**
- 2. Work jointly as a trusted partner to prevent harm and damage, intervene early and solve problems**
- 3. Deliver the "Right People, Right Support" every time**
- 4. Maximise efficiency to make the most effective use of all available resources**
- 5. Enhance positive culture, openness, integrity, and public trust**

Priority 1

## Actively engage with all communities to identify need and risk and to reassure

### Objective 1a

**Public confidence and satisfaction in North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service has increased.**

This year we introduced more ways to gather the opinion of residents across our county so that feedback can inform how we shape our services. In January 2023 the Commissioner launched the **NYFRS Public Trust and Confidence survey** which invited the public to complete a set of questions to gauge trust and confidence in the Service. While the number of responses to the survey has been limited, with only 16 responses, those who did participate report high levels of confidence in the Service to treat people with respect and dignity, put the interests of the Public and the community first and be there when they need them (in an emergency). The overall response rate has been too low to be able to fully understand public confidence and satisfaction in NYFRS so we will relaunch the survey later in 2023. This will include widescale promotion across our social media channels and at all OPFCC public and community engagement events, to ensure participation levels are sufficient to inform future planning. You can respond to the survey here: [Trust & Confidence Survey - North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service \(smartsurvey.co.uk\)](https://smartsurvey.co.uk)

By the end of the financial year 2022-23, the Commissioner's Complaints and Recognition Team had received **23 new complaints and 42 compliments**. Whilst the number of complaints received remains low, themes across all complaints are identified and analysed to learn lessons and reduce the likelihood of it happening again. The themes are reported to the Service's monthly Tactical Leadership Team meetings, the top two over the last year being; inconsiderate driving (5 complaints) and damage to land or property-not driving related (4 complaints). The reason for sending compliments was mostly to thank crews for attendance at an incident (26 compliments).

### Objective 1b

**North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service has a holistic understanding of risk in our communities.**

The Community Risk Profile (CRP) was published May 2022 and provides a deep understanding of the three main risks of accidental home fires, road risk (fatalities and serious injuries) and water (risk – flooding, rescues, and other water-related risk) in the Service area. It uses a range of data and information, such as local authority insights, county council data, indices of deprivation and historic incident data to provide an assessment of risk across our county. The HMICFRS inspection report noted that **the CRP has helped the Service improve its understanding of the risks it faces**. It has informed the development of the Risk and Resource Model, which was introduced in November 2022. Work is ongoing to ensure the CRP is used to effectively target prevention and protection activities to the areas of greatest risk and where emergency response times are longer. The Service used the National Fire Chiefs Council guidance and Fire Standard when developing their CRP and is reviewing the process to make improvements to its next iteration, which includes incorporating further data held by our partners, for example, health providers.

The Service has also **reviewed its processes and systems to gather and record site-specific risk information**. This is where information is gathered about the use of the building, the hazards and risks, construction, operational and environmental considerations and assists in fighting a possible fire at the site and can be used to ensure firefighters safety. New templates have been introduced to collect the risk information and when the HMICFRS inspection team sampled a range of risk-information records, the information was found to be up to date and detailed and could be easily accessed and understood by staff. **The template for gathering risk information has been extended to include additional sites (not just buildings) such as water risk sites**. This has increased the awareness of potential sites-specific risks firefighters may face when responding to different types of emergencies.

**Priority 2**

## Work jointly as a trusted partner to prevent harm and damage, intervene early and solve problems

### Objective 2a

**North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service is recognised as a leading partner in driving a whole-system approach to preventing vulnerability.**

The Public Safety Service (PSS) trial continued over the year with four Public Safety Officers (PSO) in Craven carrying out prevention activities with vulnerable members of the community on behalf of the Fire and Rescue Service, Police, and Health Partners. These roles were established to **address the underlying causes of vulnerability**, that could lead to harm, whether that be from crime, fire, or health related matters, acknowledging that this benefits other partner organisations. Every time a PSO visits a home, the occupant's vulnerability and needs are assessed from all service perspectives, regardless of the original reason for the visit. This holistic approach to preventing vulnerability and reducing harm has been acknowledged as promising practice by HMICFRS.

The PSS pilot was independently evaluated for the third time last year. The social value analysis identified the costs associated with delivering the PSS and compared that with the savings made to the community if the service did not exist. For every £1 invested in the costs of the service, there would be a return of £7.80 in social value benefits including a reduction in incidents requiring an emergency service response and in hospital admissions and health social care for instance. The scheme, therefore, indicates a significant return on investment as well as good value for money.

In July 2022 the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's Executive Board **agreed to fund the existing PSO contracts for at least a further two years**. Based on the independent evaluations and the experience of the PSOs, from April 2023, a new shift pattern that aligns the PSOs to the Police Neighbourhood Teams will be introduced and the geographical areas covered by each PSO widened, to ensure equality of access to the Public Safety Service for all communities within the Craven area.

The Service's Prevention Team announced the creation and **launch of a water safety flume and video presentation** to use in schools and other educational settings. Water is one of the three greatest risks in the Service area (accidental home fire and road risk being the other two), identified in the Service's Community Risk Profile. This new resource can simulate different water hazards, to show people the hydraulics and dangers near weirs, waterfalls and much more. The flume was funded by partners at JBA Trust, a charitable organisation that aims to educate on the management of water risk. Over the last year, over 60 Water Safety Flume sessions were delivered at various locations across the City and County including the Great Yorkshire Show, York Pride, Whitby Regatta, Skipton Pride, and at Fire Station open days. These were held mostly over the summer when people are more likely to enter water.

In June 2022 the Commissioner's Executive Board approved a £300,000 funding request from North Yorkshire Police (NYP) and NYFRS on behalf of the York and North Yorkshire **Road Safety Partnership (RSP)**. The fund was divided across three years with £100k allocated each year. The money will be used for:

- An academic review of road safety enforcement enabling the Road Safety Partnership to understand the effectiveness of current and alternative enforcement opportunities.
- A two-year funded Road Safety Partnership Coordinator role to support partners in delivering the action plan.
- Additional communication and engagement materials.
- Improvements to the Fire Bike initiative (including the delivery of the [Biker Down courses](#)).
- A Safer Neighbourhood/Road Safety Team to deliver community speed watch initiatives.
- Drugs testing training for roads policing.
- Health and wellbeing support to police staff involved in investigating road crashes.
- Software to support the enforcement of driver's hours.



## SPOTLIGHT – Fire Bike

The 2021-26 [York and North Yorkshire Road Safety Strategy](#) highlights that motorcyclists are vulnerable road users with a much higher likelihood of fatalities and serious injuries. Fire Bike, introduced in April 2022, is an exciting project for NYFRS supported by the RSP and funded by the Commissioner. Fire Bike aims to reduce injuries by direct engagement with motorcyclists and other road users by being at the very heart of community events and connecting directly with bikers at specific motorcycle meeting points. 106 Fire Bike engagements were delivered last year. In addition, 15 Biker Down courses have been delivered to over 178 individuals (delivered at targeted Stations and biker 'meet ups').



## Objective 2b

**The prevention of vulnerability and fire protection services are the core elements of North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service's operating model.**

Preventing fires and other emergencies are at the heart of the Service's new Risk and Resource Model (RRM). The **ambition is to prevent emergencies from happening in the first place through education, advice, and support.** The Service aims to prioritise and increase the amount of prevention work it does, to reduce the risk of harmful fire, road, and water emergencies in our communities. There will be significant investment over the next two years to permanently increase the number of roles in the prevention department, including the introduction of specialist roles to strengthen safeguarding practices, partnership working and work with children and schools. Positively, the **HMICFRS inspection assessed NYFRS as good at preventing fires and other risks.**

NYFRS has a responsibility to protect workplaces and premises to which the public have access. HMICFRS said the risk-based building inspection programme needs to include proportionate activity to reduce risk and the Service has worked to address this. The RRM consultation has reviewed and redesigned the current protection staffing structure, to incorporate an inclusive and fair progression pathway for all existing personnel. This has been complemented by temporary new roles funded by Government grants to offer opportunities for additional staff for development and academic professional

qualifications to bolster future succession and career enhancements. This has proven to show a tangible increase in regulatory and consultation activity since inception, whilst investing in staff within the protection section.

### Through this RRM we will:

- implement a new structure for prevention with new roles that provides career progression or staff;
- introduce and develop existing and future specialist role capabilities;
- provide more even access to prevention services across the county and more targeted delivery;
- utilise the Community Risk Profile to influence delivery plans and target activity to the right place and the right people;
- increase the use of On-call staff to deliver prevention activity in our more rural areas;
- develop the Public Safety Service across the service area in conjunction with partners;
- utilise the National Fire Chiefs Council workstreams and Fire Standards to identify and adopt best practice.

**NYFRS now use a nationally recognised partnership tool called the Online Home Fire Safety Check** which was developed by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), Fire Kills and Safelincs. Using this online tool, anyone across the country can complete a room-by-room home fire risk check themselves and are provided with tips and advice on the steps to take to reduce the risk of a fire. At the end, a personalised fire safety action plan is issued and, dependant on the information provided, a visit from the local fire and rescue service may be recommended. The customer's contact details, with consent, are passed to the local Service to follow up. NYFRS have started to use this as a tool to create a recognised and simple referral pathway for members of the public and our partners. A risk score is allocated to a person/household which the Service uses to prioritise its home visits and ensure that their focus is based on risk and the most vulnerable.

**Be Safe, Feel Safe campaign and prevention booklet was launched to help keep people safe in the winter by NYFRS and OPFCC.** With the increased cost of living and energy prices, this booklet, published online, aimed to help people make safe choices on use of heating devices, cooking methods, electrical safety, candles, fire detection and smoke alarms. It outlined a range of prevention techniques to ensure personal safety and that of families, neighbours, and friends with links to enable people to reach out to support services such as Warm and Well and York Energy Advice who offer practical solutions to reduce fuel poverty.

Supported by the Commissioner's Community Fund, the Local Intervention Fire Education (LIFE) course works with small groups of young people who have been referred by professional or educational agencies. Young people can spend some time in an alternative educational environment to help them develop self-confidence, improve resilience, develop skills around decision making and consequences of actions as well as teamwork. The **LIFE course includes practical activities as well as interactive educational sessions covering home fire safety, water safety, road safety, first aid, online safety, and mental health.** Each course is delivered by a team of four instructors who supervise, coach, and encourage the young people to go beyond their comfort zones and challenge themselves.



The Service has received a lot of positive feedback from the young people who have attended a LIFE course, as well as from parents and schools. A school wrote to the Service about a young male LIFE course attendee who was regularly becoming excluded from school due to reacting aggressively and fighting, and who was lacking motivation and getting involved with negative influences.

*“He has demonstrated he can help others and can walk away from situations instead of reacting badly. He has come back so positive and happy in school and is really proud of himself. This course has given him something to focus on and work with and will help him avoid further suspensions in school. This is a real success story for this young man, and I really can't thank you enough.”*



**Priority 3**

# Deliver the “Right People, Right Support” every time

## Objective 3a

**North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service has resource and response models that maximise productivity in communities and the efficiency and effectiveness of the response to emergencies.**

**The Risk and Resource Model (RRM) document has been produced by the Chief Fire Officer** and published following approval by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. The document sets out the future direction of the service to reduce the risk from fire, road and water related emergencies in our communities. There are several changes to how the Service uses its resources (including its fire engines and people) to best reduce the risk in the Service area and respond effectively to emergencies. The changes outlined in the diagram below have started to be implemented in phases over the next two years.

The changes were presented to the Public and consultation took place over a 12-week period from 23 May to 14 August 2022. This enabled the Public to give their views on seven proposals for change which had been developed by NYFRS.

Consultation with the public consisted of 12 public events at which 1400 people actively engaged. Three resident

focus groups were held, and we hosted and an online survey receiving 1300 responses. Throughout this period the Commissioner put the questions asked by the public to leaders of the Fire and Rescue Service and interrogated their response at regular meetings, including at the Commissioner's Executive Board.

Following the consultation the Commissioner made the decision to approve all the proposals with any savings from the changes being re-invested into vital areas including permanent investment into prevention and protection teams and concentrating on improving the availability of On-call fire engines in rural areas.

Amongst the approved proposals is to change Huntington to an On-call station with the requirement for the Chief Fire Officer to implement an ongoing assurance review of On-call response times – this is undertaken via the Service's Service Delivery Performance Group and reports monitored periodically at the Strategic Leadership Team. The decision is based on evidence that there is more emergency response resource in the York area than the risk or demand requires, and therefore changing Huntington station is aligned to risk and will enable capacity for more prevention and protection work.

### Proposals for consultation

- 1 Improving our prevention and protection work**  
Permanently increase the specialist staff in our prevention and protection departments and increase prevention and protection activities across the Service.
- 2 Managing attendance to Automatic Fire Alarms**  
Reduce response to low-risk Automatic Fire Alarms (AFAs) which are often unwanted fire signals (an alarm activated by something other than a fire).
- 3 Response resource in the York area**  
Change Huntington to an On-call fire station to rebalance the emergency response resource with the risk that exists in the York area.
- 4 Response resource in Harrogate and Scarborough**  
Replace the Tactical Response fire engines with Emergency Rescue fire engines, crewed during the time when emergencies are most likely to happen.

### Other Service changes

- 1 Specialist water rescue resource capability in Craven**
- 2 Introduction of emergency response principles**
- 3 Introduction of alternative duty systems**

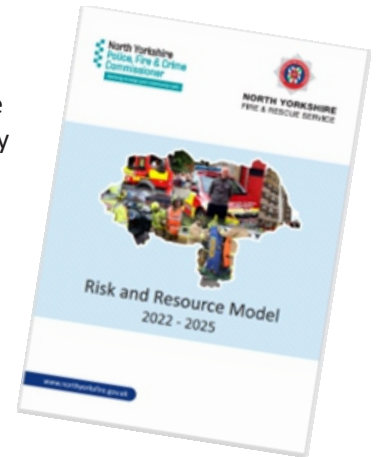
Commissioner Zoë said:

*“I have made these decisions to support the transformation of our Fire and Rescue Service based on extensive evidence and from listening to what is important to you, which you said was increasing and enhancing prevention and protection work to stop incidents from happening in the first place”*

The proposal to replace the Tactical Response fire engines at both Harrogate and Scarborough with larger Emergency Rescue fire engines has been approved and will be staffed only during peak hours of demand. This will increase the capacity and capability to respond to an emergency when demand is at its greatest, improve resilience across the service area and increase the opportunity to undertake prevention and protection activities during these hours. This change will take place at Harrogate first and, on completion of a full review of the implementation of the change, be extended to Scarborough.

Other decisions to be progressed include the reform, improvement, and enhancement of the On-call service in our county and the introduction of a new specialist water rescue capability in Skipton.

Full details on the Commissioner's decisions can be found in the Decision Notice published here: [-DN 16/2022 Risk and Resource Model](#)



### Right People

Your fire service - Your say



### Right Place

Your fire service - Your say



### Right Time

Your fire service - Your say



### Right Equipment

Your fire service - Your say



## Objective 3b

**North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service has developed a blueprint for, and has begun implementing, a new On-call model.**

NYFRS needs to increase its prevention and protection capability in our rural areas. Currently, most prevention and protection activity is delivered by full-time Firefighters, mainly in the more urban areas because that is where the full-time fire stations are located. Over the last year the Service continued to increase the **use of On-call Firefighters to deliver more prevention and protection activity in our rural areas.**

**The On-call firefighter recruitment process has been subject to an in-depth review to identify and improve areas of weakness.** Consequently, an online candidate application and tracking system has been introduced to assist candidates' access into NYFRS and the flow of communication between NYFRS and the applicants has improved considerably. Common points of delay have

been brought forward in the application process, such as the eye-test and the potential need for reasonable adjustments is flagged earlier on. The recruitment process is now quicker, and the consolidation of the practical sessions has reduced the burden on applicants of multiple site visits and on the resources of the Service.

### SPOTLIGHT – Fire Watch application

A new Fire Watch mobile application has been trialed successfully at three stations and rolled out across all On-call stations. The app allows On-call Firefighters to remotely submit and update their availability from their smartphones. Feedback from On-call Firefighters has been extremely positive with less time spent travelling to their station to update their availability.



**Priority 4**

**Maximise efficiency to make the most effective use of all available resources**

**Objective 4a**

North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service is increasing its effectiveness and efficiency through transformation.

In addition to the introduction of the Risk and Resource Model which is transforming and modernising NYFRS to become an exemplary service, a **Fire and Rescue Service Change Board has been established and business critical areas requiring change identified and prioritised**, including upgrades to incident activity, risk and training recording systems, breathing apparatus as well as upgrades to several fire station buildings to ensure they are fit for purpose for a modern and diverse workforce.

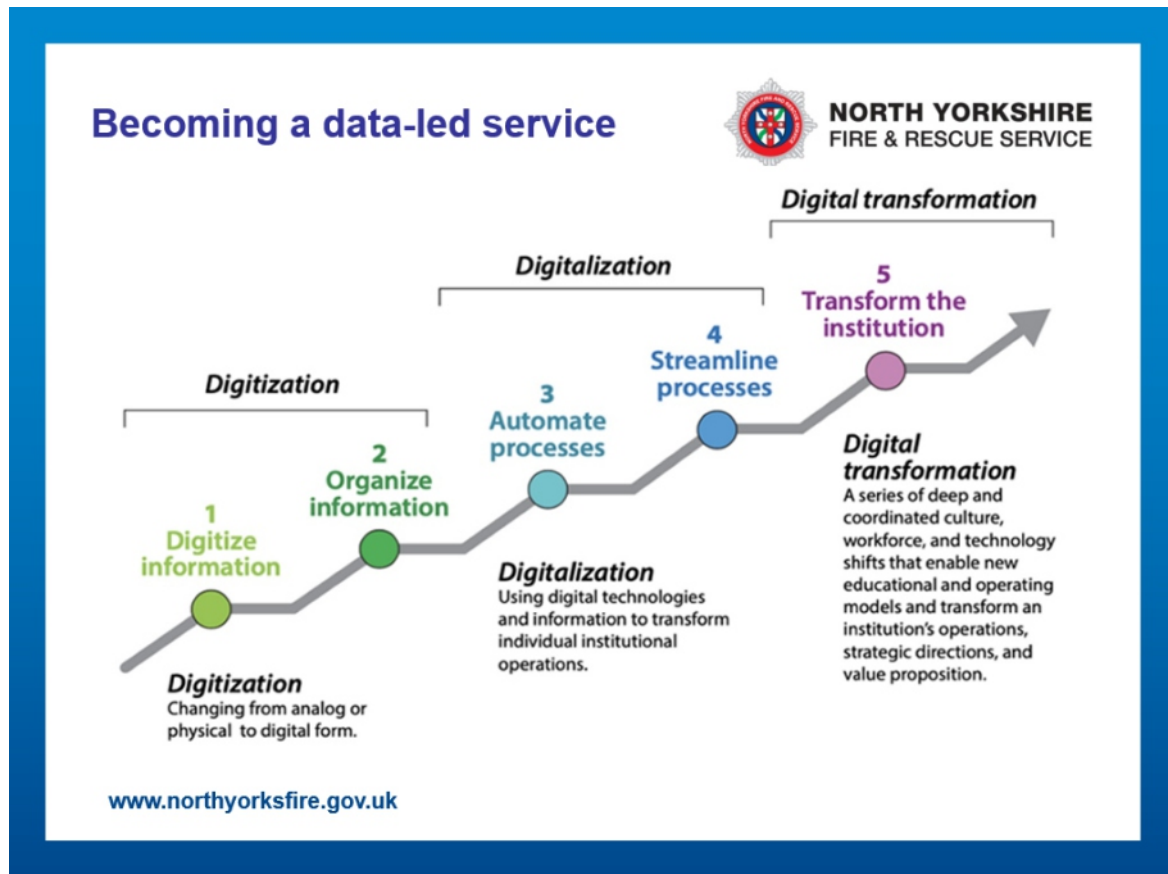
Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) must produce and publish annual efficiency plans that should now also include their plans for increasing productivity. **A comprehensive Productivity and Efficiency Plan for 2023-24 has been developed.** The Commissioner and the public can see both the progress made to date and the plans that the Service has in place to increase efficiency and productivity over the next two years. The Productivity and Efficiency Plan for 2023-24 can be viewed [here](#):

**Objective 4b**

North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service has better data to understand and improve itself.

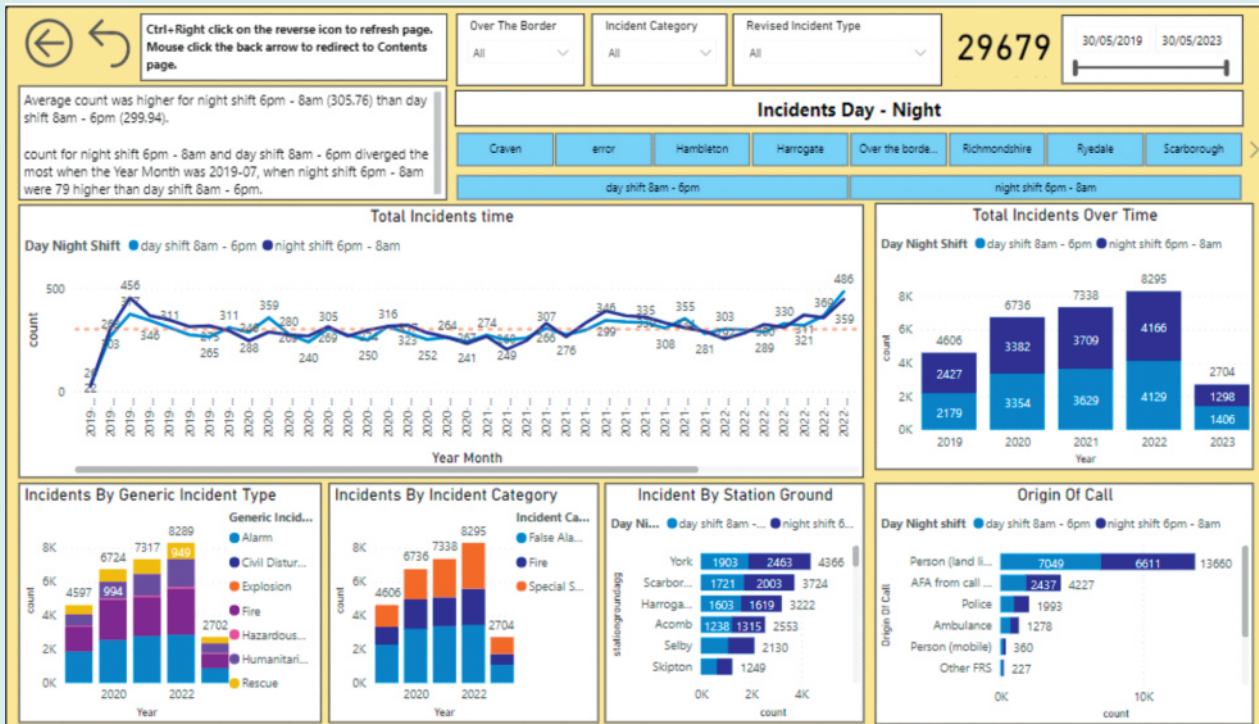
In March 2023, NYFRS provided a **Business Insight and Data presentation at the Commissioner's Public Online Meeting.** It set out how it will become a data-led service. Focus over the last year has been on ensuring consistent, secure, complete, and accurate collection and recording of data and maintenance records.

NYFRS is in the process of undertaking a **gap analysis to see how it is performing against the national Fire Standard on Data Management**, introduced in July 2022. The Fire Standard sets out explicitly "What good looks like". An Action Plan is being developed to close any gaps and meet the desired outcomes of the Fire Standard and areas for improvement relating to data management raised in the recent HMICFRS inspection report.



## SPOTLIGHT – Performance Dashboards

Incident data and prevention and protection dashboards have now been provided internally at district level, which are enabling staff to measure and monitor their performance and drive local decision making. Subsequently, this will allow for greater discussion and context through the governance model via the Service Delivery Performance Group and the Commissioner's Online Public Meetings.



## Priority 5

# Enhance positive culture, openness, integrity, and public trust

### Objective 5a

**Public trust in North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service is maintained.**

Significant issues in relation to behaviours and culture have been raised in fire and rescue services around the country, brought to light initially by the independent cultural review of London Fire Brigade, published in November 2022. Subsequently, in March 2023, **HMICFRS published a report into the values and culture of all 44 fire and rescue services** in England. The report found that bullying, harassment, and discrimination are, to varying degrees, still problems in all services. The Chief Fire Officer and Commissioner are united in their focus to review NYFRS against the report's findings and address each of the 35 recommendations as quickly and robustly as possible. The Service has started to develop a cultural roadmap, in line with local values and the national Core Code of Ethics, to ensure a positive culture and maintain public trust and confidence in the Service. The Commissioner seeks regular assurance of progress, as part of her scrutiny.

**A Public Confidence function has been established within the OPFCC** with the appointment of new Director of Public Confidence and Inclusivity. The new Director of Public Confidence role is driving several key workstreams to support both services to achieve our strategic principles, utilising a programme management approach to ensure the OPFCC, NYP and NYFRS work more closely together whilst also representing the Public's interests by linking back to the Commissioner on progress made and any barriers or challenges to be addressed.

In May 2022, the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) worked together to draft a letter to the Home Office to seek changes to the 'Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 ('the Exceptions Order') which would see inclusion of the Order for all Fire and Rescue Authority Employees. This would mean that **all Fire and Rescue staff members undertake an appropriate level of DBS check**. This change to the Act is likely to be in place from July 2023. NYFRS has already started to undertake DBS checks for staff in essential public facing prevention and protection roles and is aiming to undertake checks for all remaining staff over the next 12 months.

### Objective 5b

**Inclusivity, diversity, and equality are at the heart of North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service's organisational culture and service delivery.**

The Service is committed to becoming a pro-inclusion employer, with commitments detailed in the **People Strategy and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy**. The EDI Strategy outlines a range of actions and outcomes that define what success will look like, aligned to each of the three elements of the Strategy (People and Culture, Effective Collaboration and Our Communities). The Chief Fire Officer has refreshed the strategic and tactical governance, alongside the EDI Framework and Delivery Plan, to incorporate the HMICFRS Values and Culture Review recommendations and the Independent Culture Review of London Fire Brigade recommendations.

This ensures the Commissioner and Chief Fire Officer have a robust assessment of progress against the Strategy and in achieving the priorities outlined in the Fire and Rescue Plan. This will be reviewed regularly at both the Service's Strategic EDI Board and the Commissioner's joint Executive Board.

A budget was identified to deliver interactive equality, diversity, and inclusion staff training, commencing with those in supervisory roles. The supervisory training was completed by the end of January 2023 and will be revisited every three years.

Over the course of 2022, **the Service introduced Diversity Champions to help create a more inclusive working environment** and to improve communications across the Service area including raising awareness of the Service's values and code of ethics. Open days and awareness days were held Service-wide to establish and build relationships with our local communities and to encourage underrepresented groups to consider a role with NYFRS.

The Service has an aging estate which has proved challenging to adapt. However, the Service has committed to a programme of improvement works to ensure that stations are more suitable for a diverse workforce. **Work across the estate to improve the facilities has been slower than projected**. The scale and scope of improvements has

been revisited to focus on essential work. The importance of delivering the improvements to the fire estate to ensure better access to all are essential and forecasted completion of the works by December 2023 will be closely monitored by the Commissioner.

**Improvements to the recruitment processes have increased fairness and accessibility** to applicants from a range of backgrounds. Vacancies are now open to both internal and external candidates and NYFRS is taking steps to ensure recruitment campaigns are accessible to under-represented groups.

**'Have a go' days at stations and online testing for new applicants** has made NYFRS more accessible. Aimed at underrepresented staff of both NYP and NYFRS, the Shine programme has been developed to support Positive Action commitments, and NYFRS has participated in the Women in the Fire Service's development programme.

## Objective 5c

**North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service is an employer of choice with a clear people focus that develops leadership, integrity, and inclusivity.**

Open to Police, Fire and Rescue and OPFCC staff, daily online wellbeing workshops were run every six-months. They included topics such as stress, back care, self-care, diet, sleep, mental health workout, boundaries, relaxing and the wellbeing passport (designed to focus on prevention, early intervention, and provision of support for the whole workforce to improve wellbeing).

To support leadership development, a **First Line Leader course has been developed** in conjunction with enableNY, to deliver cross service (Police and Fire) leadership training, aligned to the National Fire Chiefs Council Leadership Framework.



## SPOTLIGHT – Strengths Based Assessments

Endorsed by the Commissioner, ongoing development of recruitment processes has seen a commitment to move away from competency-based processes to a strengths-based approach which looks at abilities, interests, and potential, as well as competence. This has been introduced in consultation with the Trade Unions and will conclude with a formal review before full implementation.

North Yorkshire became the first fire and rescue service to implement strengths-based assessments last year, starting with the recruitment of the Chief and Deputy Chief Fire Officer. This approach has also been used for both Area Manager and Group Manager recruitment and will be used for Station Manager recruitment in 2023-24. A strengths framework has been developed over the last year using psychological research, the Service values and Core Code of Ethics and Service ambition and vision outlined in Ambition 2025 and the Commissioner's Fire and Rescue Plan.

# Governance, Assurance and Scrutiny

The Commissioner, in their capacity as the Fire and Rescue Authority, is assured of adequate arrangements for the effective management of financial (see section on 'Funding and Spending'), governance and operational matters, as well as overall adherence to the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England.

## New Assurance Framework

In March 2023 we launched a new assurance framework. To ensure that we make a positive difference to the public, every day it is important to continually monitor and assess delivery of outcomes against the Commissioner's priorities which are set out in the Police and Crime Plan, and the Fire and Rescue Plan.

Whilst the Office of The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (OPFCC) regularly seeks assurance from the services, we will also scrutinise them to ensure that we can effectively and formally evidence that positive progress and outcomes are being achieved.

We will monitor the Police and Fire and Rescue Service in a range of ways which are detailed below.

Online Public Meetings	Bi-monthly, Five per year for each service (Break in August and December). At this meeting the Chief Constable is held to account in their delivery of the Police, and Crime Plan and the Chief Fire Officer is held to account in their delivery of the Fire and Rescue Plan. Police complaints are monitored, and lessons learnt. Fire and Rescue complaints are monitored, and lessons learnt.
Executive Board (Monthly)	Monthly formal governance meeting between the commissioner, Chief Constable/Chief Fire Officer to ensure proper governance of the services and the OPFCC. This takes place through open, constructive debate of their respective statutory duties and the efficiency and effectiveness of their delivery against the Police and Crime Plan and Fire and Rescue Plan.
Chief Catchups	Closed informal briefing's which enable dialogue and discussion monthly. This is an opportunity for the commissioner to discuss elements of the Police and Crime Plan delivery, and the Fire and Rescue Plan delivery based on themes and receive updates on current issues and operational matters.
Independent audit committee	The Audit Committee provides independent scrutiny on the adequacy of the corporate governance and risk management arrangements in place. It advises the North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority, according to good governance principles and proper practices.
Joint independent audit committee	The Joint Independent Audit Committee (JIAC) provides independent scrutiny on the adequacy of the corporate governance and risk management arrangements in place. It jointly advises the Commissioner and Chief Constable, according to good governance principles and proper practices.
Scrutiny Panels	Scrutiny Panels allow members of the Public to hold North Yorkshire Police to account via review of incidents, policing powers, and tactics. Panel observations, feedback and recommendations facilitate continuous learning, improvement of police services and identification of best practice



Community Review Group	The community review groups will assess and provide feedback on areas which the scrutiny panels review. This includes, identifying good practice and areas for learning, making referrals and recommendations.
Independent Ethics advisory board	Under development with an independent chair. The Panel will provide independent and effective challenge and assurance around integrity, standards, and ethics of decision-making in policing and fire.
Independent custody visitors	Independent Custody Visitors are members of the local community who visit police stations unannounced to check on the welfare of people in police custody.
Violence against women and girls' strategic governance board.	6-monthly Joint Violence Against Women and Girls Strategic Governance Board meetings, chaired by the Commissioner to monitor overall progress against our joint violence against women and girls' strategic objectives and provide greater transparency and accountability to increase public confidence in how we are improving the overall safety of women and girls.
Frequent interactions	Informal interactions between the services and OPFCC staff. This enables and encourages spontaneous face-to-face discussions between Chief Officers, Senior OPFCC staff, who may receive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updates on significant issues</li> <li>• Notification of significant/critical incidents</li> </ul> OPFCC staff will also conduct site visits across York and North Yorkshire.
Complemented by	Bespoke briefings from Chief Constable/Chief Fire Officer on significant or sensitive issues. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior OPFCC staff attending key meetings within the services (e.g., HMICFRS* Governance Board, Gold Groups, Risk and Assurance Boards, Performance boards, etc.)</li> <li>• OPFCC staff conducting further checks and audits.</li> <li>• Routine liaison between Senior OPFCC staff Senior Staff/Officers.</li> <li>• Feedback from Independent Custody Visitors and Appropriate Adults.</li> <li>• Regular meetings with Public Bodies and Inspectorates (e.g., HMICFRS).</li> <li>• Independent review of complaints.</li> </ul>

To underpin improvements in the services, so that they can be the best they can at protecting us and keeping us safe and feeling safe, we will utilise the frameworks set out by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) to support our scrutiny. For example, we will use questions that HMICFRS use to establish how the services are performing and improving outcomes.

We will evaluate what the public tell us in our trust and confidence surveys and through information we receive into our office. At our Delivery and Assurance Board we will regularly assess our performance against our own OPFCC Delivery Plan which can be found here: [Organisational Activity Plan 2023/24](#)

Additionally, the Commissioner carries out a number of consultations with the Public and partners throughout the year. We will review reports from external inspections such as HMICFRS and monitor the services delivery against any action plans

developed because of these inspections.

Last year's fire and rescue Online Public Meeting (OPM) assurance presentations included Service response to HMICFRS's second inspection report, false alarm attendance, development of business Insight and use of data, fire investigations, Risk and Resource Model proposals, safeguarding, implementation of the national Fire Standards, prevention, and protection (business fire safety) in rural communities, response principles and equality, diversity, and inclusion. The meetings also consider fire and rescue performance data, allowing the Commissioner to assess performance against public priorities. The OPM presentations can be found here: [Online Public Meetings](#)



## Complaints and Recognition

1 April 2021, the Complaints and Recognition Team (CRT) within the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner became the main contact for all fire and rescue related complaints and compliments.

Like last year, by end of the financial year, the Commissioner's CRT had received 23 new complaints and 42 compliments. The themes of all complaints are identified and analysed to ensure organisational learning and any topical issues are raised at the Commissioner's Online Public Meetings.

## The Independent Audit Committee

The Committee proactively supports the Commissioner and Chief Fire Officer in ensuring the right governance and control mechanisms are in place to support a well-run fire and rescue service. The Committee reviews and scrutinises the adequacy and effectiveness of risk management, internal audit and control, and corporate governance arrangements of the Fire and Rescue Service, as well as reviewing financial management and reporting.

In April 2023, the Corporate Governance Framework was reviewed by OPFCC statutory officers and senior officers of the Service and subject to several changes, predominantly concerning changes to procurement processes, was considered fit for purpose, and reported to the Independent Audit Committee.

Following a review, governance and decision-making arrangements continue to be regarded as fit for purpose in accordance with the governance framework. There are however several issues of a significant nature that need to be urgently addressed during 2023-24, along with several areas that require continued focus to ensure that they do not become significant issues in future years. The Commissioner's draft Annual Governance Statement can be found at: [Annual Governance Statement 2022-23](#)



## Operational assurance

The Commissioner, as Fire Authority must outline the way in which the authority and its fire and rescue service has had regard to the National Framework and the local Integrated Risk Management Plan (known locally as the Risk and Resource Model) over the last year. This is called operational assurance and an assurance statement has been provided by the Chief Fire Officer - Statement of [Operational Assurance 2022-23](#)



## HMICFRS - Inspection of North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service

National assessments including His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) reports are used to assess performance of the Service compared to other services.

In February 2023, the Commissioner welcomed the latest assessment by HMICFRS of NYFRS's effectiveness, efficiency and how it looks after its people. The report is an independent and rigorous assessment which the Commissioner can use to ensure NYFRS becomes an exemplary service. The full inspection report can be found at [NYFRS: HMICFRS Inspection Report-2021-22](#)



The extent to which the service is effective at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks **requires improvement**.



The extent to which the service is efficient at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks is **inadequate**.



The extent to which the service looks after its people is **inadequate**.



The Commissioner was pleased that NYFRS was recognised as being good at keeping people safe, preventing fires and other emergencies and good in their response to major and multiagency incidents.

The Chief Fire Officer and Commissioner are united in their focus to improve upon the Inspectorate's findings. Necessary improvements are already being driven forward, to build a more inclusive working culture. For example, there is investment to improve how our people are looked after and the environment in which they work. Prevention work will be further strengthened by investment in 2023 with an increase in roles which tackle the root causes of danger to communities and deliver targeted activities to help stop emergencies from happening. This is in line with the priorities in the Commissioner's Fire and Rescue Plan.

Following the HMICFRS inspection earlier this year, two Causes of Concern (CoC) were identified.

HMICFRS wanted assurance that the Service:

- makes sure it has the right workforce skills and capabilities it needs.
- plans to maintain a balanced budget without relying on its reserves.

Detailed discussions with the Inspectorate have taken place to clarify the basis for their concerns and the sources of their evidence. Following these discussions, an action plan was submitted to HMICFRS, and a revisit conducted between 30 January and 1 February 2023, to review progress against the action plan and the arrangements for overseeing it. The revisit team was *“pleased to see the service had started to make headway on both causes of concern. We recognise the service has invested time and resources to develop its improvement plans and establish robust monitoring and governance arrangements.”*

In September 2023, the Inspectorate we will return to NYFRS to make sure it has made satisfactory progress with their action plan and the service provided to the public has improved.

A robust action plan is in place and commitment from the Chief Fire Officer to address all areas of improvement. The Commissioner will continue to hold the Service to account for delivery.





# Performance

The Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and NYFRS are committed to providing a high-quality service to the public. You can review the Service's performance in several ways:

- Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner: We publish NYFRS's performance report dashboard on the OPFCC website located here: [Performance dashboard](#)
- Online Public Meetings: The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner holds regular online public meetings where you can ask questions about NYFRS's performance. These meetings are held every other month and are streamed live on the Commissioner's website: [Remit of the Commissioner's Online Public Meetings](#)
- North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service: The Service publishes details of all incidents attended over a 24-hour period on its website. The incident details are updated daily and can be found here: [Incidents information](#)
- Home Office Website: Information collected by the Home Office from Fire and Rescue Services across England and Wales, covers fires, false alarms and other incidents attended by fire crews, and the statistics include the numbers of incidents, fires, fatalities, and casualties as well as information on response times to fires. This information can be accessed here: [Home Office fire and rescue statistics](#)
- His Majesty's Inspectorate for Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS): HMICFRS is an independent body that inspects fire and rescue services in England and Wales. HMICFRS publishes reports on each fire and rescue service that assess their performance in several areas, including effectiveness, efficiency and how the service looks after its people. Further details about the inspections can be viewed here: [HMICFRS Fire Service Inspections](#)

# Funding and Spending

Funding Breakdown 2022/23	Actual £000s	%*
Core Grant	8,006	21
Precept (including Collection Surplus)	23,382	61
Grants (Ringfenced)	5,849	15
Non Grant Income (including project income)	935	2
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>38,173</b>	<b>100</b>

Expenditure Breakdown 2022/23	Actual £000s	%*
Salary Costs (including NI and Pensions)	27,076	71
Injury and Medical Pensions	795	2
Other non salary employee costs	580	2
Premises costs	2,166	6
Supplies and Services	3,585	9
Transport costs (including fuel)	1,037	3
Financial costs	1,778	5
PFI	1,624	4
Budgeted transfers from reserves	(723)	-2
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>37,917</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>Underspend transferred to Reserves</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>1</b>

\* Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100%

## Financial Position

2022-23 has been another challenging year from a financial perspective, for many obvious reasons including that interest rates have increased from 0.75% at the start of the financial year to 4.25% by the end of the financial year.

These increases are aimed at reducing inflation which during the 12 months to March 2023 was reported as increasing by:

- Consumer Price Index – 10.1%
- Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs - 8.9%
- Retail Price Index – 13.5%

Despite these high levels of inflation, which did create overspends in certain areas of the £12m of 'non-pay' budgets in 2022-23 the non-pay budgets were well set and expenditure was restrained resulting in a small underspend during 2022-23.

The vast majority (70%) of the funding available to NYFRS is spent on employment costs (i.e., Pay, National Insurance, Pensions etc.). The 2022-23 pay budgets included a 3% pay award during 2022-23. However, given the significant increases in inflation that are referred to above, both pay awards, for staff and Firefighters, were agreed significantly higher than this.

The agreed staff pay award saw an increase of £1,925 per person, with effect from the 1st of April 2022, which equated to an increase of 6.5% across the roles. The Firefighters pay award was agreed at 7%, with effect from the 1st of July 2022.

The significantly higher than expected pay awards added around £800k to the expenditure on pay during 2022-23. The annual costs of these awards were almost £1.1m and created a significant additional pressure in the 2023-24 budget setting process.

Despite these challenges expenditure was well contained and managed leading to a small underspend of £256k for the year and therefore this doesn't create any additional challenges on the budget and medium-term financial plan that was set in February 2023.

The underspend of £256k has provided an opportunity to set some funding aside to fund some important areas of development work in 2023-24.

The annual Statement of Accounts shows the annual costs of providing the Service and is determined by a Code of Practice which aims to give a 'true and fair' view of the financial position and transactions of the Authority. At the end of the 2022-23 financial year, requirements associated with the appropriate management of financial matters were fully met (subject to conclusion of the external audit of the Statement of Accounts 2022-23). The Annual Statement of Accounts and auditors' reports can be found at [Annual Statement of Accounts to 31 March 2023](#)

## Fire and rescue precept

Most of the funding comes via the local precept, the amount people pay through their council tax for their fire and rescue services. Between December 2022 and January 2023, the Commissioner consulted on setting the fire and rescue precept and received over 2300 responses from the public. The majority (52%) supported the maximum increase of £5 set by the Government, bringing the total fire and rescue precept for 2023-24 to £80.61 for an average Band D property. The extra precept flexibility was something campaigned on by the Commissioner to provide the opportunity to invest into the Fire and Rescue Service within our county.





## Contacts

### North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service

You can contact the North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service in the following ways:

Headquarters, Alverton Court, Crosby Road, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL6 1BF



Switchboard: 01609 780 150



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<https://www.facebook.com/northyorksfire/>



[northyorksfire.gov.uk](http://northyorksfire.gov.uk)



<https://twitter.com/northyorksfire>



[youtube.com/user/northyorksfire](https://youtube.com/user/northyorksfire)

You can contact the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner in the following ways:

Office of the North Yorkshire Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner,  
Police Station, Beckwith Head Road, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG3 1FR



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[youtube.com/c/nypcc](https://youtube.com/c/nypcc)

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