

FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES
National Employers
(England)



NFCC
National Fire
Chiefs Council

Local 
Government
Association

Fit for the Future

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Foreword

This updated version of Fit for the Future is the product of more than three further years of close partnership working between the National Employers (England), the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and the Local Government Association (LGA). Fit for the Future was the first time that we came together to consider what we all want the fire and rescue service to look like in the future and to acknowledge the challenges we face in getting there.

We have brought together evidence from past experience, information about future global issues and trends and the views of strategic leaders at both political and officer levels to set out the future role of the fire and rescue service in England.

We recognise that, although we have come a long way over the last 20 years, there are still areas where we can and must do more. The recent pandemic as well as other key issues, such as the impact of climate change leading to extreme weather events, and the emergence of new technological innovations all demonstrate a need for us to adapt for the future. We must make better use of data and research to drive forward our work, ensuring we are data driven and evidence led.

We also need to ensure positive culture change across UK fire and rescue services so that all services are inclusive, open, and safe places to work. The public must have trust and confidence in fire and rescue services, and the themes of positive culture, equality, diversity and inclusion must be central to all our work.

It is also important that the fire sector has robust national arrangements in place to deal with large scale national events on behalf of the public, particularly those related to emergent risk including wildfire and flooding. Funding to maintain, enhance and develop these national capabilities must be a priority for government.

We believe that local leadership at both the political and operational level will be key to meeting changes and driving improvement in the sector, but we will also need support from national government. We believe this should include:

- The role of the Fire Minister being a senior, ministerial appointment with sufficient seniority and influence both to champion the future of the sector and drive forward further reform and investment.
- The establishment of a ministerially chaired National Fire Board, bringing strategic partners together alongside ministers, to help shape and drive forward reform and improvements across Fire and Rescue services.

The role of the fire and rescue service and the improvements we will need to make in the next five years are all set out here in the latest version of Fit for the Future. The details contained within will be used to describe our ambition for the future role of the fire and rescue service to all interested parties, including central government.

Fit for the Future will inform how the roles of employees will be developed and be the basis for how we prioritise our work to deliver what we intend. Fit for the Future therefore sits at the highest level of policy for our organisations and is a basis for an ongoing partnership between us to deliver change.

To support the future of the service we are setting out twelve areas of improvement that span the breadth of fire and rescue business, from risk planning of prevention, protection, recruitment and retention through to how we work with others to improve safety in our communities.

Fit for the Future can only be useful if it genuinely drives change and improvement in the fire and rescue services the public receive. As national organisations, we will do all we can to support its delivery. Locally, in fire and rescue services, we invited careful scrutiny of the material so as to actively plan to make the improvements we have set out. Each FRA (Fire and Rescue Authority) and FRS (Fire and Rescue Service) had the opportunity to engage at local political and officer levels before Fit for the Future was published in 2022.

The significant areas of improvement and reform set out in Fit for the Future will clearly need adequate resources and additional funding to support them. The partners believe there is a sound case for such funding in terms of the societal value and the benefits to the public that will be delivered. That case will be made in support of the delivery of Fit for the Future.

We will take regular steps to ensure Fit for the Future remains current and fresh and that we maximise the opportunities presented by long-awaited plans for reform.

Executive Summary

Making our fire and rescue service Fit for the Future

In order to reflect societal, environmental changes, and risk in an ever-changing world the role of the fire and rescue service always needs to evolve.

Climate change is one of the key global issues of the 21st century and is presenting unprecedented risk to communities, with extreme weather events already having significant impacts in the UK. Over the past two decades, the UK has seen a vast increase in flooding, wildfires, heatwaves, landslides, sinkholes, high-intensity storms, and high winds, with these events likely to become more frequent and extreme as global temperatures rise.

UK FRS play a key role in responding to these events, alongside having an important preparedness role which includes the delivery of prevention, protection, and resilience activities to minimise the anticipated impacts of climate change.

It is not only FRS which need to adapt to be fit for the future; the built environment, including vital infrastructure, will also need to be adapted to ensure that it is sustainable and can withstand climate change impacts to keep communities safe from climate change related risks.

Fire and rescue services are as much about *rescue* as they are about fighting fires. FRS are regularly called to attend road traffic collisions (RTCs) when people are trapped inside their vehicles and need to be rescued. Firefighters witness first-hand lives completely destroyed as a result. Crews must undergo regular training in using the latest equipment and procedures to enable them to respond efficiently and effectively to the complex and noncomplex RTCs. Improving road safety is vital to try and stop these incidents from occurring. Equally, firefighters are increasingly involved in rescuing vulnerable people from their own homes – often for health-related issues.

The fire and rescue service has extensive capabilities to build upon to serve the public during a crisis or when demand places extensive pressures on other parts of the public sector.

Mindful of local risks and needs, we will do this to save lives and protect local communities. The previous Government's Fire Reform White Paper response and the reform plans outlined within it, build on the partnership work and achievements to date, but to deliver further improvements the fire and rescue service will need adequate funding and resources.

Some things will be different to reflect changing risks and demands

Each FRA/FRS will use their duties, powers, capabilities and people to...

... put local communities at the centre of any decisions made when responding to major emergencies (irrespective of the type and nature of the incident). For instance, the Covid 19 pandemic is an example of the contribution the fire and rescue service can make. This can be done by:

Leading the development of high-quality local resilience plans, with partners.

Taking a prominent role in leading and managing the response.

Having the capability to quickly put highly trained, competent people into any stage of a crisis 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

... protect the most vulnerable people in our communities, tackling the health, social and infrastructure inequalities that put their wellbeing at risk. This could include continuing discussions about developing the role of firefighters, for example:

Focusing on the people in local communities who are most at risk.

Preventing accidents by identifying and explaining how people are at risk and helping them if an accident happens.

Responding to urgent medical emergencies, such as heart attacks, in advance of the ambulance service.

Supporting the ambulance service when demand is high, where fire service capacity and capability allows.

Some things will be enhanced

Each FRA/FRS will enhance the way they...

... prevent fires and other emergencies by...

Increasing their understanding of the root causes of fires and other emergencies and how to address them.

Working with partners to reach people most at risk and make them safer.

... protect people from the effects of fires and regulate the built environment by...

Identifying and increasing the understanding of people and the buildings and places that represent the most serious risks and enforce wherever appropriate.

Targeting audit and inspection regimes to identify buildings that are unsafe.

... respond to fires and other emergencies by

Being better prepared to deal with a wide range of emergencies and major incidents.

Having highly trained, flexible employees who can manage emergencies with the highest levels of professionalism.

... represent value for public money by

Measuring and quantifying the benefits of the work delivered by the fire and rescue service in terms of public safety.

Continuously learning and improving the service.

Some things will be improved

Each FRA/FRS will have a positive, welcoming and inclusive culture, growing the diversity of our workforce and one that helps manage risk in local communities by

... embracing and embedding the Core Code of Ethics to create a positive and inclusive culture.

... improving recruitment, retention and progression of employees from all backgrounds, including positive action to encourage women and people from minority ethnic groups to join and flourish in the fire service.

... listening to the voices of all employees, with a particular focus on those with protected characteristics, and wider staff networks to inform improvements.

... celebrating diversity and promoting equality in all its forms so all employees have a strong sense of belonging.

Ownership

Fit for the Future is applicable to England. It has been developed in partnership between the National Employers (England), the NFCC and the LGA. All organisations recognise their separate roles in improvement in support of fire and rescue services. They also recognise the importance of working together to deliver the fire and rescue service that they seek to achieve.

Engagement by the partners will continue to regularly refine the content of Fit for the Future so it works at strategic and operational levels for FRAs and FRSs. The idea is to have common agreement about what the future needs to look like, what needs to change to improve the service and how the benefits of that improvement can be realised.

The National Employers have strategic responsibility in every part of the UK to create an “enabling framework” that will allow local fire and rescue authorities to implement services that will reduce risk in their communities in the most effective and efficient way. To achieve this, they negotiate directly with national employee representatives, through the National Joint Councils (NJC), to agree how employees’ roles should align to the delivery of these local services and determine national pay and terms and conditions that will support this. They also support fire and rescue authorities and fire and rescue services as they seek to implement change at local level.

The LGA represents fire and rescue authorities who have the legal and democratic responsibility for fire and rescue services. The LGA works to support, promote and improve fire and rescue services through policy and improvement work. This work is directed by the Fire Services Management Committee. The LGA’s Fire Commission provides a forum for all fire and rescue authorities to discuss fire issues.

The NFCC represents senior managers who have operational responsibility to deliver the fire and rescue service in every part of the UK. The NFCC will provide evidence and advice, as appropriate, to the National Employers (England) and the LGA in support of new ways of working that will deliver a service that is fit for the future.

Background

Fit for the Future establishes a common picture for the future of fire and rescue services in England. Its purpose is to identify what needs to change, using a sound evidence base and then identify how that change could be delivered at local and national levels, supporting its implementation across all services.

We have reviewed a wide range of sources to establish a credible picture of the future. The sources we've used include external and internal stakeholder feedback about the current performance of the service. This includes recent independent reviews and inspections into values and culture in fire and rescue services, as well as considering what might happen in the future over the next 5 to 10 years.

The partners' approach draws upon the available information about service effectiveness and efficiency from service reviews, inspectorate reports and expert commentary. It uses this information to create the common areas of improvement and an agreed future role for the fire and rescue service that is set out in Fit for the Future. Necessary future funding, employee roles and national tools can then be aligned with that view of the future role of the fire and rescue service and its areas of improvement.

Even though the partners in their analysis have looked up to 10 years ahead, this is too long a timescale to set for the delivery of the changes identified in Fit for the Future. Our ambition is that these will be achieved within 5 years.

Wide engagement took place on the concept and content of Fit for the Future to ensure it reflected the views of senior managers and political leaders.

There are a number of key areas of work and oversight that will be informed by Fit for the Future, these include:

- Production of central guidance, doctrine and tools.

- Audit and inspection.

- Pay and conditions for employees.

- Culture and inclusion

- Standards development.

Fit for the Future is a system of evidence-based improvements, not a rigid set of static objectives that is inflexible and unresponsive. The partners will need to continually review new evidence and make changes where appropriate. Joint arrangements to do this will be put in place.

Funding

Wide engagement took place on the concept and content of Fit for the Future. As a partnership we are committed to driving improvement through productivity and efficiency gains, however, recognise that without adequate funding, resources and cross government support, the ambitions of Fit for the Future cannot be fully realised.

Fire and rescue services have managed funding pressures well, by working together, and with other organisations, to respond to a wide range of activities and incidents. By driving savings through productivity and efficiency improvements, we hope that funding can be reinvested in other areas of FRSs' work to provide new or enhanced services to the public. However there remains the inherent need for longer term and sustainable investment to ensure the sector remains fit for the future. This is equally true of funding needed to support the implementation of the ambitions set out within this document, through the three partners.

There will be demonstrable societal value and public benefits resulting from the improvements and reforms that the partners have outlined in Fit for the Future. But we know that simply setting out our ambition and then seeking funding will not be enough. Well evidenced business cases will be made to government in support of our ambitions. Flexibility will also be sought for other funding authorities and bodies to support this work. These business cases will demonstrate how we will save more lives, recognise employee contribution and continue to deliver excellent value for money.

Relationship to Pay and Terms and Conditions for Employees

Fit for the Future has a range of implications and opportunities for the roles of employees. The changes that may need to be agreed and the value of the benefits of those changes will be the basis of a key business case to the English government, for funding to support appropriate pay arrangements.

To support the aspirations set out in Fit for the Future in providing improved services to the public, the partners also recognise the value of good industrial relations and the role of trade unions and employee representatives.

Working together provides opportunities to have discussions about professionalising the career structure within the Fire and Rescue Service, to explore the creation of pay structure that supports an accredited skills and knowledge framework, embeds the values and leadership behaviours that reflect the modern Fire and Rescue Services and drives the recruitment and retention of a professional, more diverse workforce.

The National Employers (England) will continue to seek to translate the strategic vision of Fit for the Future into their employee relations work, understanding and exploring where the consensus in the sector lays, in order to lead consultation and negotiations with employee representatives to move discussions forward.

The Working Environment

Society is changing in different parts of the country in different ways. Fire and rescue services need to be able to reshape to address societal changes, including population growth and movement, an aging society and health inequality. Services need a diverse and inclusive workforce that better reflects the communities they serve.

FRAs and FRSs also need to be able to build upon their success in changing human behaviour through prevention and other associated practices in order to broaden their contribution to a safer, more prosperous society.

The pandemic has resulted in significant changes in society. There are now well-established new ways of working including using technology that can move people away from more office-based models. It has also established the practical reality of widening the scope of the service offer to the public within fire and rescue. This needs to be built upon.

There are global challenges posed by the climate warming leading to increasing risks of extreme heat, wildfires, flooding and water scarcity. Services need to take into account changes in context such as modern methods of construction and changing and emerging technology and innovation.

These societal and global changes are reflected in the risks that drive the activities of the fire and rescue service. Although many risks and some resultant activities are common to all fire and rescue services, no one service is identical to another. Through consistent and robust Community Risk Management Planning (CRMP) local risks need to be properly assessed to inform the deployment of local services. Proposals for service delivery need to be carefully developed, and local communities fully engaged, to ensure that service delivery reflects their expectations, and the impact of services is known and understood.

All fire and rescue services and authorities need to continue to strive for excellence in their core functions and to meet their statutory duties. This includes preventing fires and other emergencies, protecting people from the effects of incidents that do happen and providing a timely, effective response to the highest standards of quality.

Fire and rescue services need to ensure that their responses are resilient and can respond in collaboration with others to large scale events such as wildfires and major flooding. The threat of terrorism is a sad reality that needs to be prepared for and the ability to respond, in line with civil contingencies and with partner agencies, is vital.

Recent tragic events have challenged fire and rescue services and placed their operations under intense scrutiny. Both the Grenfell Tower fire and Manchester Arena bombing

demonstrated to the public that although all fire and rescue services do respond to major incidents, they are organisations that need to continually learn, reflect on their actions and implement change so that they can improve the services they deliver to the public.

We must all ensure that we learn from events and incidents. This includes learning from independent reviews into culture in fire and rescue services and the recommendations coming out of them. We acknowledge that implementing real change, that will have a positive impact, will take time.

Recommendations for change, and for improvement should be considered in the wider context of an evolving fire and rescue service. Improvement needs to be considered from a wide variety of sources and the response needs to be joined up and co-ordinated to best effect.

All these issues are reflected in Fit for the Future, and to improve the service we need:

- Clarity of the future service delivery role of fire and rescue services.

- Organisations with an inclusive culture and employees with a broad range of skills.

- National infrastructure and support to enable authorities and services to deliver improvement.

- Appropriate funding in recognition of the societal value and public benefits delivered.

Improvement Objectives

The evidence considered within Fit for the Future identified 12 improvement objectives, which have been divided into three themes:

Service Delivery – the role of the Fire and Rescue Service

Leadership, People, and Culture

National Infrastructure and Support

These areas are all underpinned by a verified and extensive evidence base.

Alignment between the improvement objectives and the themes is set out in the below table.

Theme	Improvement Objective
Service Delivery – the role of the Fire and Rescue Service	1. Fire and rescue services will have evidence based, high quality and consistent community risk management plans, based on the Community Risk Planning Fire Standard. The Plans will encompass all aspects of service deployment and delivery, addressing local risks within diverse communities as well as ensuring they are resilient to national risks and threats.
	2. Fire and rescue services support new and innovative ways to prevent fires and other emergencies. They will work with people in local communities to make them safer including tackling the health and social inequalities that put their wellbeing at risk.
	3. A culture of responsibility and ownership will be driven by the fire and rescue service to influence all organisations and bodies responsible for fire safety. Fire protection activity carried out by fire and rescue services will reflect their role as a part of the changing regulatory system.
	4. The benefits of all fire and rescue service activity are measured and evaluated so that decision making about resource allocation can be improved.

Leadership, people, and culture	5. Fire and rescue services refocus their investment in the selection, training and development of employees to maintain, support and improve their skills and knowledge throughout their careers.
	6. Prospective employees are attracted to fire and rescue services as their employer of choice where inclusive recruitment practices and the available diverse roles and responsibilities help the service manage risk in the local community.
	7. A diverse and inclusive culture is at the heart of every fire and rescue service. They are welcoming and supportive places to work, retaining the widest variety of people from all backgrounds throughout their careers, so they better reflect the communities they serve.
	8. Political leaders and managers work together to deliver effective and inclusive leadership across all fire and rescue services. Common approaches and leadership frameworks will be developed that set out service values, expectations and behaviours which all can support and promote. This will be the basis on which fire and rescue services are led and all employees operate.
National infrastructure and support	9. Fire and rescue services have access to comprehensive national implementation support and a repository of standards, guidance and tools that they embed in their own local service delivery.
	10. Opportunities to collaborate are considered in all aspects of service delivery, where it will bring about better outcomes for communities. Partnership working will be based on solid evidence and data to determine the most efficient and effective use of resources to ensure the safety of the public and our employees.
	11. All fire and rescue services will develop the management of data and digital capabilities to ensure evidence-based decision making. This will enable the measurement of benefits delivered through service activity, evaluation of the service and also support employee development.
	12. The National Employers (England), the LGA and the NFCC will work in partnership to drive and embed organisational learning to promote continuous improvement at all levels. The partners will jointly own an implementation group to support delivery of the Fit for the Future improvements at local level.

Theme 1 – Service Delivery – The role of the fire and rescue service

Our ambition is that within five years' ...

FRAs/FRSs will produce consistent, high-quality Community Risk Management Plans (CRMP) to protect each local community from a range of risks¹. Each service will work with partners to understand and respond to local risks within diverse communities, as appropriate.

A high quality, timely, safe and effective response will continue to be a key feature of each CRMP, able to manage all foreseeable risks.

Each FRS/FRA will work with partners to develop local joint plans to make local communities resilient to the risks that face them. The response of the fire and rescue service will be flexible and agile, able to put highly trained, competent people into any stage of a crisis 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Depending on the assessment of the risks within the local CRMP, wider areas of consideration for each fire and rescue service in support of health, social care and ambulance colleagues could include:

- Focusing on the people in local communities who are most at risk.
- Preventing accidents by identifying and explaining how people are at risk and helping them if an accident happens.
- Responding to urgent medical emergencies, such as heart attacks, in advance of the ambulance service.
- Supporting the ambulance service when demand is high, where fire service capacity and capability allows.

Prevention work will be centered on the people in communities who are most at risk from harm from accident and injury. Services will learn from incidents that do happen to inform future prevention activity.

¹“Community Risk Management Plans” will be made in a way that is consistent with preventing what might happen (risk) and seeks to provide the right people, systems, and equipment (resources) to deal with what does or could happen.

Each fire and rescue service will have proactively implemented the new national regulatory system, provide information and guidance, and enforce the Fire Safety Order in their areas, working with councils to promote fire and building safety.

Fire and rescue services will continue to make the best use of public money. They will measure and quantify the benefits of their work to be clear about how they are making their communities safer. This will further establish the value of fire and rescue service work to the public.

Community Risk Management Planning (CRMP)

What are we going to improve?

Improvement objective 1

Fire and rescue services will have evidence based, high quality and consistent community risk management plans, based on the Community Risk Planning Fire Standard. The Plans will encompass all aspects of service deployment and delivery, addressing local risks within diverse communities as well as ensuring they are resilient to national risks and threats.

What does this mean?

Each fire and rescue service will develop and implement a high quality, evidence-based community risk management plan based on an assessment of risks within their area and the best way to address them. Each service will balance the deployment of its resources to match its plan and the local risks identified.

It must be recognised that public funding and resources are finite and must be used in the most effective and efficient way possible. The current evidence suggests that there is inconsistency across England in the way these plans are produced and that the services provided, and the resources deployed to deliver them could be optimised making the public safer whilst using of available funding to greater effect.

How will we improve it?

FRAs/FRSs will:	Centrally ² , we will deliver:
Produce plans that are accessible to the public and reflect their expectations.	A consistent approach to the development of CRMPs across the country and make them accessible to FRAs and FRSs
Ensure plans give equality of access to services for all in our diverse communities.	A common methodology that leads to a clearer understanding of the relationship between risks and resources.
Show how local resources will be used efficiently to deliver the service required.	

² "Centrally, we will" - In each of the improvement objectives we say "centrally, we will:". This describes the ambition of the partner organisations to provide support to fire and rescue services for improvement. Each element of that ambition will be supported by one or more of the partners, as appropriate. Each partner organisation retains responsibility in its own area and will work together wherever it is appropriate to do so.

FRAs/FRSs will:

Develop their plans in a consistent way that makes them more easily comparable across FRAs.

Achieve the Fire Standard(s) set in this area using the underpinning national guidance and tools.

Centrally², we will deliver:

A strong evidence base for activity using a wide range of data sources and analytical techniques.

Good practice in the development of working patterns that support risk management, balanced against the needs of employees.

Good practice guidance and case studies to support improvement in this area.

Evidence and guidance to support improving access to services for diverse community group.

Prevention

What are we going to improve?

Improvement Objective 2

Fire and rescue services support new and innovative ways to prevent fires and other emergencies. They will work with people in local communities to make them safer including tackling the health and social inequalities that put their wellbeing at risk.

What does this mean?

The fire and rescue service will continue to reduce risks in communities through a wide range of prevention work. We will further develop our work with key stakeholders and partners where appropriate, educating communities to adopt safer behaviours, improve their safety, health and wellbeing. We will ensure such work is accessible to all parts of diverse communities, focusing where the risk is greatest.

How will we improve it?

FRAs/FRSs will:	Centrally we will:
<p>Raise the profile of prevention within CRMPs.</p> <p>Identify the people who are most at risk in communities and target their prevention activities ensuring equality of access for all.</p> <p>Evaluate prevention activity to demonstrate the financial and public value it brings to inform allocation of resources.</p> <p>Achieve the Fire Standard(s) set in this area using the underpinning national guidance and tools.</p>	<p>Identify and develop new innovative prevention activities, in collaboration with other stakeholders that meet the needs of diverse communities, mindful of any potential contractual impact on employees.</p> <p>Provide a person-centred framework with a range of supporting tools, that places the individual and the community at the core of prevention activity.</p> <p>Provide research to give greater insight into early intervention and prevention.</p> <p>Provide information, methodologies, and evidence-base for evaluating the effectiveness and reach of prevention activities, supported by central data collection.</p>

FRAs/FRSs will:

Centrally we will:

Continually improve prevention products and activities.

Include prevention in the development of competence frameworks for all fire and rescue services.

What are we going to improve?

Improvement Objective 3

A culture of responsibility and ownership will be driven by the fire and rescue service to influence all organisations and bodies responsible for fire safety. Fire protection activity carried out by fire and rescue services will reflect their role as a part of the changing regulatory system.

What does this mean?

Fire and rescue services are a key part of the overall regulatory system that ensures the built environment is safe. They need to influence and work with partners and stakeholders, including central government, to ensure that the regulatory system is fit for purpose and that the fire and rescue service role in it is clear.

Each fire and rescue service will assess the risk to life that buildings pose across their areas, prioritise inspection resources and focus on the buildings that represent the most significant danger to the public.

How will we improve it?

FRAs/FRSs will:	Centrally, we will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and inspect the buildings that represent the most significant risks in their area as part of a community risk management plan. Influence and support those organisations and bodies who have a role in fire safety in their areas to fulfil their responsibilities. Engage with Government's remediation partnership programme and councils Work with building safety regulator to deliver the new building safety regime Embed competence requirements and provide training for fire protection employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to advise government about the regulatory regime, ensuring it is effective and the FRS role is clear. Influence national organisations responsible for elements of the fire safety system to effectively play their part in delivering a culture of safety. Develop a consistent system for fire and rescue services to use that identifies the buildings that represent the greatest risk in their area. Identify the competence requirements for protection, both for front line employees and specialists. Develop a retention strategy for specialist employees to ensure sufficient

Allocate appropriate resources alongside improving ways of working to increase capacity and productivity.

Achieve the Fire Standard(s) set in this area using the underpinning national guidance and tools.

capability and capacity is kept within the fire and rescue service.

What are we going to improve?

Improvement Objective 4

The benefits of all fire and rescue service activity are measured and evaluated so that decision making about resource allocation can be improved.

What does this mean?

The fire and rescue service has been very successful in reducing a range of risks in communities. But there is a need to become much better at establishing the value of activities that are planned and undertaken. In particular, every service needs to be clear about the benefit that different activities bring to the public and how they are being measured and demonstrated. Creating a clear link between what is done and what benefits it brings will support better funding and resource allocation decisions.

How will we improve it?

FRAs/FRSs will:	Centrally, we will:
Have made significant progress in evaluating the benefits of their activities.	Develop a model that demonstrates the economic value of the service that all stakeholders can use.
Draw on central evaluation techniques to improve local evaluations.	Clearly identify the benefits to be achieved in improvement projects and programmes and how they are being measured.
Use the outputs of evaluation to inform risk planning and learning.	Improve the specification of data requirements, collection protocols and analysis to support evaluation and to make service plans and performance more comparable across FRAs and FRSs.
Achieve any Fire Standard(s) set in this area using the underpinning national guidance and tools.	Develop and implement good practice guidance on evaluation and benefits realisation for use in all fire and rescue services.

Theme 2 - Leadership, people and culture

Our ambition is that within five years'

Fire and rescue services will be workplaces that are open, inclusive and welcoming of diversity and are attractive to people from across all sections of the community. They will have a culture based on delivering excellent public service, making all that they do accessible to all, in line with the fire and rescue service's Core Code of Ethics and supporting Code of Ethics Fire Standard.

Everyone working within the fire and rescue service will be clear about how their role contributes to making local communities and their colleagues safer and how that is reflected in their local Community Risk Management Plan.

All employees' terms and conditions and working patterns will reflect the adaptability and flexibility needed to reduce the identified risks in their communities.

Employees will be able to switch between different aspects of their role, as required, calling on different skills as they do so.

Employees will have the ability to respond to any anticipated incident, safely and effectively, which will be reflected in the expectations, training, and leadership of employees.

Employees will be selected, trained and managed to achieve their full potential. There will be a consistent approach to maintaining and improving their knowledge and skills within every role in the service, with clear expectations set in an open culture of performance review and development.

Employees will consistently support and demonstrate the values and behaviors envisaged in the Core Code of Ethics and within each service.

Employees will be supported with high quality equipment, relevant and focused training and be well led by highly professional managers to provide the best possible outcomes for those affected.

All employees will have working patterns, which are based on the best way to serve the local community, together with the need to ensure they are safe, attractive to employees and secure a healthy and work/life balance.

Employees that work either whole time or part time will have attractive duty systems, pay, and terms and conditions that also meet the needs of their fire and rescue service.

High expectations of the public will need to be reflected in the right pay and terms and conditions for employees and Fit for the Future will be utilised to underpin a business case seeking additional funding.

The importance of leadership will be recognisable in every aspect of the fire and rescue service and in every role. Potential leaders will be actively recruited and developed. Every employee should display leadership behaviours appropriate for their role and can expect to be led and supported by a qualified, competent leader in all aspects of their work. Where conduct or behaviors fall below expected standards, the appropriate processes and procedures will be used fairly and consistently.

Competence

What are we going to improve?

Improvement objective 5

Fire and rescue services refocus their investment in the selection, training and development of employees to maintain, support and improve their skills and knowledge throughout their careers.

What does this mean?

The fire and rescue service is enormously proud of its employees. It is right for us to focus on how we can make sure we continue to recruit and retain the best people, train and develop them to the highest standards and then support them to make sure they safely perform to the best of their ability.

Employees must be competent, and it is equally important that they treat each other with dignity and respect and embrace diversity, leveraging it as a strength.

How will we improve it?

FRAs/FRSs will:	Centrally, we will:
<p>Have a clear and effective strategy for workforce development and competence, mindful of any impact on pay, terms and conditions.</p> <p>Expect employees to perform to any relevant competence standards for the fire and rescue service.</p> <p>Develop and implement working patterns that address the risks in their communities whilst being mindful of the impact on employees.</p> <p>Achieve any related Fire Standard(s) set in this area using the underpinning national guidance and tools.</p>	<p>Analyse the functions of a modern fire and rescue service and set outcome-based standards in each area.</p> <p>Develop a competence framework that covers all roles and functions within an FRS that is agile to changing landscape and flexible to meet local FRS needs, mindful of any implications for pay, terms and conditions.</p> <p>Provide tools that align selection of employees with the values, behaviours, skills and abilities needed to perform these functions competently.</p> <p>Review training and development approaches, including apprenticeships, to support the</p>

FRAs/FRSs will:

Centrally, we will:

highest standards of professionalism
in all aspects of the service.

Streamline assessment and development
protocols to focus on performance
and nurturing talent.

Attracting Employees

What are we going to improve?

Improvement objective 6

Prospective employees are attracted to fire and rescue services as their employer of choice where inclusive recruitment practices and the available diverse roles and responsibilities help the service manage risk in the local community.

What does this mean?

The fire and rescue service needs to ensure that its national reputation is positive, that Fire and Rescue Services are good employers, who manage fairly and consistently, provide the right tools and resources for employees to do their best work, and offers career progression based on knowledge and skills providing employees with recognisable and transferable skills. This will support the drive to broaden the diversity and base from which it can recruit. This will enhance the range of experience, skills and diversity of thought that can enter it.

How will we improve it?

FRAs/FRSs will:	Centrally, we will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Embed a positive and inclusive culture.Promote the fire and rescue service as a welcoming and inclusive workplace.Ensure diversity of opportunities within the fire and rescue service clear to maximise access to talent from the broadest possible base.Take positive action when needed to recruit from under-represented groups.Achieve the Fire Standard(s) set in this area using the underpinning national guidance and tools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provide good practice tools, guidance, and support to fire and rescue services in nurturing a welcoming, inclusive culture that celebrates equality and diversity.Use robust evidence, analysis and data to better understand where we are now, the barriers to and measurement of progress.Assess the impact of all aspects of central work, adopt and champion inclusive practices and diverse talent and promote this practice within all fire and rescue services.

Retaining Employees

What are we going to improve?

Improvement objective 7

A diverse and inclusive culture is at the heart of every fire and rescue service. They are welcoming and supportive places to work, retaining the widest variety of people from all backgrounds throughout their careers, so they better reflect the communities they serve.

What does this mean?

Findings from independent culture reviews and from HMICFRS inspections on culture are wholly unacceptable to an inclusive, modern blue light emergency service. Creating an inclusive, positive and supportive professional culture is a key part of ensuring that employees remain happy and valued within their roles.

To support work in this area, the Core Code of Ethics has been developed and published by the LGA, NFCC and Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC). It is underpinned by a Code of Ethics Fire Standard. All fire and rescue services are expected to adopt the Core Code of Ethics, which may be supplemented by local codes of behaviour and conduct.

How will we improve it?

FRAs/FRSs will:	Centrally, we will:
Adopt the Core Code of Ethics.	Promote the Core Code of Ethics.
Fully embed the principles within the Core Code of Ethics in all aspects of their work, including behavioural and service delivery expectations.	Continue to develop guidance and tools that support the adoption of the Core Code of Ethics and different aspects of a positive organisational culture.
Ensure that unacceptable behaviours are able to be and are challenged within the workplace and individuals work together effectively within a healthy positive culture.	Explore the most effective ways of benchmarking and testing cultural performance to assess aspects of culture such as ability to learn as an organisation.
Actively manage their organisational culture, by upskilling everyone on inclusive behaviours and an awareness of unique differences.	

FRAs/FRSs will:

- Foster direct engagement with the workforce to ensure ownership at every level of a positive culture.
- Have proactive senior leadership.
- Achieve the Fire Standard(s) set in this area using the underpinning national guidance and tools.

Centrally, we will:

Inspirational and Inclusive Leadership

What are we going to improve?

Improvement objective 8

Political leaders and managers work together to deliver strong inclusive leadership across all fire and rescue services. Common approaches and leadership frameworks will be developed that set out service values, expectations and behaviours which all can support and promote. This will be the basis on which fire and rescue services are led and all employees operate.

What does this mean?

Delivering improvement relies upon the unified, coordinated and sustained effort of leaders at every level across political and officer roles locally and centrally. Achieving unity around what needs to improve, as outlined in Fit for the Future, will act as a compelling vision and starting point to build on.

How will we improve it?

FRAs/FRSs will:	Centrally, we will:
Recognise the investment needed to develop and support leaders within their organisations from supervisory level upwards through selection, training and development.	Continue at national level to work in partnership across the National Employers (England), the LGA and the NFCC to lead the delivery of Fit for the Future.
Create and adopt a strategy to manage and develop leadership talent within their organisations.	Create and deliver a strategy for leadership development, including developmental pathways tailored to the needs of all leaders in the fire and rescue service to support inclusive leadership.
Equip senior leaders of the future to be resilient and have the skills they need to think strategically.	Provide tools and guidance to support leadership strategy, including appropriate scrutiny and performance management protocols to hold all leaders to account.
Diversify the candidate base for managers and leaders at all levels.	Implement national leadership programmes to support the
Ensure leaders understand the need to be inclusive, deriving maximum benefit for their employees and their organisation.	
Adopt and promote the Core Code of Ethics as a vital element of setting the	

FRAs/FRSs will:	Centrally, we will:
<p>expectations of employees and leaders.</p> <p>Achieve the Fire Standard(s) set in this area using the underpinning national guidance and tools.</p> <p>Support managers and leaders at all levels to challenge and address poor behaviours in their service.</p> <p>FRAs and FRSs will work together to ensure improvement on these issues, with FRAs holding FRSs to account and FRSs providing information to facilitate this.</p>	<p>development of the leaders of the future.</p> <p>Complete the development of Fire Standards for leadership and the supporting national guidance and tools.</p>

Theme 3 - National infrastructure and support

Our ambition is that within five years'

- The national partnership between employers, political leaders and senior managers will have collectively provided support, products, guidance and tools to help services to achieve the objectives within Fit for the Future leading to more consistency and continual improvement in fire and rescue service performance. That work will be ongoing.
- The use of data and digital technology to support planning, prioritisation, evaluation and measurement of benefits achieved through widening the scope of work undertaken by fire and rescue services in line with Fit for the Future will be fully understood and embedded by all fire and rescue services. This data will also inform evaluation at national level through the partnership. The sector will have a programme in place to further explore and utilise digital technology in the delivery of services to the public wherever possible.
- Research, evaluation and organisational learning will be fundamental to each fire and rescue service and to the wider sector. The ability to evaluate learning from a variety of sources and act on it effectively will be inherent in services. We need to be data driven and evidence led, working closely with key partners including academia. Learning may include event and incidents, as well as de-briefs from other industries and sectors and research findings from academia both from the UK and internationally and feedback from HMICFRS. Learning from significant events, including the Grenfell Tower fire and the Manchester Arena Bombing will have been acted upon. The feedback coming from the inspectorate as well as from other commentators and expert scrutineers will continue to be actively considered.
- The Fire Standards Board will have completed a suite of Fire Standards to support continuous improvement and high-quality performance. The Fire Standards will be underpinned by accessible and user-friendly resources including national tools and guidance that will support services in achieving the specified outcomes.

Creating National Implementation Support

What are we going to improve?

Improvement objective 9

Fire and rescue services have access to comprehensive national implementation support and a repository of standards, guidance and tools that they embed in their own local service delivery.

What does this mean?

Findings from the inspections by HMICFRS, and other previous reports, have highlighted issues with inconsistent approaches and some other performance concerns many of which are being addressed within Fit for the Future. There is a clear need for central resources to coordinate improvement support in an efficient and effective way. This needs to be supported by accessible resources that fire and rescue services can use to meet their own local needs. The development of nationally recognised Fire Standards will continue through the Fire Standards Board.

How will we improve it?

FRAs/FRSs will:	Centrally, we will:
Contribute and collaborate with national bodies in the central development of materials, which can provide efficiencies for all fire and rescue services.	Work together across the partner organisations to develop a joint portfolio of work in support of the improvements set out in Fit for the Future.
Feedback on the effectiveness of all standards, tools and guidance so they can be continuously improved.	Create a joint partnership group to coordinate support and resources supporting implementation of improvement across all Fire and Rescue Services.
Embed the suite of Fire Standards and make use of supporting guidance and tools.	Continue the development of Fire Standards, tools and guidance to meet service needs and drive key improvements.

Collaboration

What are we going to improve?

Improvement Objective 10

Opportunities to collaborate are considered in all aspects of service delivery where it will bring about better outcomes for communities. Partnership working will be based on solid evidence and data to determine the most efficient and effective use of resources to ensure the safety of the public and our employees.

What does this mean?

There is a sound basis for improving collaboration and partnership with other organisations across all fire and rescue services, noting that FRSs already play a leading role in their Local Resilience Forums (LRFs) as Category 1 Responders. Many organisations locally serve the public, and often the same members of the community become affected by different risks, managed by different agencies. Maximising the opportunities to work together to address these issues, at every level, is key to efficient management of risk in communities

How will we improve it?

FRAs/FRSs will:	Centrally, we will:
Have analysed all potential partner organisations with which they could interact with to deliver their services in the best way that provides good value for the public.	Where relevant and helpful include collaboration in Fire Standards.
Establish working relationships and where appropriate common objectives with each partner.	Identify partners at a national level to support efficient local delivery.
When working with partners, develop common ways of working, data sets and evaluation protocols when appropriate.	Develop data sets and shared objectives with national partners to support all fire and rescue services.
Achieve any Fire Standard(s) and where appropriate make use of any supporting guidance and tools.	Collaborate with HMICFRS to identify innovative and positive practices and share these across FRSs.

Data and digital support

What are we going to improve?

Improvement Objective 11

All fire and rescue services will develop the management of data and digital capabilities to ensure evidence-based decision making. This will enable the measurement of benefits delivered through service activity, evaluation of the service and also support employee development.

What does this mean?

Across all the areas of improvement identified in Fit for the Future there is a need for current accurate data to further support change. This will help drive improvements in the way the service is deployed, managed and evaluated. This needs to be supported by better use of digital and technology solutions to ensure maximum benefit can be achieved in delivering the service to the public. Using data to better understand the needs of the workforce and to direct resources where they are needed to provide the best development and support to them. We are committed to working with Central Government and local partners to develop and improve cyber resilience across the sector.

How will we improve it?

FRAs/FRSs will:	Centrally, we will:
<p>Collaborate with each other and with partner organisations to pool and analyse data to achieve maximum benefit.</p> <p>Achieve the Fire Standard(s) and where appropriate make use of any supporting guidance and tools.</p>	<p>Work with central government to replace the current Incident Recording System with a modern National Fire Data Collection System (NFDCS) that meets the needs of the service.</p> <p>Develop a national data analytics capability that will serve the needs of all Fire and Rescue Services.</p> <p>Create a longer-term plan for investment and development in developing data and digital capabilities that supports better service delivery to the public.</p>

Organisational Learning

What are we going to improve?

Improvement objective 12

The National Employers (England), the LGA and the NFCC will work in partnership to drive and embed organisational learning to promote continuous improvement at all levels. The partners will jointly own an implementation group to support delivery of the Fit for the Future improvements at local level.

What does this mean?

The partner organisations see organisational learning as the consideration of notable practice and where improvement is needed at a national or local level. This includes our critical work with academia to develop the evidence base so that we are evidence led in all we do. This then informs improvement action within Fire and Rescue Services and at a national level. It is not limited to learning from responding to incidents, although this is clearly an aspect of it. A jointly owned partnership group to support implementation of improvement at local level will be put in place.

How will we improve it?

FRAs/FRSs will:	Centrally, we will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Openly promote a learning culture where lessons are shared.Follow the good practice guide for operational learning, feeding learning into the National Operational Learning and Joint Organisational Learning systems as appropriate.Draw upon central support for local implementation where required.Achieve any Fire Standard set in this area using the underpinning national guidance and tools.Develop and draw on academic research, analysis and learning so we are data driven and evidence led	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Set up a jointly owned partnership implementation group to promote the Fit for the Future improvement objectives and to support delivery of such change at local level, drawing in relevant expertise from the partner organisations.Continue the partnership approach to setting national improvement objectives based on the best available information and data.Create a good practice guide for Organisational Learning in support of this objective.

FRAs/FRSs will:

Centrally, we will:

Identify and access all the key information and data to inform organisational learning.

Create and maintain a national database and system for analysis of learning material to inform decision making.

Through the Academic Collaboration, Evaluation and Research Group (ACER), convened by NFCC, create better national links between FRS and academia and provide an ethical approach to research partnerships and potential research funding.