



STAFFORDSHIRE COMMISSIONER
Police | Fire and Rescue | Crime

Annual Report

2023 – 2024

Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent



Foreword



This is my third annual report detailing progress made against my Local Police & Crime and Fire & Rescue Plans, and the positive activity undertaken by the Office of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner, OPFCC. As elected Commissioner, I consult with the public and stakeholders before publishing these plans, which aim to set out the public's expectations of Staffordshire Police and Staffordshire Fire & Rescue. These local plans inform the operational plans developed by our Chief Constable and Chief Fire Officer, which take account of national factors and the risks we face in Staffordshire. I will be consulting this autumn on refreshed local plans.

This report sets out where progress has been made by both services. This is notable in the enhanced performance of our local Police teams, who continue to drive down neighbourhood crime and anti-social behaviour, and of our strengthened pro-active units, including roads policing and serious organised crime, who are tackling organised gangs stealing vehicles and dealing drugs. The force has been bolstered by significant numbers of new Police officers who are helping the service to respond quickly and using their powers more often to address continued high demand, particularly in domestic violence.

Our Fire & Rescue emergency response continues to be rapid and effective across the county and city, thanks to our professional firefighters and support staff. Better training and equipment, and a focus on providing a supportive work environment, is helping the service retain and recruit the firefighters we need. Prevention and protection teams are increasingly successful at identifying those most at risk and using their powers to ensure buildings are safe. Staffordshire Fire & Rescue are also proving the value of close working with NHS partners through their falls response team and by helping discharged patients return home from hospital.

My key responsibility as Commissioner is to recruit our two services' Chief Officers. The improvement in both services, recognised by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services, is a credit to them and the strong leadership teams they have built in recent years.

Their real strength, however, is that their leadership approach is being applied through every level of leadership and supervision throughout both organisations and every Police officer, firefighter, staff member and volunteer is accountable, empowered and supported now. This is probably the most significant step forward over the past three years and reflects the emphasis I placed on leadership in my local plans.

Some ambitions set out in my plans have not been fully achieved. Some non-emergency callers to the Police still wait too long to speak to someone, and court backlogs mean some victims are waiting too long for justice or withdraw from the process. Despite considerable attention and investment to reduce serious accidents, there are still too many killed or seriously injured on our roads. These community concerns will feature in my refreshed plans.

My office has accomplished much in the past three years, too. With their help, I hold the Police and Fire & Rescue services to account on your behalf. We do this through regular governance meetings and in public. I also hold the budget for the two services and have responsibility for approving significant investments and how the shared estate is utilised. Working with my own S151 officer and the two effective finance teams, led by their own S151 officers, we have helped to position the services as healthily as possible, given the uncertain nature of government funding and increasing wages, pensions and other costs. I am confident that local council tax payers can be assured that their contributions to the service budgets are being well directed.

My team has a significant range of experience, which they apply in commissioning services to support victims, protect vulnerable people and reduce offending and re-offending. All their activity either helps people get through the criminal justice process, get back on with their lives, learn how to keep themselves safe or reduce demand on our Police and Fire & Rescue services. The services are provided by specialist organisations and volunteers, many of which are charities, all committed to the people of Staffordshire's wellbeing and all greatly appreciated.

This year alone, my team are monitoring the effectiveness of warden and Police patrols in ASB hotspots, have re-commissioned services for victims of domestic and sexual abuse and are helping to tackle violence, drug and alcohol addiction while increasing the number of people participating in restorative justice. Some of this valuable activity is funded by government, some in partnership with local councils, health and other agencies and some is funded by local council tax payers. I work closely with them to ensure that every project supports victims or reduces crime and harm.

My team are working alongside Staffordshire Police and Staffordshire Fire & Rescue, doing everything they can to keep us safe. I will do my utmost to help them do so for another four years. This annual report demonstrates the impact our combined efforts have had this year and in establishing the foundation for building two outstanding blue-light services.

Strategic policing requirement

The Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) sets out seven national threats which all police force areas in England and Wales must demonstrate they have the plans, capacity and capability to respond to:

- violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- terrorism
- serious and organised crime
- a national cyber incident
- child sexual abuse
- public disorder
- civil emergencies

I have a legal duty to respond to the SPR and ensure that Staffordshire Police is well prepared to meet the requirement locally and also able to support joint responses between forces, regionally and nationally. I hold the Chief Constable to account and regularly scrutinise Staffordshire Police's position against these areas and allocate sufficient funding to ensure the force has the capacity and resilience to make its contribution to these vital aspects of policing. My plan, and force plans, are kept under review to take account of any changes made to the SPR by the Home Secretary.

On an annual basis, I seek assurance from the Chief Constable with regard to the Force Management Statement, which focuses on the demand it expects to face in the foreseeable future, its capabilities and capacity to meet that demand, how it intends to transform its workforce, policies and practices to help adapt and any residual risk. This examines all areas of policing including those highlighted in the SPR and incorporates the capabilities and capacity it can access through regional collaboration.

I chair the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Violence Reduction Alliance and have overseen the development of our local Violence Reduction Strategy which includes a range of projects developed to help reduce violence, including VAWG.

I currently chair a Regional Governance Group of PCCs and Chief Constables which oversees our collaborations to respond to serious and organised crime and terrorism across the region. Drugs supply is a major driver of serious and organised crime and I also chair the local Drug and Alcohol Partnership Board which oversees our local response to the National Drugs Strategy.

My office supports and works alongside the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board and the Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership, which co-ordinate the actions of partner agencies and help ensure the effectiveness of safeguarding children arrangements. I also commission a range of support services for young people, professionals, parents, and carers, aimed at preventing or stopping child exploitation.

Our local response to civil emergencies is through the Staffordshire Local Resilience Forum (LRF), a partnership of police, fire and rescue, local authorities, health services and the Environment Agency currently chaired by the Chief Fire Officer. Through the Civil Contingencies Unit, the LRF supports and coordinates agencies to prepare for emergencies through joint plans and exercises.

The individual sections of this report provide additional detail of specific interventions in support of the threats identified in the SPR.

Key achievements

Officer numbers exceeded the **2,000** target, reaching 2,020. **428 more than 2020**



Almost **64,000 referrals** into the Victim Gateway and Restorative Justice Service to support victims of ASB and crime, including domestic abuse

Almost **£5 million funding** won since 2020 to improve safety for women and girls, and reduce ASB, violence and acquisitive crime



Between April 2023 and March 2024, Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service attended **8,203 incidents, 80.9% within the target time**



In March 2024 the average time to attend Police emergency calls was **9.63 minutes**



Between April 2023 and March 2024 Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service responded to over **939 incidents** of vulnerable people falling in their homes as part of an award-winning NHS pilot

£924,750 provided to councils to prevent crime and reduce ASB



Public perception survey in March 2024 found **62% of people agree** Staffordshire Police responds effectively to emergencies compared to 51% in 2022

Staffordshire Fire & Rescue conducted **almost 14,000 safe and well visits** with vulnerable members of the community between April 2023 and March 2024



Staffordshire Police make on average **43 arrests per day**, an increase of 17.4%



56% of 101 calls now resolved or finalised at the early triage stage meaning these are resolved within an average of **4.33 minutes**



280 fire safety audits were completed, with **13.3%** deemed unsatisfactory and requiring further input from Fire Safety Teams between April 2023 and March 2024





His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)

“I monitor the performance of our services, and the progress they are making against improvement plans, at regular formal and informal governance meetings. The services also continually track their performance at improvement boards which my team attend on my behalf. In addition to this internal assessment, independent audit and invited peer review, there are regular visits from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) to judge how the services are doing. Some of these visits lead to published inspection reports and recommendations, which then become part of my performance monitoring approach.

My primary concern will always be the quality of service provided to the population we serve with a focus on delivering against our local priorities; however, I welcome the views of HMICFRS as independent experts. They provide a valuable opportunity to understand how our services compare with other similar Police and Fire & Rescue services across England and Wales, and their previous inspections in Staffordshire. Inspections are a good test of the accuracy of the services' self-assessments and my office's performance reviews. I am therefore reassured that we had identified the same issues as the inspectorate did and there were no surprises.

These are complex challenges that cannot be addressed by a quick fix. They require wide-ranging solutions and determined leadership. I am reassured that the Chief Constable and Chief Fire Officer and their senior leadership teams have worked hard

to tackle the issues identified and are continuing to bring about sustained improvements.

Staffordshire Police

Two areas of concern were highlighted by HMICFRS in March 2022 prior to the publication of the Police Efficiency, Effectiveness and Legitimacy (PEEL) report on the force later that year. One related to the identification and assessment of the vulnerabilities of people contacting the force, while the other concerned the effectiveness of investigations and the support provided to victims. His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

As a result, in June 2022 Staffordshire Police were placed in the 'Engage' process with HMICFRS to address these two areas of concern with support from Home Office, College of Police, National Police Chiefs Council and others. The force responded positively to these findings with a raft of changes to staffing structures, processes and technology supported by training for officers and supervisors.

HMICFRS acknowledged that the force had:

- Significantly improved the frequency and quality of threat, harm, risk, investigation, vulnerability and engagement (THRIVE) assessments at the first point of contact. They have also improved the identification of vulnerable and repeat callers.

- These improvements were supported by a comprehensive auditing regime that has helped the force to understand their performance and better target work to improve.
- Improved the standard of investigations and are providing higher quality supervision. They have also improved compliance with the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime. This means that victims now receive a better service.

The force was therefore removed from 'Engage' in May 2024. This has only been possible due to the hard work and commitment of all the officers and staff here in Staffordshire, led by Chief Constable Chris Noble and his team.

As well as marking the end of a difficult period, it also signalled the start of a journey to returning the force to being an outstanding one. Neither I nor the Chief Constable are remotely complacent about the progress made so far. There is still much more to do to restore public confidence and deliver better services and this will be reflected in my Police & Crime Plan.

Staffordshire Fire & Rescue

Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service was inspected in 2022, the inspection being brought forward at the request of the Chief Fire Officer and myself in response to some concerns raised in relation to the way the service conducts some of its people-related practices.

The inspection found the service to be effective in its identification and response to risks in communities and how it identifies people most at risk of fire and works with partners to reduce that risk. It also highlighted good financial management and collaboration arrangements. Twenty recommendations or areas for improvement were identified, 19 of which have now been addressed, based on self-assessment.

Some of these measures address the need to improve equality, inclusion and diversity, which was also covered in a national HMICFRS report into culture and values in the Fire sector. This called for urgent improvements in values, culture and the management of misconduct across the sector. Inspectors found examples of racist, homophobic and misogynistic behaviour in a quarter of Fire & Rescue services in England. It identified 19 recommendations for Fire & Rescue services, all of which have now been addressed in Staffordshire, based on self-assessment.

The service has made significant progress in this area under the leadership of Chief Fire Officer Rob Barber and his team, including work to improve its understanding workforce culture and a range of improvements to staff training, grievance handling, whistleblowing procedures and recruitment and selection practices.

The results of the latest inspection of Staffordshire Fire & Rescue are awaited, and I anticipate that the improvements made across the service will be recognised.”

Police & Crime

Priority 1 A local and responsive service



'Understand and deal with what matters to communities, respond promptly to incidents and work with partners to solve problems and prevent them from getting worse. This will mean that crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) reduces, our roads are safer and confidence in Staffordshire Police increases.'

What we said we would do

Improve telephone and online 101 non-emergency services so that people contacting Staffordshire Police receive a high-quality and timely response

Progress

- Calls now answered more quickly – 87% of 999 calls within 10 seconds, placing Staffordshire Police 18 out of 43 forces. Average wait time for 999 calls is down to 9.4 seconds
- 56% of 101 calls now resolved or finalised at the early triage stage meaning these are resolved within an average of 4.33 minutes
- HMICFRS Cause of Concern on call handling has been discharged
- Working more closely with NHS, mental health services and other agencies to ensure people in crisis are receiving appropriate support from the right agency

What we said we would do

Reduce the time taken to safely respond to emergency and non-urgent calls and ensure the effective management of incidents

Progress

- Officer numbers exceeded the 2,000 target, reaching 2,020. 428 more than 2020
- Average time to attend emergency calls is now 9.63 minutes
- Public perception survey in March 2024 found 62% of people agree Staffordshire Police responds effectively to emergencies compared to 51% in 2022
- Staffordshire Police make on average 43 arrests per day, an increase of 17.4%



Promote awareness and use of the tools and powers available to prevent and resolve ASB so that issues are quickly and effectively addressed by all those responsible

- Study commissioned to consider how to strengthen the effectiveness of local Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) in addressing ASB
- The Commissioner restated his commitment to provide core funding and grant support for local CSPs for two more years
- Training session provided to increase CSP capability around their use of powers and the promotion of ASB community triggers
- Staffordshire Commissioner's Office (SCO) selected to pilot new national ASB hotspot patrolling approach worth £1m this year. Initial Police patrols now replaced with community wardens and specialist diversionary workers
- Partnership ASB Delivery Group, chaired by the Commissioner, meets regularly



What we said we would do



Progress

Build strong relationships with communities by focusing Neighbourhood Policing teams on crime prevention and early intervention and by ensuring people can easily contact their local Police to raise concerns

- Locally based response teams more closely connected to local issues, Neighbourhood Policing officers and PCSOs, working with partners to problem-solve recurring issues
- Public perception survey in March 2024 found 73% of people feel they could rely on their local Police team, compared to 72% in 2022
- 71.8% of victims feel they were kept informed about their case by Staffordshire Police, compared to 79.6% in 2022/23



Ensure Police and partners take a problem-solving approach to drive down neighbourhood crimes such as burglary, robbery and vehicle crime and to tackle business and rural crime, all of which cause distress, disrupt communities and directly impact on livelihoods



£820,000 Safer Streets funding secured for CCTV, lighting and environmental improvements in Cannock, Longton and Tunstall. 126 new CCTV cameras installed since Safer Streets began

- £1m Home Office funding secured to provide additional Police and warden patrols to tackle ASB in hotspot areas as part of a national pilot
- In most traditional crime areas we are seeing a reduction in vehicle crime and robbery. However, burglary and shoplifting are increasing and these will be a focus in the Commissioner's next plan

What we said we would do



Progress

Ensure the policing of our road and transport network is appropriately resourced and assisted by the latest digital technology to help officers identify and apprehend offenders, deter criminals and reduce casualties by tackling excessive speed, distracted driving, drug or drink driving, unsafe and uninsured vehicles

- Roads Policing Team expanded to enable 24/7 coverage
- £0.5m invested in additional static and mobile Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras
- New digital technology rolled out across speed camera enforcement sites in areas of community concern
- #Lookagain campaign launched to educate drivers about distracted driving

Ensure that public protests are policed in a safe and impartial way which balances the rights of individuals to protest against the rights of those whose activities are impacted upon

- Partnership work continued to manage planned protests at various locations throughout the year, reducing disruption

Expect Staffordshire Police to protect people in custody by ensuring appropriate arrangements are in place for their safe detention

- Between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024, Independent Custody Visitors:
 - Conducted 95 visits
 - Spoke to 315 detainees to check their welfare and entitlements were being met
 - Spent on average 80 minutes on each visit



What we said we would do



Progress

Expect Police leadership, standards, systems, culture and training to be focused on providing high-quality services

- Staffordshire Police invested in training to improve the supervision and quality control of investigations
- Continuous improvement programme introduced for Force Contact Centre
- Implementation of Operation Soteria to improve the investigation of rape and serious sexual offences, and service to victims



Expect Staffordshire Police to have a rigorous approach to, and a low tolerance of unacceptable behaviour by their officers and staff ensuring they meet the required standards.

- Work underway to vet all serving officers and staff against the Police National Database, in line with national guidance
- 1,250 officers and staff educated on sexual misconduct through the force's 'Know the Line' campaign. This training has also been extended to relevant external partners
- Force's internal ethics panel meets bi-monthly, representing the views and perspective of all business areas
- Between April 2022 to March 2023 there were 1,783 complaints received. This saw a slight decrease between April 2023 and 2024 with 1,764 complaints received by Staffordshire Police. For April 2022-March 2023, 431 met the criteria for a review, with the SCO being the review body for 398. Between April 2023 and March 2024 there was an increase with 487 complaints meeting the criteria but a decrease to 354 where the SCO were the review body. Between April 2022 and March 2023 the SCO received 77 reviews and upheld 10 compared to April 2023-March 2024 where 62 reviews were received and 11 reviews upheld
- New complaints triage function to provide a better, quicker response to the public



Priority 2
Prevent harm and protect people



'Prevent harm and protect people (particularly children and those that are vulnerable) by ensuring they are appropriately safeguarded and receive the help and support they need.'

What we said we would do



Progress

Support the work of the VRA to prevent and address all forms of violence, including that connected to county lines drug gangs and violence against women and girls (VAWG)

- The Commissioner oversees delivery of the Serious Violence Duty across Staffordshire, to support a partnership approach
- Serious Violence Strategy launched for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, setting out the VRA's partnership approach
- Installed Control the Bleed Kits in public places, and in Police and Fire & Rescue vehicles
- Developed a range of educational resources on VAWG, gangs, knife crime and exploitation
- Used Home Office funding to deliver a range of projects including work with Youth Offending Services on prevention and diversion schemes, and education, safeguarding and mentoring projects in local prisons and young offender institutions



What we said we would do



Progress

Work with regional partners, employing state-of-the-art surveillance and covert methods, to disrupt and dismantle serious organised crime gangs and to prevent potential terrorist activity

- Staffordshire officers deployed into the Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU) and the Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU), working across the wider West Midlands to ensure a coordinated approach from force level to national and international agencies
- Both units follow a Prevent, Pursue, Prepare and Protect framework, using specialist equipment and specially trained officers to thwart threats at the earliest opportunity
- Staffordshire Police's Operation Target launched in May 2023 to target county lines, illegal firearms, modern slavery and cyber-crime. From May 2023-April 2024, the teams made 695 drugs-related arrests, 334 weapons-related arrests, protected vulnerable members of our communities and secured numerous convictions

Commission prevention and early intervention programmes for those more vulnerable to crime (domestic abuse (DA), sexual assault and abuse, drug and alcohol misuse, exploitation, harmful sexual behaviour, hate crime, road crime, online fraud, cybercrime) or ASB

- SCO commissions a range of early intervention and prevention services:
- Domestic crime has decreased by 16.5% over the last year and the SCO continues to invest in services
 - 5,763 adults and 1,022 children supported by New Era's DA victim service, and 147 through the perpetrator service
 - 227 young people supported by the Prince's Trust, engaging those at risk of offending and victims of crime, improving their lifestyles and employment prospects
 - 18 young people supported by a Personal Development Programme delivered by Stoke City Community Trust and partners for those at risk of engaging in ASB, building their confidence and changing attitudes and behaviour
 - Interventions delivered to 212 children by the Child Criminal Exploitation Service, including those in custody or A&E

What we said we would do



Progress

- Harmful Sexual Behaviour resources developed by the NSPCC for professionals working with children identified as vulnerable
- The Commissioner leads the Drug and Alcohol Partnership, with new activity and funding around breaking drug supply chains, delivering treatment and recovery systems, and reducing the demand for drugs and alcohol
- Commissioned a 'Navigator' from national charity Catch22 to support workers in A&E and custody to identify and support those affected by serious violence

Further develop the way in which partners (such as Staffordshire Police and NHS) work together to address mental health and other vulnerabilities in a community safety setting to ensure that people get early access to the support they need from the right agencies

- Needs Assessment completed in collaboration with the Integrated Care Board on the impact of alcohol abuse
- The Commissioner continues to work closely with Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Integrated Health System to reduce demands placed on Policing in supporting people in crisis
- Working more closely with NHS, mental health services and other agencies to ensure people in crisis are receiving appropriate support from the right agency
- With NHS England and criminal justice partners, triage, liaison and diversion schemes support those with mental health issues or other vulnerabilities coming into contact with the criminal justice system (CJS), as well as diverting them into appropriate treatment and support



What we said we would do



Progress

Intensify the activity of our Safer Roads Partnership (SSRP) so that Police, Fire & Rescue, Local Authorities and National Highways work jointly towards safe roads, safe vehicles, safe road use, safe speeds and post-crash care to reduce road casualties that have devastating consequences for families

- Despite the best efforts of the SSRP we recognise the deaths of 44 people on our roads in 2022/23 and that the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads is not falling
- SSRP jointly chaired by the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner
- Work carried out to improve the quality of collision data to support early intervention and prevention activity
- New digital technology rolled out at a number of speed camera enforcement sites in areas of concern
- Modernisation of camera van fleet completed and new mobile cameras being implemented
- Community Speed Watch scheme continues to be supported, with 433 volunteers across 77 groups
- Increased monitoring of Highways and HS2-related roadwork safety schemes



Equip professionals with the skills and knowledge to identify and respond appropriately to harm and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) or trauma

- Developed a suite of resources covering ACEs, Trauma and Vicarious Trauma under the brand of Trauma Informed Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent
- Delivered DA awareness sessions across communities and businesses, ensuring people can recognise DA and access support and guidance. The DA in the Workplace Scheme has also continued to grow

What we said we would do



Progress

Work with partners to understand and address the root causes of crime and ASB, breaking the cycle of crime

- SCO awarded almost £1m to CSPs and community groups to fund local initiatives to help drive down crime and ASB and increase public confidence
- Community funds allocated to support projects to tackle ASB and other local community safety priorities:
 - £724,750 Locality Deal Fund shared between Staffordshire's 9 CSPs
 - £100,000, seized under the Proceeds of Crime Act, split between CSPs to support problem solving
 - £100,000 made available to community groups through grants of up to £5,000 to address locally identified concerns

Ensure Staffordshire Police have the systems, processes and skills in place to be able to promptly identify harm and vulnerability and to safeguard individuals and families

- Staffordshire Police improved its processes to identify and assess vulnerability from the first point of contact
- Recording of repeat and vulnerable callers, issue of Public Protection Notices and subsequent referrals have all increased
- Improved processes in place to review and reassess vulnerability and risk through local Harm Reduction Hubs and the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
- Commissioned a Mental Health Community Triage service, where mental health professionals work alongside Police in incidents involving people with mental health needs, to ensure they receive specialised support as quickly as possible

Strengthen Police and partners' ability to share data and intelligence to help them understand problems, intervene quickly to resolve them, support victims and target offenders

- Vulnerability dashboard being developed to assist in strategic planning and operational delivery by overlaying data from partner agencies to identify and safeguard vulnerable people and communities
- Commissioned Navigators in hospital A&E and custody to identify and support children involved in youth violence or at risk of exploitation

What we said we would do



Progress

Work with schools and alternative education establishments to develop and deliver consistent, good quality education about community safety related topics, so children are able to make informed, positive and safe choices

- Continued to commission two Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education Coordinators to help schools deliver a quality PSHE curriculum:
 - Developed age-appropriate resources and support for teachers around hate crime and ASB
 - Developed training and resources for PCSOs on PSHE best practice principles
 - Supported CSPs to enhance their schools' PSHE offer around youth violence and community cohesion

Commission services to protect vulnerable children and adults from harm and exploitation including those who go missing from home or care

- Catch 22's Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Missing service:
 - Received 2,821 referrals for missing children. Compared to 3255 referrals in 2022-23
 - Carried out 2,394 interviews for children. Compared to 2703 interviews in 2022-23
 - Supported 354 children for CSE and 212 for CCE. Compared to 248 children supported for CSE and 179 for CCE in 2022-23
- 91% of children supported demonstrated a reduction in overall risk-taking behaviours

Divert children away from harm through a range of personal development programmes and positive diversionary activities

- Almost 10,000 people aged 8-17 attended over 2,500 SPACE programme events, designed to support potentially vulnerable young people by increasing skills and improving health and wellbeing, bringing together public, voluntary and private organisations

Establish a Staffordshire-wide Community Safety Forum to enable better collaboration with partners to ensure prompt, joint action to prevent harm and safeguard individuals and families

- Staffordshire-wide Community Safety Forum meets quarterly to enable collaboration between agencies:
 - Developed standardised ASB polices
 - 239 delegates attended training on the use of ASB tools
 - Developed a standardised illegal trespass process



Priority 3 Support victims and witnesses



'Ensure victims and witnesses are provided with exceptional specialist support services so they feel able to cope and recover from the impact of crime and ASB.'

What we said we would do



Progress

Provide a range of free, confidential, non-discriminatory, specialist support services for victims and witnesses of crime (including domestic abuse, sexual assault and abuse, violence, exploitation, hate crime, road crime, harmful sexual behaviour, business crime, restorative justice, online fraud and cybercrime) and ASB

- 562 people supported by the Survive Sexual Assault and Abuse Service
- 1,115 referrals received by the Hate Crime Service, with 339 people receiving practical and emotional support
- 531 referrals received by the ASB Service, with 464 people receiving practical and emotional support
- 6,785 adults and children supported by the New Era DA services, as well as providing support for communities, businesses and partners
- 585 referrals made to New Era's DA behaviour change service, with 538 adults and children receiving support
- 4,832 incidents resourced by the Business Crime Support Service, with 2,473 accepting support. 703 businesses accepted the one-hour free confidential specialist support
- Over £835,000 secured from the Ministry of Justice to provide practical and emotional support for victims of sexual abuse and DA

What we said we would do

Progress

Make sure Staffordshire Police work harder to keep victims informed on how their case is progressing



- Victim views sought via survey and through a victim's forum, and used to inform service developments
- Produced a training video for Police officers to highlight best practise
- Developing a digital response to assist victim updates

Provide a free and confidential triage service for victims of crime to assess their needs and ensure they are signposted to specialist services where necessary

- 63,722 referrals into the Victim Gateway and Restorative Justice Service:
 - 48,347 individuals received advice, guidance, information or signposting to other services
 - 22,331 victims accepted further support, with 1,384 accepting support from the Victim Gateway
 - 7,504 victims referred to specialist agencies
 - 84 victims took up an offer of restorative justice



Improve accessibility to support services, paying particular attention to seldom heard groups, tailoring their service offer accordingly

- Improvements made to ensure the prompt transfer of victims' details from Staffordshire Police to the Victim Gateway support service
- 69% of all victims' details now transferred within the 48-hour limit set in the Victims Code of Practice (VCOP) compared with 53% in the previous year
- Recite Me software introduced to victim support service website to improve accessibility
- Targeted campaigns have been delivered throughout the year focusing on disability, race and sexual orientation
- Promoted victim support services through campaigns targeting community events such as Freshers Week and Pride

What we said we would do

Progress

Address offending behaviour to prevent people becoming victims

- The number of adult first-time entrants to the criminal justice system fell by 46% between 2013 and 2023. From 2,570 to 1,377
- Over the same period, the volume of juvenile first-time entrants fell by 30%, highlighting the success of prevention and early intervention work by Youth Offending services and Staffordshire Police
- Youth and adult reoffending rates in Staffordshire have reduced relative to the reoffending rate in England



Ensure service providers (defined in the Victim Code of Practice, 2020) comply with the Victims Code

- Ministry of Justice (MoJ) to launch a system to allow key organisations to measure compliance. The Commissioner continues to oversee compliance through the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB)
- Staffordshire is one of several forces to pilot the MoJ's proposed data metrics to support compliance with the VCOP

Reach agreed quality standards for all support services (such as Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARC) services achieve forensic accreditation by October 2023)

- Our regional provider is on track to obtain accreditation status by October 2025. Discussions are currently being held to understand the changes required to the regions SARC centres

Improve communication on victim support so that people are more aware of what services are available and how they can access them

- Continued to promote commissioned services across various media channels to ensure victims of crime can access support services
- In 84% of victim-based crimes, a victim contract was completed in the last 12 months compared to 76% in the previous year. This is the agreement between the victim and Police on their preferred method of contact and how often they will be updated on progress

What we said we would do



Progress

Work with the NHS and other agencies to ensure victims have access to services to meet a broad range of related needs (such as mental and emotional health support)

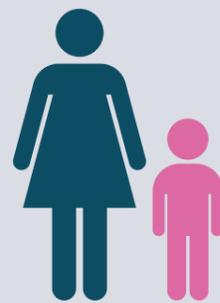
- Provided training to two local specialist sexual abuse service providers (Survive and Savana) to widen their therapeutic interventions, including counselling, self-help resources, workshops and talking therapy
- Referrals are now being taken for a new joint project with Survive, Savana, Midlands Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust and North Staffs Combined Health Care Trust to mobilise prompt mental health support for those within the services

Ensure that information about witnesses and their experience is accurately recorded and available to help services improve

- End-to-end victim satisfaction survey and victim provider forum provides feedback to inform service improvement across the CJS

Adhere to any emerging requirements of new legislation such as the Victims Law and the Domestic Abuse Act 2021

- Awaiting national direction on the implementation of the Victims and Prisoners Act which will significantly transform victims' experiences of the CJS, including rights for children impacted by DA



**Priority 4
Reduce offending and reoffending**



'Ensure people are challenged and supported to make life choices that will prevent them from offending and perpetrators don't reoffend. Doing so will mean fewer victims of crime.'

What we said we would do



Progress

Support prevention and early intervention programmes to stop the onset of offending behaviour, diverting people away from unnecessary contact with the CJS

- Child Criminal Exploitation Service delivered interventions to 212 children, including those in custody or A&E
- Commissioned Navigators in hospital A&E and custody to identify and support children involved in youth violence or at risk of exploitation
- Continued contribution of c.£355,000 to Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Youth Offending Prevention Services

Target interventions to those identified as more vulnerable to / at risk of offending; working with partners to prevent generational offending

- Prince's Trust delivered personal development and employability programmes for 227 young people aged 16+ at risk of offending
- New conditional caution option for first-time offenders arrested for less serious drug possession offers opportunities to access drugs awareness courses as an alternative to prosecution
- Investment in youth offending prevention teams as well as delivering targeted education programmes and support to identified cohorts of young people

What we said we would do

Progress

Commission programmes to address specific offending behaviours such as domestic abuse and harmful sexual behaviours (HSB)

- Delivered a range of DA perpetrator interventions, raising awareness of inappropriate behaviour and challenging attitudes and beliefs
- Commissioned 'Change for Good' training for Local Authorities, provided by NSPCC, enabling them to provide support for young people displaying Harmful Sexual Behaviours (HSB)
- Completed an HSB Needs Assessment to inform service development, identifying good practice, challenges and opportunities

Offer targeted programmes to repeat or high-risk offenders

- Continued to support funding of mental health nurses to provide specific input to offenders managed by the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) services
- 54 referrals from Staffordshire Probation Service and Staffordshire Police since April 2023 resulting in assessment of cases, direct interventions where appropriate and referral to other services including GP/primary care and secondary services
- New Era's DA behaviour change service received 585 referrals for adults and children, providing support to 538 adults and children to change their abusive behaviour



What we said we would do

Progress

Improve the availability and effectiveness of housing, employment and other rehabilitation support services (such as drugs and alcohol and mental health) to help those in prison or in the community to reintegrate successfully and achieve stable lifestyles away from crime

- New pilot employment service commissioned for offenders already subject to intensive, multi-agency IOM arrangements:
 - 71 referrals made, resulting in 55 programme starts
 - 44 individuals supported to take up a job, or educational or vocational course – an 80% conversion rate
- Worked with NHS England to support the delivery of Reconnect, an enhanced resettlement support service for prisoners with mental health needs following their release:
 - Reconnect is now mobilised across Staffordshire's 5 prisons, with support staff embedded in each
- Commissioned a floating housing support service for up to 120 offenders, supporting tenancies in the community to help them gain the skills and confidence to live independently. Over two thirds have gone on to successfully complete their community orders and achieve long-term resettlement in the community

Ensure offenders are brought to account for their actions through appropriate punishment and effective disposals while being given the appropriate support and encouragement to move on and avoid reoffending

- Established multi-agency board to drive improvements in joint working arrangements to deliver Community Orders with Drug, Alcohol and Mental Health Treatment Requirements
- Commissioned substance misuse interventions, working with Local Authorities to help offenders address the underlying causes of their criminality:
 - 89 Alcohol Treatment Orders, 73 Drug Treatment Orders and 80 Mental Health Treatment Orders granted
- Worked with Police, Probation and partners to develop and strengthen current multi-agency IOM arrangements, including a new Performance Framework to improve tracking of outcomes



What we said we would do

Progress

Continue to disrupt criminality in Staffordshire's prisons, address staff corruption and protect prison staff

- Staffordshire Police's specialist team continues to work with the county's prisons and Youth Offender Institutions. Alongside prison governors and staff, they respond to criminal activity in prisons, and work with specialist ROCU officers to tackle criminality outside the prison estate that is coordinated from inside prisons
- The Commissioner continued to visit local prisons and actively engage with prison governors



Engage with the Ministry of Justice, Youth Offending Services, the Probation Service and the Prison Service to ensure the effective delivery of custodial and community sentences

- Worked with Probation and other key partners to ensure the new unified Probation delivery model is responsive to local needs and will ensure effective delivery of local Probation services
- Contributed to Youth Offending Service and Probation Service Delivery Plans

Prevent people from being drawn into terrorism due to their vulnerabilities, associations or ideology and ensure individuals are appropriately monitored and managed

- Commissioner receives quarterly briefings on Counter Terrorism (CT). He was engaged in a regional visit to the CT unit to receive updates on local sensitivities and ongoing work with partners around Martyn's Law which is designed to protect public spaces and events



Priority 5
A more effective criminal justice system



'Ensure Staffordshire Police, the Crown Prosecution Service, Courts, the National Probation Service and HM Prison Service all work seamlessly so that effective justice is delivered more quickly.'

What we said we would do

Progress

Ensure all partners work towards the same Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) Strategy and Performance Framework, with the same aspirations and goals

- The Commissioner chairs the LCJB, developing a shared action plan and performance framework to assist service development, track progress and identify areas for further development
- The LCJB brings together the Police, Crown Prosecution Service, Courts and Probation representatives to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and transparency of the criminal justice system

Improve the quality of investigations and case preparation so charging decisions can be made more efficiently

- New supervisor checks, training and audit processes to drive improvements in investigation quality
- Introduction of new Detective Superintendent and 10 Sergeant roles dedicated to improving investigation quality
- 79.1% of victims satisfied with investigation, up from 72.9%



What we said we would do

Progress

Ensure fairness for all within the Staffordshire CJS so that the system provides everyone with the same opportunities and people are treated with dignity and respect

- Regional Disproportionality Committee continues work to understand and tackle disproportionality in race, gender and age across the CJS
- Continued to work with Staffordshire Police to deliver our local response to the national Police Race Action Plan

Develop and implement simplified and secure digital processes from charge through to sentencing

- Two-way IT interface between Police and CPS systems is now in place to ensure seamless file transfer



Help increase the number of guilty pleas and reduce the number of repeat visits to court so that justice is delivered more quickly

- Guilty Plea rate at 74% remains above the National Average of 66%
- The average time for Police to charge an offender in victim-based cases has improved to 62 days from a peak of 93 days in 2022. There is more to do to meet the national average of 44 days

Promote the use of Community Orders and Restorative Justice (RJ) where this is appropriate and supported by victims

- New Out-of-Court Disposal (OoCD) options introduced to divert people committing low-level offences away from the criminal justice process and into rehabilitation and understanding the impact of their actions. 3,597 Out-of-Court disposals have been recorded in the last 12 months and Staffordshire are now above the national average (33.5%) for the use of OoCD with 33.9% of all Criminal Justice Outcomes. Currently ranked 16th out of 43 forces for use of OoCD having been 35 out of 43 at the start of April 2023
- Worked with Staffordshire Police to review the RJ process and offer. A pilot is underway to locate a RJ Coordinator within Police premises to identify cases suitable for RJ interventions

What we said we would do

Progress

Ensure mechanisms are in place to help victims and witnesses engage successfully and positively with the CJS, such as safe rooms, video links and other special measures

- Special Measures Advisor appointed in August 2023, advising around 100 victims and witnesses per month on facilities and other support available. 40% of people take up the offer.
- Regular case meetings taking place two weeks before court dates to ensure special measures have been considered and cases are trial ready

Work to reduce adjournments and short notice court date changes

- The Commissioner actively uses the LCJB to influence the reduction of backlogs in Crown Court and Magistrates Court and address the causes
- A Task and Finish Group has made small improvements to increase the effectiveness of trials, however, limitations on court capacity and court staff levels continue to be a constraint

Ensure victims and witnesses are kept informed and provided with information and support through every stage of the criminal justice process, and ensure their needs and wishes are considered

- Victim Code of Practice sets out services and minimum standards organisations must provide to victims of crime. The Commissioner closely monitors compliance of the Code by the Police, criminal justice partners and commissioned services to ensure victims are supported in line with the 12 Rights



Develop a victim satisfaction survey which seeks victims of crime experiences from the point of reporting the crime through to exiting the CJS



- New victim forum and the end-to-end victim satisfaction survey monitor how well services are being delivered, whether victims' expectations are being met and identifies areas for improvement through the whole CJS including Police, CPS, courts and Probation

Fire & Rescue



Priority 1 A flexible and responsive service



“Ensure your local Fire & Rescue Service continues to be accessible and responsive so that risk is appropriately and proportionally managed, community and firefighter safety remains paramount and high levels of public confidence and trust in the service are maintained.”

What we said we would do

Ensure a rapid response to fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies wherever needed in our area and to assist other areas in line with our mutual aid commitments, regionally and nationally

Progress

- Between April 2023 and March 2024, Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service (SFRS) attended:
 - 8,203 incidents
 - 1,309 primary fires
 - 1,575 secondary fires
 - 1,412 special service calls
 - 809 road traffic collisions
- The Service Attendance Standard was met for 80.9% of incidents (target 80%), compared with 81.4% in 2022/23
- The average attendance time was 9.34 minutes compared with 9.6 minutes in 2022/23
- Whole-time appliances are available for deployment 98% of the time
- On-call appliances are available for deployment 60% of the time



What we said we would do

As part of the Staffordshire Local Resilience Forum (LRF), continue to take an active role in planning and preparing responses to disruptive events including those arising from adverse weather conditions, public health crises, industrial incidents, transport incidents and terrorist attacks

Progress

- SFRS played a key role in the LRF’s implementation of recommendations arising from the Manchester Arena Inquiry:
 - 35 actions are in progress, covering the sharing of major incident plans, record keeping, sharing of site-specific tactical plans and interoperability of emergency services

As part of the Staffordshire Local Resilience Forum (LRF), continue to take an active role in planning and preparing responses to disruptive events including those arising from adverse weather conditions, public health crises, industrial incidents, transport incidents and terrorist attacks

- SFRS provided leadership of the LRF’s planning for major events as well as the response to and recovery from emergencies:
 - Led multi-agency preparedness for service disruption and mitigation of incidents with the potential for significant community impacts
 - Conducted joint training and exercise events to support a coordinated and timely local approach to resilience



Ensure an effective response to risks associated with rural communities and open spaces such as wildfires in our moorlands, woods and grassland areas and open water incidents so that people, livestock, wildlife and the environment can be rescued and protected

- Included content on wildfires and fire safety in the countryside in weekly Safe+Sound broadcasts for Key Stage 2 children
- Included regular water safety advice in the weekly programme, with content from RNLI, Canal & River Trust, RLSS and SFRS



- Included water safety workshops at live Safe+Sound events for Year 5 children, delivered by Canal & River Trust and the RNLI

What we said we would do



Progress

Develop plans and capabilities to be able to respond to fire risks associated with rapidly growing new technologies including electric vehicles and home battery power storage systems

- Firefighters are developing their understanding of emerging hazards related to new technologies, including battery use in vehicles, homes and businesses
- Operational plans will take account of tactical considerations needed to resolve any emerging incidents
- A number of engagements with councils, planning authorities and MPs to embed the national Fire Chiefs guidance on energy storage sites

Further develop work between SFRS, Staffordshire Police and other emergency services in examining their approach to managing incidents where multiple services attend. This local initiative is additional to established national principles for managing major incidents

- SFRS played a key role in the LRF's implementation of recommendations arising from the Manchester Arena Inquiry:
 - 35 actions are in progress, covering the sharing of major incident plans, record keeping, sharing of site-specific tactical plans and interoperability of emergency services

Explore opportunities for Fire & Rescue teams to respond to incidents which might be initially reported to other agencies. Examples are gaining entry to save lives, assisting with searches for high risk missing persons, and carrying out emergency treatment at cardiac arrest incidents

- SFRS supporting West Midlands Ambulance service in responding to falls where people are uninjured but need help in getting up
- SFRS mobilised 939 times to falls in the community between April 2023 and March 2024
- Average attendance time is 38 minutes, and on 86% of occasions no further assistance from NHS Urgent Care Services was required



What we said we would do



Progress

Continue to work to reduce repeated demand from the same locations and from false alarms

- SFRS Prevention and Protection teams monitor and react to premises with repeated operational demand to find out why, assist with vulnerabilities and ensure SFRS appliances are available where they are needed most





Priority 2 Protect people and places



'Protect people, premises and the environment through the right balance of education, advice and support and the use of regulatory and enforcement powers to keep people safe.'

What we said we would do

Progress

Maintain the pace of the Community Sprinkler Programme to reduce the risk to occupants of multi-occupancy buildings within the scope of the programme and lobby for the installation of sprinkler systems to new multi-occupancy residential premises to become a regulatory requirement

- Final project to retrofit sprinklers in Midland Heart buildings completed in April 2023
- Water misting technology installed in a building operated by Bromford Housing
- Stoke-on-Trent City Council continuing programme to retrofit sprinklers at 9 high- and medium-rise blocks



Continue to work with the Environment Agency, Staffordshire Police, Local Authorities and other partners to ensure co-operation in investigation and enforcement activity related to fly-tipping, waste and environmental crime, often linked to organised crime

- Continued the outreach business support for rural communities, working with the National Farmers' Union and the Chamber of Commerce via our Business Support Officer

What we said we would do

Progress

Continue to develop the audit process by which the service identifies high-risk premises to ensure inspection activity is properly targeted. This will be enhanced by better information sharing and joint analysis with partners

- New Risk-Based Inspection Programme went live in February 2024 and is now embedded within Service Protection teams
- Numbers of audits, licencing consultations and post-fire inspections have remained consistent, while there has been an increase in building regulations consultations



Ensure that the service has the required specialist staff, training and other resources to undertake an expanded role in the risk-based audit and inspection of premises and the application of regulatory powers

- Staffing structures reviewed and a new central protection team formed to audit activity in all Service Delivery Groups
- Seven members of Protection staff are undergoing training towards their Level 4 Diploma in Fire Safety, with 1 also starting a degree in Fire Engineering

Strike the right balance between advising and supporting co-operative businesses to achieve compliance and robust enforcement where it's needed

- During 2023/24, 280 fire safety audits were completed, with 86.7% deemed satisfactory and 13.3% unsatisfactory
- 684 Building Regulations consultations were received in the same period, with 95% responded to within 15 days
- 1 Alteration Notice, 11 Enforcement Notices and 9 Prohibition/Restriction Notices were issued



What we said we would do



Progress

Consolidate the existing range of services provided to support businesses that are affected by fire or fall victim to crime into a more joined-up service 'offer'

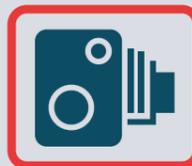
- Business Support continues to support the Chamber of Commerce Rural Forum initiative and its wider work with the business community
- Initiative introduced with Emergency Damage Support Services to provide 24/7 post-incident support for businesses and homeowners. Expert advisers offer immediate and ongoing practical advice after a fire or other property-related disaster

Establish an overarching Community Safety Forum to enhance joint planning and service delivery; collaborating with partners to ensure prompt, shared action and shared responsibility to prevent harm and protect individuals and families

- Staffordshire-wide Community Safety Forum continues to:
 - Improve collaboration between agencies including the NHS
 - Align their strategic direction
 - Ensure prompt joint action is taken to tackle community safety issues

Intensify the activity of our SSRP so that Police, Fire & Rescue, Local Authorities and National Highways work jointly towards safe roads, safe vehicles, safe road use, safe speeds and post-crash care to reduce road casualties that have devastating consequences for families

- Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership jointly chaired by the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner
- Work carried out to improve the quality of collision data to support early intervention and prevention activity
- New digital technology rolled out at a number of speed camera enforcement sites in areas of concern
- Modernisation of camera van fleet completed and new mobile cameras being implemented
- Community Speed Watch scheme continues to be supported, with 433 volunteers across 77 groups
- Increased monitoring of Highways and HS2-related roadwork safety schemes



What we said we would do



Progress

Engage communities more in understanding the work of the service and volunteering to support prevention work for all road safety initiatives

- 44 volunteers, including Chaplains supporting local crews, and one Volunteer Coordinator support community events such as Pride and the County Show, station open days, charity car washes, and Safe+Sound events
- The Canal & River Trust trained three volunteers to deliver their water safety workshop and SSRP trained four volunteers to deliver their seatbelt safety workshop. Volunteers also supported a recruitment campaign for retained firefighters



Priority 3 Help people most at risk stay safe



'Deliver effective and targeted prevention work that provides early help to individuals, families and communities so that we keep people safe from fires, road traffic collisions and other incidents, they feel safer and there is less pressure on Fire response services.'

What we said we would do

Progress

Ensure that home safety visits are targeted at those at most risk of fire in the home and enable prompt intervention to provide the support people need to prevent fires and identify underlying issues which contribute to fire risks

- In 2023/24, 13,970 visits were completed to those most at risk – people over 80 living alone or living with another, compared to 13,131 in previous year. Referrals are also received through partner referral networks and managed through the contact centre.
- Extended Safe and Well visits using prevent teams involve a range of complex needs and require significant support to help with matters such as hoarding, mobility, mental health, drug and housing issues



What we said we would do

Progress

Follow up home safety check interventions to ensure improvements are sustained, the impact is evaluated and any learning is applied to other cases

- Monthly questionnaires ask residents who have received Safe and Well checks about their experience, to recognise good performance or inform improvements
- Follow-up conversations with those who made contact but did not qualify for Safe and Well visits take place after three months to see if their circumstances have changed
- Fatal fire conferences are held when someone loses their life following a residential property fire, with any interactions with SFRS regarding home safety looked into and learning points shared
- Following Safe and Well visits, extremely vulnerable residents are visited again by Prevent Teams and further interventions applied. The case is then monitored by the Community Safety Officer
- SFRS is engaging with the NFCC's Competencies in Home Fire Safety Visits workstream and will adopt processes as necessary following the evaluation

Ensure referral pathways are in place between Fire & Rescue and health services so that people get the help they need to reduce the risk of fire and other incidents in the home such as mental and physical health, and drug and alcohol support

- Home safety fire visits can be requested via the SFRS contact centre or website
- Fire safety learning package available on the national LearnLive website or delivered in person locally
- Referrals to other agencies are made to ensure people get the support they need. Since the start of April 2024, over 600 referrals were made to partner agencies and local authorities
- Work is taking place with local hospital trusts to encourage staff to refer people leaving hospital for a Home Fire Safety Visit
- Prevent Teams can request a needs assessment from local partners around drug and alcohol support



What we said we would do



Progress

Share data appropriately to ensure services are targeted towards people and places most at risk

- Revised risk profiles for domestic dwellings have been developed and implemented in February 2024 to identify high-risk dwellings and individuals within the county and allow services to be targeted to our most vulnerable households
- As a result of recent fire fatalities, a number of case conferences have been held to identify the causes leading up to the fire. This learning is then shared with partners and used to prevent further fires occurring. The case conferences involve representatives from SFRS, Housing, and Social Care and Health

Work with schools and alternative education providers to develop and deliver consistent, good quality education about fire safety and road safety, so children are able to make informed, positive and safe choices

- Safe+Sound is the Service’s universal offer to Key Stage 2 children at Fire stations across the county
- Online delivery of Safe+Sound continues weekly on the Learn Live Channel
- Updated Education Policy and Delivery Plan launched in December 2023, focusing on crews delivering Fire Safety and Road Safety to Key Stage 1, Deliberate Fires to Key Stage 3 and 4, and supporting colleges with Uniformed Public Services students



Divert children away from harm through a range of personal development programmes and positive diversionary activities and ensure that they are brought together with similar activities in policing in a cohesive and coordinated way

- SFRS ran 12 Prince’s Trust programmes from various locations
- 117 young people aged 16-30 participated, supported throughout by trained SFRS staff
- The programme resulted in positive outcomes, progressing onto either further education, work or referred onto appropriate partners

What we said we would do



Progress

Support the delivery of education initiatives targeted towards groups most at risk of road traffic collisions

- Prevent and operational staff have been involved in road safety activities across the county, including integrating education into events at community Fire stations, linking in with local colleges and retail outlets and undertaking training provided by the SSRP
- Over 30,000 children and young people engaged with by the Road Safety Education Team





Priority 4 A Fire & Rescue Service for tomorrow



'Ensure that Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service is fit for a changing future and is a leading example for other services to follow so the people of Staffordshire can be reassured that their money is being used efficiently and effectively and the workforce better reflects the communities it serves.'

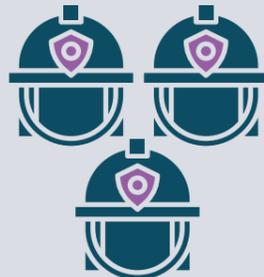
What we said we would do



Progress

Apply robust processes to understand present and future service demand and risk to provide a sound and transparent evidence base for resource allocation and funding decisions

- Three-person crewing for on-call staff has been piloted since June 2023, aiming to improve appliance availability and response times to emergencies to enhance public safety without compromising firefighter safety
- An average increase of 11% in on-call appliance availability. On average a three-person crew which arrives first at the scene is 9 minutes and 45 seconds quicker than the next fully crewed appliance
- The service still strives to crew on-call appliances with four or more crew members and is actively recruiting on-call staff
- The Roving Appliance Project aims to improve appliance availability across South Staffordshire. The ongoing pilot involves funding on-call crews over weekends as an alternative to paying for cross-border mobilisations from neighbouring services



What we said we would do



Progress

Use this evidence base to develop an operating model that puts the right people with the right skills in the right place at the right time to respond to fires and other incidents and deliver the prevention and protection services which will reduce risk even further

- Robust evaluation processes are in place for pilots and crews engaged throughout
- No safety concerns have been reported and on-call station availability has increased by a mean average of 12%. Data shows improved response times, with on-call crews arriving 9 minutes and 45 seconds ahead of the next fully crewed appliance

Ensure the right resources are available to respond to fires and other incidents and carry out prevention and protection work, considering the balance between wholetime and on-call firefighters, generalist and specialist roles, shift patterns and working locations. Reviewing the vehicle fleet mix and associated crewing arrangements should reform part of this process

- Two new Aerial Ladder Platforms (ALP) purchased to replace older vehicles at Longton and Burton, providing a safe means of working at height to tackle difficult-to-reach fires. An old ALP has been donated to Ukraine
- Two new appliances with enhanced rescue capabilities were purchased for deployment from Longton and Stafford
- Cabs and lockers continue to be developed to support the move towards a 'Clean Cab concept' to enable equipment which could bring contaminants from a fire into crew areas to be safely removed



Ensure long-term service plans consider the impact of climate change, including the resources required to deal with potentially more frequent and more severe extreme weather events

- The service has leased three electric vehicles for a two-year trial period and installed four electric vehicle charging points at HQ, JETS and Sandyford Fire Station. The EV trial will work closely with the performance and assurance team to monitor progress and benefits
- The service now holds ISO 14064:1 certification, enabling it to report carbon emissions to national standards

What we said we would do



Progress

Increase the diversity of the workforce to better reflect the community we serve, promoting inclusion and addressing any organisational or cultural barriers to achieving this

- The National Fire Chiefs Council has developed a Culture Action Plan in response to the *HMICFRS Spotlight Report – Values and culture in Fire & Rescue services*. There are 35 national recommendations which aim to improve culture and address discrimination, bullying and harassment across UK Fire & Rescue services. 19 are directed for Chief Fire Officers to progress. Completed actions under the plan include:
 - Establishing whistleblowing processes and ensuring they are accessible
 - Reviewing the support available to people raising concerns
 - Reviewing arrangements for background checks
 - Notifying HMICFRS of allegations with the potential to constitute gross misconduct
 - Seeking regular feedback from staff on values, culture, fairness and diversity
 - Putting plans in place to gather and analyse staff feedback, watch and team cultures and provide prompt remedial action for any issues they identify
 - Ensuring implementation of the Core Code of Ethics

Build on our Police/Fire collaboration programme to deliver effective and efficient support services and bring together the best in new ways of working and the technology that supports it from both organisations

- SFRS and Staffordshire Police continue to share Finance, Commercial, HR, Corporate Communications, Estates and Transport Services
- Support to both services on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is now provided by a single team
- Further areas of collaboration being explored

What we said we would do



Progress

Make better use of our best buildings by enabling Fire & Rescue and Police staff to share accommodation

- New shared base at Chase Terrace and similar schemes progressed in 2024 at Uttoxeter, Kidsgrove, Stone, Kinver and Penkridge Fire stations



Implement strong evaluation processes to provide a better understanding of productivity and impact the service is having against the outcomes it is working towards

- Internal review of the structure of prevention teams implemented in February 2024, providing a centralised overview of prevention activity and support to local teams
- Implementing a new data management system for recording prevention activity to improve data gathering and analysis

“In this financial section, I set out how my office is funded and detail how we invest to reduce crime, tackle ASB and support victims. I, along with you, need to be assured that everything my team does represents good value for money and that Staffordshire Police and Fire & Rescue services are effectively governed and our communities are safer as a result of their efforts.

Police, Fire & Crime Commissioners provide the local elected oversight, governance and financial control that Police and Fire Authorities, made up of assigned local councillors, were responsible for in the past, but we do more. Notably, we have a duty to provide important support to victims and champion their interests. Under the ‘crime’ element of our role, Commissioners focus on prevention activity and improving the wider criminal justice system alongside prosecutors, courts, prisons and probation.

PCCs have the power to commission services and to award grants to organisations to assist them in delivering the priorities set out in the Police & Crime and Fire & Rescue plans. In many PCC areas, much of this activity is funded from within the Police or Fire & Rescue service budgets and often delivered by Police or Fire staff and officers. Being a low crime area, Staffordshire Police doesn’t receive special grants to form violence reduction units or to tackle county lines but some of our neighbouring forces do.

I work alongside their PCCs to ensure effective regional collaboration to tackle organised crime, counter terrorism, patrol our motorways and train officers.

It is very much in residents’ interests for us to identify and protect the people most vulnerable to organised criminals, those at risk of sexual or criminal exploitation and to seek to reduce substance misuse and tackle addiction. Government funding has been provided to tackle the impact of drugs and to reduce serious violence. I hold senior responsible officer roles to ensure our local partnership strategy aims are met and this new funding is efficiently used.

I will also continued to fund Staffordshire SPACE to reduce ASB during school holiday periods by subsidising positive activities for children.

To do all of the above, and to help me influence significant spending in other agencies to improve criminal justice outcomes, it is essential there is an experienced and professional Office of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner in Staffordshire. Securing government grants such as Safer Streets and winning opportunities to pilot interventions like the ASB Hot Spot Patrolling, worth millions of pounds, to improve safety across the force area doesn’t just happen. The office’s lead on bids realises excellent return on investment for local council tax payers.

Every PCC must employ a Chief Executive who has statutory duties as well as being responsible for delivering my strategy and running the Commissioner’s Office. Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires every local authority to appoint an officer responsible for the proper administration of its financial affairs. Katharine

Ross started in the role of Director of Finance in October 2023 and has greatly improved our approach to developing our medium-term financial strategy.

Because of the different funding received by the 43 forces and local challenges, it is difficult to compare the cost of

Commissioner’s Offices across England and Wales, but I hope this section helps to demonstrate the value of the choices I have made to meet our priorities in Staffordshire.”



Staffordshire Police and Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Actual Expenditure 2023/24

How we plan to invest in your services

Police & Crime

Income

● Government Funding	£163.5m
● Council Tax	£101.3m
Total	£264.8m

Expenditure

● Police Officer Pay	£135.5m
● Police Staff Pay	£74.4m
● Premises Transport and Other Services	£25.5m
● PCSO Pay	£9.5m
● Capital Financing Costs	£8.6m
● Commissioned Services	£6.1m
● Other Pay Costs	£3.7m
● Commissioner's Office	£1.5m
Total	£264.8m

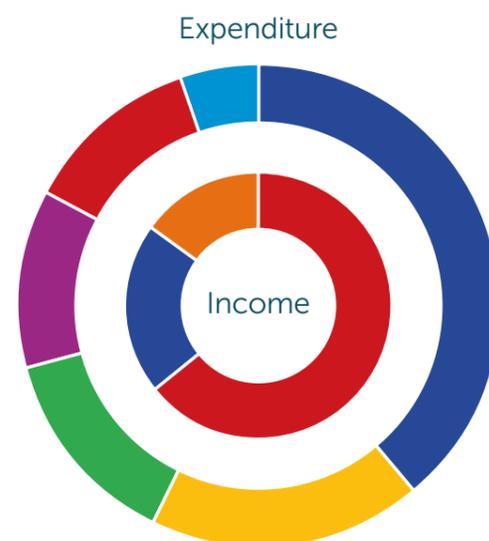
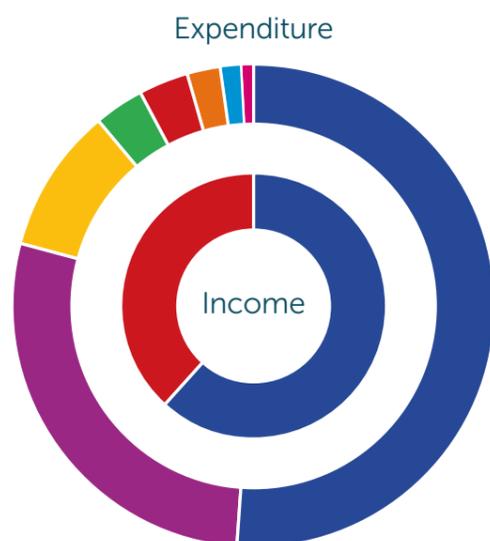
Fire & Rescue

Income

● Council Tax	£32.1m
● Business Rates	£10.4m
● Revenue Support Grant	£7.5m
Total	£50.0m

Expenditure

● Wholetime Firefighters Pay	£19.5m
● Premises Transport and Other Services	£9.2m
● Capital Financing Costs	£6.8m
● Fire Staff Pay	£6.0m
● On-Call Firefighters Pay	£5.9m
● Other Pay Costs	£2.6m
Total	£50.0m



Staffordshire Commissioner's Office Financial Report 2023/24

The salary costs of the SCO team represent 0.6% of the overall Police and Fire revenue budgets.

Office Costs

The total salary costs for the year 2023/24 were £1.814m and include the required contributions for National Insurance and pensions, with all SCO staff being eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). Pay costs for the year were £0.137m lower than budget due to achieved pay savings in the year.

This total cost can be broken down into the following key areas:

SCO Business Area	£m
Leadership	£0.344m
Commissioning and Partnerships	£0.674m
Performance and Engagement	£0.493m
Governance and Assurance	£0.303m
Total Salary Costs	£1.814m

The Commissioner is responsible for setting the strategic direction for the Police and Fire & Rescue Service. This SCO leadership team, supported by the Performance & Engagement team, together develop strategies and policies which provide a planning framework for the services. They provide strategic advice to the Commissioner to assist him in holding the Chief Constable and Chief Fire Officer to account, ensuring all interventions are fully aligned to the SCO priorities, and adhere to all ethical, statutory and government standards. The team also includes a small number of highly experienced Communications and Engagement specialists who deal with a wide range of tasks including liaising with news and local media, campaigns, events and leading on engagement activity such as surveys and consultations on budgets, council tax and strategy.

A key priority for the Commissioner is for the work of the office to be open, honest and transparent. This work is undertaken by the Governance, Assurance and Volunteering team, ensuring the Commissioner and the office develop and maintain a robust governance framework that underpins the delivery of efficient and effective Policing and Fire services, and the management of resources.

The SCO Commissioning team works, often in partnership with other agencies across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, to enhance, commission or co-commission projects and services which support the criminal justice system and improve community safety. Primarily focused on prevention and early intervention, the team includes specialists on serious violence, ASB, protecting children and young people, tackling re-offending and sexual violence.

Commissioned Services

The cost of the Commissioning and Partnerships Team represents 0.2% of the overall Police and Fire revenue budgets.

During 2023/24, the team oversaw a gross budget of circa £11.9m:

- £4.9m (42%) of this budget came from income received from national sources (such as the Victims Grant from the MOJ), income received from Proceeds of Crime and partners including the City, County, District and Borough Councils, as well as NHS England
- £1.9m (16%) of this budget came from devolved budgets to the PFCC (such as Community Safety Grants)
- £1.6m (13%) of this budget represented contracts being overseen by the Team on behalf of the Force
- £3.5m (29%) of this budget came from the Police and Fire revenue budgets

The Commissioning team also leads on positive activities to reduce ASB including the SPACE summer holiday programme and relationships with our nine local Community Safety Partnerships.



STAFFORDSHIRE COMMISSIONER

Police | Fire and Rescue | Crime