

Consultation on proposals to improve Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service

Data Methodology

Introduction

The Fire and Rescue Cover Model public consultation is underpinned by modelling that was undertaken by ORH (Operational Research in Health). The aim of the modelling was to determine future potential organisational emergency response performance based on historical data. This modelling made use of the most recent on-call fire engine availability data from July 2022 to March 2024 together with emergency incident data from April 2022 to March 2024 to reflect recent organisational performance. For further information regarding the modelling methodology, p.40-47 of the [‘ORH Modelling Report’](#).

In addition to the underpinning modelling, the report makes use of further data to provide context and to inform the impact of the proposals. The methodologies used to obtain this various data are as follows with public consultation page numbers indicated where relevant:

1) Reduction in full-time equivalent on-call firefighters (p.5)

This data is publicly available through the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Fire Statistics table 1101: Staff in post by role and year (Full-Time Equivalent and Headcount)¹.

To calculate the full-time equivalent figure, the following calculation is utilised:

On-call firefighters are in 24-hour units of cover. A single 24-hour unit of cover is 120 hours a week. Therefore, as an example, a firefighter providing 96 hours of cover a week is 0.8 of a post (96/120).

2) Fire engines efficiencies (p.11, 15 & 17)

- Calculated using average annual labour and parts costs.
- Replacement costs amortised over a 15-year lifecycle².

3) Fire station closure/removal of on-call duty from Rewley Road (p.11 & 17)

- Staff pay reductions (based on 2024/25 data)³.
- Initial staff training cost reductions (based on seven years of recruitment data).
- Property cost savings (maintenance, utilities, business rates).
- PPE and uniform savings (average cost per role).
- Redundancy costs (12-week average pay based on 2024/25 pay data and adjusted to two years where durations were less than this to provide a prudent cost estimate).

¹ Fire Statistics Table 1101 (Staff in post by role year – Full Time Equivalent and Headcount)
<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6707956992bb81fcdbe7b60b/fire-statistics-data-tables-fire1101-171024.xlsx>

² The useful life of a fire engine does vary in Oxfordshire depending on pressures on the fleet budget. Whilst fire engines have been used for up to 17 or 18 years in recent years, the service maintains a target of a 15-year life span to maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of the fleet.

4) 12-hour day shift efficiencies (p.11)

- Reduced operational cover costs such as overtime (based on 2020/21/22 data).
- Hypotheses:
 - Daytime cover not needed except at Thame, Watlington, Wheatley.
 - 84% of additional cover occurs between 0700–1900 hrs.
 - Conservative pay rate used (firefighter competent rate).
- Net increase of 3 posts (2 fewer firefighters, 2 more crew managers, 2 more watch managers). Revenue impact depends on job evaluation of watch manager roles.

5) Specialist Rescue Changes (p.14 & 15)

- Costs and savings from removing the Specialist Rescue Team and redistributing skills to 2-2-4 shift stations as the conservative option.
- Current cost: £10,000/year for training and Personal protective Equipment (1 person turnover/year).
- Redistribution hypotheses:
 - Train up to 64 firefighters across three stations.
 - Each station to be trained in a separate specialist rescue discipline.
 - Maintain skills with eight new trainees/year.
- Fleet savings:
 - Rescue tender replacement cost: ~£300,000.
 - Replacement costs amortised over a lifespan of 12 years.
 - Equipment replacement savings not included but may be offset by new delivery model.

6) Sale of fire stations and land (capital receipts) (p.17)

- These are based on a marker assessment of the likely value of the sites based on the potential for and type of redevelopment that could be achieved by a potential buyer.