

# Productivity and Efficiency Plan

## 2024-2025



PREVENTION



PROTECTION



SERVICE DELIVERY



PEOPLE



ASSETS

# Introduction

West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (WSFRS) is committed to delivering an effective, efficient, and productive service that delivers against our five strategic priorities.

1. Preventing fires and emergencies from happening
2. Protecting people, firefighters and property by making buildings as safe from fire as they can be
3. Responding to fires and emergencies quickly and effectively
4. Have a safe and valued workforce
5. Making best use of resources

The National Framework sets a requirement that combined and metropolitan Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) produce and publish Efficiency Plans. The Minister of State for Crime, Policing and Fire requested that in 2024/25, all FRAs regardless of their governance type produce plans that not only cover their planned efficiencies, but also plans for increasing productivity.

West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service's strategy for the delivery of its services is driven by its Community Risk Management Plan 2022-2026. Our CRMP identifies and assesses all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect our community. Once we have identified these risks, we look at the resources we have in place and the activity we need to undertake to meet these risks and develop plans to improve safety.

View the [Community Risk Management Plan](#) for the period of 2022-2026.

## Funding Assumptions

West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service does not receive separate general Government funding and instead there is a notional allocation within the annual Standard Funding Assessment (SFA) which is published as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement each year. This notional allocation is not ring fenced and forms one of several building blocks of the County Council's overall funding settlement, along with a number of specific grants for fire and rescue activities.

In calculating this notional figure, the cost of providing a fire and rescue service is taken into consideration and is driven by risk rather than by demand. Many of the cost drivers are unique to each service area. The current fire and rescue services formula consists of a basic allocation of funding per resident, with adjustments for coastline, population density and sparsity, deprivation, fire risk areas, community fire safety and other area costs. These elements include indicators of both the risk of requiring a fire service response, such as the risk of dwelling fires occurring, as well as indicators of the cost of providing fire service cover, for example because of population sparsity. The table below shows the SFA for the county as a whole and the proportion of that relating to the fire and rescue service.

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>WSCC SFA</b>	79,300,000	82,300,000	87,819,000
<b>Fire SFA (Within above)</b>	5,539,000	5,746,000	6,014,000
<b>Fire Grant (Within above)</b>	-	-	1,700,000

Bringing together funding and expenditure over the last five years, the table below shows that the SFA notional allocation has remained fairly static and only increased by 5.43% over the five-year period. Grant funding over this period has reduced considerably by £2.08m, resulting in a heavy reliance on council resources to fund the difference.

Whilst only notional, the SFA now only contributes 3.5% to the funding of the FRS whilst the remaining 96.5% falls to other elements of the wider county council funding. Over the last five years, revenue spending has increased by £7.9m (27.34%) with 86% of costs being staffing related.

	Actuals					Forecast
	2019-20 £	2020-21 £	2021-22 £	2022-23 £	2023-24 £	2024-25 £
<b>Employees</b>	24,684,200	24,378,000	27,571,900	29,286,600	31,758,000	33,008,000
<b>Non-Employee Costs</b>	4,246,400	6,201,600	4,449,000	5,866,700	5,083,000	5,122,000
<b>Gross exp</b>	28,930,600	30,579,600	32,020,900	35,153,300	36,841,000	38,130,000
<b>Grants</b>	-2,974,700	-2,675,900	-2,675,900	-2,617,100	-2,617,100	-892,000
<b>Income</b>	-508,600	-416,900	-312,500	-298,500	-298,000	-448,000
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	25,447,300	27,486,800	29,032,500	32,237,700	33,926,000	36,790,000
<b>SFA</b>	5,450,000	5,539,000	5,539,000	5,539,000	5,746,000	6,014,000
<b>WSCC Funding</b>	19,997,300	21,947,800	23,493,500	26,698,700	28,180,000	30,776,000

During 2020/21 we received fire specific grants relating to:



The 18/19 inspection report from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) identified a number of areas of inadequate performance and associated cause of concerns. A review by the incumbent Minister of State for Crime, Policing and the Fire Service, recommended a review of resources to ensure sufficient were available to enable the service to deliver their statutory functions. Targeted investment into the service has facilitated significant improvement in performance.

The service has seen £4.2m growth to support its improvement plan phases 1 and 2 as well as £1.3m to fund resources related to risk identified in the current Community Risk Management Plan. There has been inflation and funding adjustments throughout these years, as well as the consideration of additional income opportunities across the FRS.

Activity is monitored through our Performance and Assurance Framework which assures our statutory obligations and strategic commitments are being delivered. The table below demonstrates increased productivity in four key measures, which link into the West Sussex County Council Plan. Appendix A shows a full breakdown of all core measures and clearly shows continued improvement across the entire organisation.

	21/22 Target	Performance	22/23 Target	Performance	23/24 Target	Performance
Number of Safe & Well Visits delivered to those at highest risk	4000	3355	4000	4680	5000	5335
Fire safety inspections of business premises (as determined by the Risk Based Inspection Programme) conducted per year	1750	841	1000	1004	1000	1032
Percentage of critical fires where the first appliance in attendance meets our emergency response standard	89%	88.90%	89%	89.10%	89%	92.20%
Percentage of critical special service incidents where the first appliance in attendance meets our emergency response standard	80%	78.70%	80%	81.30%	80%	83.90%

# Savings

## 2023 - 2024

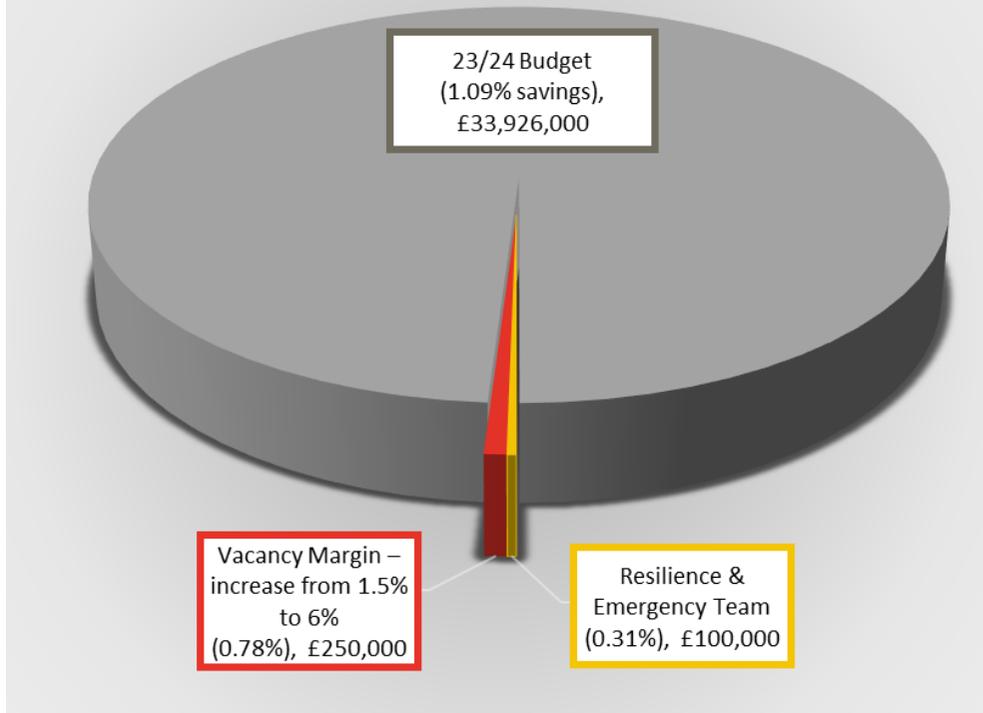


Figure 1 - 2023/24 Efficiencies

The service has contributed to closing the budget gap within the county council in 2023/24 (Figure 1) as well as 2024/25 (Figure 2) on organisational efficiencies. These savings equate to a 2% reduction in budget over the period as an accumulated figure.

Councils around the country are facing financial pressures largely due to inflation and the increase in cost of services. Cost of living rises have also meant that more people have required our services. In light of these challenges, a balanced budget was agreed for the year ahead, which will make the best use of our resources.

## 2024 -2025

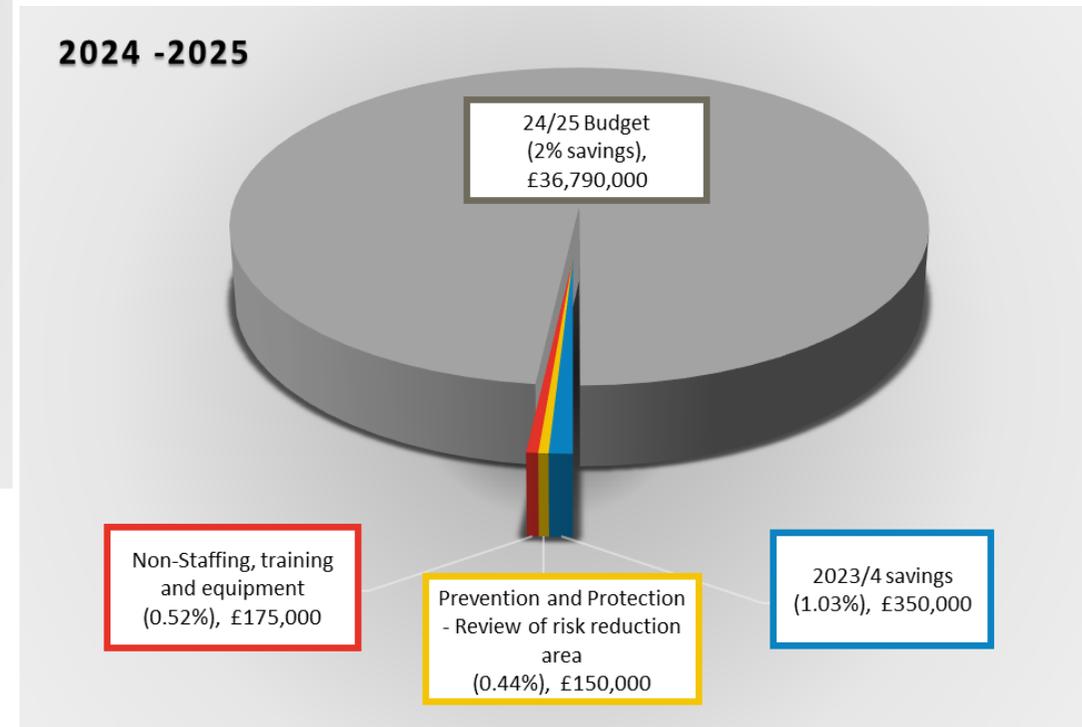


Figure 2 - 2024/5 Efficiencies

## Capital

In addition to the increased revenue investment the County Council has invested over £34m of capital expenditure over 5 years into the FRS. In the main this was to provide a new fire station and training facility in Horsham alongside £8m of investment into fleet and equipment. This has all been funded using corporate borrowing with some small investment through s106 contributions (£110,000).

	Actuals £'000 2019-20	Actuals £'000 2020-21	Actuals £'000 2021-22	Actuals £'000 2022-23	Actuals £'000 2023-24	Estimate £'000 2024-25	Total £'000
<b>Fleet</b>	1,913	3,863	350	470	135	1,572	8,303
<b>Fire Equipment</b>	196	438	180	225	352	255	1,646
<b>Horsham Fire Station</b>	641	1,214	6,053	16,027	1,036	388	25,359
<b>Breathing Apparatus – Cleaning Facilities</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Equalities and Diversity</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	2,750	5,515	6,583	16,722	1,523	2,215	35,308
<b>Borrowing</b>	2,734	5,515	6,583	16,612	1,523	2,215	35,182
<b>External Conts</b>	0	0	0	110	0	0	110
<b>RCCO</b>	16	0	0	0	0	0	16
<b>Total</b>	2,750	5,515	6,583	16,722	1,523	2,215	35,308

# Productivity



2023/24 has given us the first full 12-months since the implementation of our call challenge and non-attendance policy where our Joint Fire Control are no longer automatically mobilising fire engines to reports of the activation of automatic fire alarms within lower-risk commercial premises.

As a result we have seen a 66% reduction in unwanted fire signals, which has given our operational frontline fire crews the ability to be far more effective with their time, using it to do more fire prevention and fire protection work out in their communities, and be able to spend more time maintaining their operational competencies.

When looking specifically at Prevention activities within our Service Delivery teams it is clear that this additional time is having an impact. We have seen a 55% increase in the delivery of Safe and Well Visits overall and an increase of 102% in the medium to high-risk category.

Furthermore, the introduction of the non-attendance policy has allowed for additional prevention activity to be delivered in the form of targeted intervention for schools. As well as additional fire safety training for operational teams across the service, which has helped to support the completion of a greater number of low risk fire safety visits at a range of premises.

The Local Risk Management Plans support and underpin the day-to-day activities undertaken by firefighters. They are based around risk and ensure a clear link between the overarching CRMP and delivering at a local level.

Currently the activity that is included within the Local Risk Management Plans include set activities across every station, such as:

- Delivery of Safe and Well Visits
- Operational risk information visits
- Low risk fire safety visits
- Undertake operational exercises.

Firefighters are also expected to spend time undertaking local community safety activity based on the risk within their area. The service has worked specifically through station-based activity to focus on increased productivity and this is measured in many ways. This has seen station-based staff's time spent with the community as a proportion of the hours available increase by 6.62% since 21/22.

To support the service in its journey to further improve productivity, a focus has been placed on developing a productivity dashboard. This will enable the service to measure the productivity of all firefighters on each station.

The service will continue to proactively look at how it can improve productivity of all firefighters by at least 3% in line with the sector wide spending review target.

## **Value for Money**

We strive to deliver value for money in all its forms. Throughout our Community Risk Management and Service Plans are examples of ways we will look for value for money, by improving the availability of resources by adjusting working practices to deliver a wide range of services, through ongoing investment in modern technological solutions, and continually reviewing how we procure goods and services.

To ensure the service is delivering value for money it benchmarks itself against a range of data sets both nationally and in comparison with other fire and rescue services within its family group.

The most recent published HMICFRS data shows that West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service has a nominal value of expenditure per head of population of £40.60, less when compared to the average of other county council FRS (£42.79) and also the overall average of all FRS nationally (£46.66).

We are delivering 6.1 Safe and Well Visits in people's homes per 1,000 population, which is higher than the national average and we are delivering 7.8 fire safety audits per 100 known premises, higher than the national average of 2.0.

# Efficiency

## Platinum House

2023/24 saw the official opening of Platinum House, which provides a central location for all of our operational and support staff to train at. The facility has world leading real fire training facilities and an incident command training suite.

The provision of West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service's first purpose-built training facility has allowed the service to review how core training will be delivered centrally. The introduction of an annual three-day Maintenance of Competence training programme allows for wholtime staff to train with their team which will enable greater team cohesion and will simplify the additional staff moves required to cover this training.

For our on-call firefighters the training can be attended in singular days. This provides them with the same opportunity as wholtime staff but with the flexibility to manage training with their primary employment.

As part of the planning for the 2024/25 budget there has been a new additional income target agreed for the fire and rescue service. It is now required to make an additional £150,000 net income to support the organisational budget. Fulfilling these ongoing requirements in addition to existing income streams, demands a proactive strategy for identifying and implementing sustainable income generation across the entire service.

Achieving this target may necessitate exploring diverse revenue-generating opportunities across a range of service areas. This approach ensures a more comprehensive strategy for financial sustainability, leveraging the full scope of WSFRS's resources and expertise.



WSFRS remains committed to identifying and exploring further business opportunities beyond the Horsham training centre. This ongoing search for innovative solutions will allow WSFRS to contribute to the county council's financial stability while maintaining its core mission of serving the community.

Income generation is part of the current CRMP within Strategic Priority 5 - Assets Service Plan and is an important part of the organisational direction in alignment with the current area for improvement from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services.

To ensure the service can maximise its income generation, work has been undertaken to create a comprehensive list of fees and charges split between special services and commercial training. These fees and charges can be seen in

Appendix B.

## Collaboration

West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service is committed to collaboration and has agreed and signed a formal collaboration agreement in 2019 alongside partners in East Sussex, Surrey and Kent fire and rescue services. The agreement is designed to enable more focus on fire service specific opportunities where improved effectiveness and efficiency can be achieved. The objectives of the collaboration are to sustainably improve services to the public, increase resilience, reduce overlaps and duplication in services and respond to changes in demand for fire and rescue services.

Several collaborative projects have already been completed, including the implementation of a Joint Fire Control alongside partners in East Sussex and Surrey fire and rescue services. This saved West Sussex £0.9m in 2020/21 and has risen to £1.16m in 23/24 due to pay inflation. There have been some improvements linked to the recommendations from Grenfell and the decision continues to offer value for money four years into the contract. The original provision of our own command and mobilising centre was 35% more expensive in 2019/20 than it is today.



Other commissioned projects completed include the joint procurement of an e-learning platform to support training and the sharing of Fire Investigators across services for specific incidents to reduce the need to recall members of staff back to duty at an additional cost.

Currently, West Sussex is jointly procuring incident command vehicles and breathing apparatus sets across all four services, as well as introducing National Operational Guidance across West Sussex, Surrey, and East Sussex. This collaborative working not only realises benefits with regard to efficiency savings from any procurement, but also supports the wider goal of operational alignment between all four services, which will see additional improvements in efficiency and productivity in the future.

## Estates

We have also been working closely with West Sussex County Council to support their work to achieve carbon net zero by 2030. This work includes heat decarbonisation across several of our fire stations. Work has begun at three of our fire stations as part of the county council's first phase of decarbonising buildings within our estate. The first three stations; East Grinstead, East Wittering and Petworth have had this work completed and further stations will see work completed throughout 2024. This will see these fire stations with new more efficient boilers and air-source heat pumps, improved insulation, efficient heating systems and installation of solar panels. The additional work on these stations is proposed to save an average of in excess of 25% of energy running costs per annum per station.

## Fleet and Equipment

WSFRS and WSCC currently operate the fleet management and maintenance for over 500 vehicles. A large proportion of the work required to manage this workstream effectively is handled through a fleet management software package.

The implementation of a new software package will improve stores management, offer additional savings, and has the ability to effectively complete external maintenance providing a revenue stream amongst other benefits such as removing time consuming workarounds within the current package and therefore reducing mistakes and complexity. It will additionally allow the fleet team to digitalise its stores function and increase its efficiency.

# Appendix A - Service Performance and Assurance Framework- Core Measures over last 3 years

CM #	Measure	Tolerance / Targets	IRMP Y4 2021-22	CRMP YR1 2022-23	CRMP Y2 2023-24
CM1	Number of accidental dwelling fires in West Sussex over a year period	Green <381 Amber 381-398 Red >398	363 ↓	338 ↓	380 ↗
CM2	Number of fire deaths in accidental dwelling fires in West Sussex over a year period	Green 0 Amber 1- 3 Red >3	1 ↓	3 ↗	0 ↓
CM3	Number of fire casualties in accidental dwelling fires in West Sussex over a year period	Green <20 Amber 20 – 30 Red >30	14 ↓	14 →	10 ↓
CM4	Number of deliberate primary fires in West Sussex over a year period	Green <180 Amber 180 – 199 Red 200+	134 ↓	160 ↗	101 ↓
CM5	Number of deliberate secondary fires in West Sussex over a year period	Green <350 Amber 351 - 375 Red >375	246 ↓	299 ↗	218 ↓
CM6	Percentage of safeguarding referrals made within 24 hours of discovery	Green 100% Red <100%	96% ↘	98% ↗	84% ↘
CM7	Number of Safe and Well Visits delivered to households with at least 1 vulnerability or risk factor	Green 5000 Amber 4800 – 4999 Red <4800	3355 ↗	4680 ↗	5335 ↗
CM8	Percentage of very high risk Safe and Well referrals contacted within 1 working day	Green 100% Amber >98% Red <98%	98.80% ↗	100% ↗	100% →

CM #	Measure	Tolerance / Targets	IRMP Y4 2021-22	CRMP YR1 2022-23	CRMP Y2 2023-24
CM9	Percentage of high risk Safe and Well Visit referrals contacted within 7 working days	Green 100% Amber >98% Red <98%	99.40% ↗	99.80% ↗	99.90% ↗
CM10	Number of FSO regulated buildings having received an audit in each financial year	Green 1000 Amber 850-999 Red <850	841 ↗	1004 ↗	1032 ↗
CM11	Percentage of unsatisfactory fire safety audits	>40% green 35%-40% amber <35% red	39.50% ↗	28.60% ↘	55.0% ↗
CM12	Percentage of successful prosecutions under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005	>75% green <75% red	100% →	100% →	100% →
CM13	Percentage of statutory fire safety consultations completed within the 14-day time period	100% green <100% red	99.50% ↗	100% ↗	100% →
CM14	The number of unwanted fire signals attended in West Sussex over a year period	Green <700 Amber 700-800 Red >800	1601 ↗	1305 ↓	523 ↓
CM15	Percentage of SSRIs that are currently in date (high risk last 12 months, medium risk last 36 months)	Green >90% Amber 60% - 90% Red <60%	98.50% ↗	99.3% ↗	99.5% ↗
CM16	Percentage of emergency calls answered within 10 seconds by Joint Fire Control	Green >=95% Red <95%	94.60% ↗	95.4% ↗	98% ↗
CM17	Average time taken between Joint Fire Control receiving the emergency call and the station being notified	Green <1m 45s Amber 1m45s - 1m55s Red >1m 55s	Measured Differently Previously	Measured Differently Previously	00:01:26

CM #	Measure	Tolerance / Targets	IRMP Y4 2021-22	CRMP YR1 2022-23	CRMP Y2 2023-24
CM18	Percentage of notifications of a level 2 Incident Commander to life risk calls within 5 minutes by Joint Fire Control	Green >98% Amber 95% - 98% Red <95%	98.90%	100%	100%
			↗	↗	→
CM19	Percentage of occasions the first fire engine meets its emergency response standard at a critical fire incident.	Green >89% Red <89%	88.90%	89.1%	92.2%
			↘	↗	↗
CM20	Percentage of occasions the second fire engine arrives at a critical fire incident within its emergency response standard.	Green >83% Red <83%	79.50%	84.20%	84.90%
			↗	↗	↗
CM21	Percentage of occasions the first fire engine meets its emergency response standard at a critical special service incident.	Green >80% Red <80%	78.70%	81.3%	83.9%
			↘	↗	↗
CM22	Percentage of availability on all wholetime frontline pumping appliances	Green 100% Amber 95% - 99% Red <95%	98.80%	97.60%	97.60%
			↘	↘	→
CM23	Percentage of availability on all retained frontline pumping appliances (based on 24/7 crewing)	Green 75% Amber 65% - 75% Red <65%	53.80%	48.60%	47.40%
			↘	↘	↘
CM24	Percentage of all FRS survey respondents satisfied with the overall service from WSFRS	Green 95% Amber 85% - 95% Red <85%	97.80%	98%	98%
				↗	→
CM25	Percentage of staff who are not sick across all staff groups	Green 95% Amber 90% - 95% Red <90%	96.50%	96.80%	95%
			↘	↗	↘

CM #	Measure	Tolerance / Targets	IRMP Y4 2021-22	CRMP YR1 2022-23	CRMP Y2 2023-24
CM26	Percentage of eligible operational staff successfully completing fitness test	Green 95% Amber 85% - 95% Red <85%	89.80%	94.7%	96.7%
			↗	↗	↗
CM27	Percentage of eligible operational staff in qualification	>95% green 85% - 95% amber <85% red	90.30%	91.9%	91.50%
			↘	↗	↘
CM28	Percentage of RIDDOR accidents that are investigated and reported on time	100% green <100% red	86.40%	85.70%	100%
			↘	↘	↗
CM29	Percentage of Health and Safety Risk assessments within date	100% green >95% amber <95% red	99.70%	100%	100%
				↗	→
CM30	Occasions where a Fire Engine in the fleet was made available for each West Sussex crew in operational service	100% green >95% amber <95% red	Not measured	Not measured	100%

## Appendix B - Fees and Charges

Fire and Rescue Service	Fees or Charges	Per What?	2024/25 Fee Inclusive of VAT (Where Applicable) (£)	Type of Charge
Special Services	Major appliance/Large Vehicle & Crew (e.g. Aerial Ladder Platform)	Hour	529.20	Cost Recovery
Special Services	Pumping Appliance	Hour	588.00	Cost Recovery
Special Services	Small Vehicle (e.g. 4x4, Community Engagement Vehicle)	Hour	444.00	Cost Recovery
Special Services	Copy of IRS report	Report	144.00	Cost Recovery
Special Services	Fire Investigation Interview	Hour	216.00	Cost Recovery
Special Services	Copy of Fire Report	Report	666.00	Cost Recovery
Special Services	Labour (dependent on role) - First Hour or Part Thereof	Hour	114.00	Cost Recovery
Special Services	Labour (dependent on role) - Each Subsequent 30 Minutes	Half Hour	66.00	Cost Recovery
Special Services	Event Charges	Hour	540.00	Cost Recovery
Special Services	Primary Authority Scheme (PAS) - Hourly Fee	Hour	90.00	Cost Recovery
Special Services	Open Course Face to Face Training - Fire Safety - Various	Per Head	145.00	Cost Recovery

Special Services	On-Site Face to Face Training - Fire Safety Awareness	Course - Max 20 people	395.00	Cost Recovery
Special Services	On-Site Face to Face Training - Fire Extinguisher	Course - Max 15 people.	495.00	Cost Recovery
Special Services	On-Site Face to Face Training - Fire Warden	Course - Max 15 people.	660.00	Cost Recovery
Commercial Training	On-Site Face to Face Training - Manual Handling	Course - Max 15 people.	660.00	Cost Recovery
Commercial Training	On-Site Face to Face Training - Management of Fire Risk	Course - Max 15 people.	660.00	Cost Recovery
Commercial Training	Fire Extinguisher Maintenance	Extinguisher	Various	Cost Recovery