



COVID-19 Strategic Intentions

December 2021

Introduction

The UK Government's overriding goal is to protect the lives and livelihoods of citizens across Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and England. For the benefit of the whole UK, the Government has secured access to more than 400 million vaccine doses, established the largest testing infrastructure in Europe, and provided an unprecedented level of financial support for businesses and individuals.

This COVID-19 Response sets out how the Government will continue to protect and support citizens across the UK

This document has been updated taking account of the rising tide of coronavirus infections from the latest variant; Omicron that is now circulating and spreading widely across communities. The latest government controls and guidance aimed at limiting the spread of the virus may continue to change and can be accessed from the government and devolved administrations official web pages.

FRS should be aware that there may be different levels of controls and guidance in place across the devolved administrations.

Following a meeting of Health officials from all nations of the UK, the covid level changed from level 3 to level 4 in December 2021. The restrictions and the introduction of national lockdowns, regional and local measures based on transmission rates has understandably resulted in different approaches being adopted to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus. These measures have direct implications for each FRS and whilst the measures adopted in areas may be somewhat similar, it will be for each FRS to determine the extent to which the transmission rates and local restrictions in their area impacts on their non-emergency response work.

In applying this overarching strategic intention the, Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) should be aware of the current COVID-19 management measures in place relevant to their respective government and local government areas.

This document has been updated in line with Government COVID-19 Response: Autumn and Winter Plan 2021 guidance updated on 9th November 2021 and guidance appertaining to each of the devolved administrations.

The intentions have also been refreshed to reflect the changes made by all governments in response to the Omicron variant and the heightened levels of transmission witnessed.

The Autumn and Winter Plan 2021 provides to sustain progress made under the previous Recovery Roadmap document while ensuring the NHS does not come under unsustainable pressure.

The devolved administrations have set out separate plans for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. While the general approach in this document will still be relevant, specific elements such as timescales or specific restrictions will depend on the specific plans set by those respective administrations.

The advice outlined in the Autumn and Winter Plan 2021 and, specifically, those related to Plan B (England only) is broadly similar to which FRS have had to deal with previously. FRSs will, therefore, be able to

make use of their learning during that time to ensure their work can be undertaken in a safe and effective way.

Recognising the importance of clarity for those who live and work in different parts of the UK, particularly in cross-border communities, the Government will continue to work closely with the Devolved Administrations.

National Fire Chiefs Council Strategic Intent

To support the gradual recovery and transition to a new normality set out in the Government road map, enabling a prioritised and safe resumption of activities disrupted by the pandemic, whilst maintaining the ability to respond to further peaks, either locally, regionally or nationally.

Strategic Intentions

- To proactively protect our communities and limit the spread of COVID-19 by following extant government guidance.
- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of our staff through the maintenance of measures aligned to the COVID-19 Secure premises, until such time as government guidance changes.
- To ensure that the return to a new normality acknowledges and mitigates any identified risks to staff well-being.
- To maintain an effective Emergency Response – we will continue to respond to all incidents.

- To maintain Preparedness activity – we will continue prepare, train and exercise against foreseeable risk and seek the safe and prioritised resumption of Preparedness activities disrupted by COVID-19.
- To Protect our communities from fire – we will continue a risk-based approach to Protection activities, balancing the need to regulate the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and protect staff and the public from COVID-19.
- To Prevent the impact of fire and other emergencies on our communities – we will continue a risk-based approach to community facing activities, balancing the need to protect staff against the objective of preventing fires and other emergencies from occurring in the community.
- To continue to support the national COVID-19 vaccine and booster programme in agreement with local partners.
- To ensure the sector's response, recovery and transition to a new normality is coordinated and integrated with other agencies, promote shared situational awareness and a joint understanding of risk.
- To ensure effective business continuity, procurement and recovery arrangements are established and maintained throughout the sector.
- To ensure lessons to be learnt from the COVID-19 response phase continue to be gathered, shared and acted upon, where appropriate, across the sector.
- To support the transition to a new normality.

NFCC Guidance

For further information and updates, please refer to www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk/COVID-19

Reporting

- Home Office - Weekly
- PPE - Monthly
- Workforce Data – No change

NFCC COVID 19 advice and support

Should you have specific issues related to any of the areas identified please raise them by e mailing covid19.enquiries@nationalfirechiefs.org.uk

NFCC Governance

NFCC COVID-19 Committee Membership

All enquiries should be directed to covid19.enquiries@nationalfirechiefs.org.uk