



# 2023/24 Productivity and Efficiency Plan

Approved by: Shayne Scott, Treasurer to the Authority (s151)

Date: 31 March 2023



## Section A: Primary information

- **Budget:** 2023/24 budget by sources of income and planned spending
- **Reserves:** Summary of reserves as at 31 March 2023 and planned use
- **Precept:** explanation on use of the £5 precept flexibility
- **Efficiency:** efficiency savings (in £/% terms) to be implemented in 23/24 and in what areas of spend
- **Productivity:** How we are looking to drive productivity in 23/24, and the means to measuring productivity



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### Section B: Thematic review by focus area

- **Collaboration:** Internal Audit, indemnity cover arrangement, partnership with Southwest Ambulance Service, community co-responding, fire investigations and diversity and inclusion
- **Transformation:** Environmental investments, site optimisation/ rationalisation of estates, target operating model implementation
- **Charging policies:** published charging policy
- **Resourcing:** contingency cover, resourcing shifts, crewing levels, aggregate crewing, asset mobilisation
- **Procurement:** collaboration with external parties, use of national frameworks, cost savings



# Section A:

# Primary Service information



# Section A: 2023/24 budget compared to prior year

	2022/2023	2023/2024	
	Budget	Budget	%
	£000	£000	variance
<b>SPENDING</b>			
EMPLOYEE COSTS	72,489	79,815	10%
PREMISES RELATED COSTS	4,165	4,945	19%
TRANSPORT RELATED COSTS	3,354	3,767	12%
SUPPLIES AND SERVICES	7,529	7,748	3%
ESTABLISHMENT COSTS	753	781	4%
SUPPORT SERVICE CONTRACTS	816	1,090	34%
CAPITAL FINANCING COSTS	4,710	3,210	-32%
TRANSFER TO/(FROM) EARMARKED RESERVES	(4,212)	(3,044)	-28%
<b>TOTAL SPENDING</b>	<b>89,605</b>	<b>98,310</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>INCOME</b>			
TOTAL INCOME	(12,316)	(12,898)	5%
<b>NET REVENUE BUDGET REQUIREMENT</b>	<b>77,289</b>	<b>85,412</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>FINANCED BY:</b>			
Formula Funding Grant	6,424	7,293	14%
Share of Non Domestic Business Rates	13,008	16,259	25%
District Councils Collection Funds	57,857	61,860	7%
<b>TOTAL FINANCING</b>	<b>77,289</b>	<b>85,412</b>	<b>11%</b>



# Section A: Reserve forecast as at 31 March 2023 to 31 March 2025

RESERVES STATEMENT				
	Forecasted balance as at 31 March 2023		Forecasted balance as at 31 March 2024	Forecasted balance as at 31 March 2025
	£'000		£'000	£'000
RefEarmarked reserves				
1Grants unapplied from previous years (ring-fenced)	(1,054)		(265)	-
2Invest to Improve (ICT investments)	(1,173)		(500)	-
3Capital programme (Estates, Fleet etc.)	(14,671)		(3,800)	-
4PFI Equalisation	(50)		(50)	(50)
Emergency Services Mobile Communications				
5Programme	(1,182)		(1,182)	(1,182)
6Mobile Data Terminals Replacement	(144)		(72)	-
7Pension Liability reserve	(1,222)		(100)	-
8Budget Carry Forwards	(1,269)		(100)	-
9Environmental Strategy	(244)		-	-
10Marauding Terrorist Action Plan	(46)		-	-
Total earmarked reserves	(20,956)		(6,069)	(1,232)
General reserve				
11General Fund (non Earmarked) Balance	(4,300)		(4,300)	(4,300)
TOTAL RESERVE BALANCES	(25,256)		(10,369)	(5,532)



# Section A: Planned use of earmarked reserves

Ref	Earmarked reserve	Planned use
1	<b>Grants unapplied from previous years</b>	The majority of this reserve will be spent during 2023/24 apart from a small balance of £0.265m held pertaining to the Council Tax Irrecoverable Deficits which will be released during 2024/25.
2	<b>Invest to improve</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investment in replacement systems such as a new HR system (c£0.535k) of which phase 1 is due to go live during Q3 2023, will utilise some of this reserve. Further phases during 2024/25 will also aim to align and integrate improved finance and training requirements with our HR workforce data.</li> <li>The reserve is also planned to be used for the purchase of new hardware (c£0.50k) in the form of tablets for operational crews to enable recording and repatriation of assets to their parent appliance and station, as well as enhancing processes for standard testing of equipment.</li> <li>Funds are also expected to be invested in a new command support system to enhance implementation of recommended outcomes from the Grenfell Report.</li> <li>An upgrade to systems for recording the Service prevention and protection activity is also expected along with some possible enhancements to our core estate in terms of technology to enhance flexible/hybrid working building on the new ways of working adopted during Covid.</li> <li>A further £0.162k is planned for an upgrade of our current availability system to enable enhanced management of our on-call duty system which is expected to roll out during Q2 2023.</li> </ul>
3	<b>Capital programme</b>	This reserve was created to fund the capital programme and remove the requirement to borrow funds externally from the PWLB. It is anticipated the majority of the reserve will be utilised during 2023/24 (replacement fire engines such as Medium Rescue Pumps/ Area Ladder Platform and also on station enhancements). For 2023/24, this reserve has also been accessed to fund unexpected pay-awards (£2.8m). This will leave a modest balance at 31 March 2024 that will be used during 2024/25.
4	<b>Public Finance Initiative (PFI) Equalisation</b>	Based on the performance of the PFI fund, it may be possible to release this reserve into the general fund balance. The PFI contract ends on 31 March 2028 so the risk of underperformance over the remainder of the contract is low.



## Section A: Planned use of earmarked reserves cont...

Ref	Earmarked reserve	Planned use
5	ESMCP	This reserve has been allocated to support the completion of the Airwave system replacement which is currently on hold. This reserve could be utilised sooner once the project is declared live again.
6	Mobile data terminal replacement	The current mobile data terminals in service are all due replacement. We plan to replace half by March 2024 with the remainder during 2024/25.
7	Pension liability reserve	Once the immediate deterrent issue is sorted in relation to the pension changes in the firefighters pension scheme, this reserve will be utilised.
8	Budget carry forwards	We forecast a modest balance will remain at the end of 2023/24, the remainder will be utilised in the forthcoming financial year.
9	Environmental strategy	Investment in renewable energy and electric vehicle charging points will see the remainder of this reserve used by the close of 2023/24 year.
10	MTAP	Investment in replacement equipment for our MTA officers will ensure this reserve is spent during 2023/24.





# Section A: Rationale for precept level and public support

## Rationale

On 15 February 2023, the Authority agreed to increasing Council Tax (CT) precept by £5 to generate an additional **£3.1m** due to the following budget pressures:

- **£5.8m**: a 7% and a 5% pay increase in 22/23 and 23/24 respectively, for our uniformed employees (Grey Book).
- **£0.5m** increase in 22/23 for support employees (Green Book). A similar scale of increase is anticipated for 23/24
- **£0.7m** increase in electricity and gas
- **£0.4m** increase in fuel and transport related costs
- **£0.3m** increase in externally contracted services

Total increases: £7.7m

## Public support

78.9% of the respondents to our latest CT survey indicated that they supported the Service increasing CT. 36.3% (the most popular option) supported a £5 increase amounting to 9.6p per week.



## Section A: 2023/24 efficiencies (cash)

In achieving a balanced revenue budget for 2023/24 the following efficiencies were implemented:

- **£1.0m:** headcount removed from professional, support and non-operational uniformed functions
- **£0.233m:** reduction in externally procured training (not related to maintaining firefighter core-competence)
- **£0.330m:** other reductions identified through detailed budget reviews

Total reductions: **£1.563m**

In addition, the Authority has agreed to a temporary pause in making revenue contributions to the capital reserve:

- **£1.2m:** maintain pause on revenue contribution to capital for one further year-supported by reprioritisation of capital spend and disposal of surplus non-operational sites.



## Section A: 2023/24 productivity

- In July 2021 we developed template work patterns for all individual wholetime watches which support improved productivity by outlining delivery and activity expectations. These work patterns were input into each watch's daily schedules- see appendix A.
- To assess the effectiveness of the work pattern templates, we implemented a productivity monitoring trial at Plymouth's Greenbank station in January 2022 which remains on-going. This trial has proved helpful in guiding the watch's activity, however, accurately measuring delivery against expectations has proven to be slightly more difficult. Work is underway to utilise technology such as PowerBI to allow for better data capture and visualisation.
- The implementation of the template work patterns included wholetime watches undertaking prevention and protection visits. Since July 2021 our watches have undertaken more than 17,000 home fire safety visits and 7,000 business safety checks



## Section A: 2023/24 productivity cont...

- In 2023/24 we will be introducing fire safety education visits to schools following appropriate training for our wholetime crews
- Our community safety team have also been set an objective on reducing our response residential to premises fire alarms as our data shows that of the 10,000 attendances to this incident type over the past three years, this has only led to firefighting activity on 17 occasions (0.17% of incidents).



# Section B:

## Thematic review by focus area



## Section B: Collaboration

The Service has continued to develop opportunities for collaboration in the following areas:

- **Internal Audit:** Joining as a full, voting member of Devon Audit Partnership which has enhanced the quality of our internal audit function, afforded greater flexibility of resources and will deliver c£0.015m of savings annually.
- **Sector indemnity:** DSFRS continues to play a leading role as a member of the Fire and Rescue Service Indemnity Company (FRIC), combining the benefits of insurance with those of risk and financial pooling. Annual savings are estimated at c£0.070m
- **South West Ambulance Service:**
  - Developed a regional co-responding policy and memorandum of understanding to ensure recovery of costs are efficient and fair. Building on this an agreement to provide clinical governance supplied by SWAST at no cost in exchange for gaining entry on their behalf at medical incidents is underway
  - Provided co-responders from twenty fire stations across Devon and Somerset for over twenty years.



## Section B: Collaboration cont...

- Led and co-ordinated the regional FRS pandemic response to South West Ambulance Service's request for firefighters to drive ambulances in April 2020. This is known as Operation Braidwood and this arrangement formally ended on 31 March 2023. Over this three-year period the South-West firefighters drove ambulances to 38,700 health emergencies affording 68,000 hours of 'face to face' patient care which led to 224 times when a return to spontaneous circulation (life saved) was achieved.
- **Community co-responding:** Community responders are on-call fire-fighters and special constables who work at Dartmouth, Cullompton and Newton Abbot. Whilst on duty they engage in crime reduction activity, community safety initiatives as well as being available to respond to fire calls. 25% of the costs covered by Devon and Cornwall police.
- **Fire investigations:** We are in partnership with the four other FRS's, Avon, Hampshire, Kent, and Essex to achieve the accreditation standard (ISO 17020) to be able to conduct investigations of deliberate and fatal fires through the criminal justice system before 2025.



## Section B: Collaboration cont...

- **Diversity and Inclusion:** we have partnered with Dorset and Wiltshire FRS, Devon & Cornwall Constabulary, Dorset Police and Devon County Council to deliver the 'Our Time' programme which pairs talented women with champions at a senior level that can open professional networks and opportunities for them.
- **Partnership with Local Resilience Forums (LRF):** an ongoing process of collaboration takes place in line with our responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA). This is a collaboration with Avon and Somerset LRF (ASLRF), and Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (DCIoS LRF) and that focuses on horizon scanning, risk assessment, the preparation of contingency and emergency plans, sharing information, and on business continuity planning.
- **Implementation of a new mobilisation system:** We are collaborating through NFSP (Network Fire Service Partnership) with Dorset and Wiltshire, Hampshire & Isle of Wight and Kent FRSs to procure a mobilisation system (c£1.4m DSFRS contribution), which will bolster collaboration, business continuity and facilitate effective cross border and control room mobilisation.

There are other initiatives within the partnership which look to procure and introduce software and hardware to enhance the way the participating FRSs operate such as a Dynamic Coverage Tool which will provide real time data on risk and resources.





## Section B: Transformation

- **Environmental investments:** We will be investing in 2023/24 towards our transition to a more sustainable, environmentally friendly Service. This will include the roll-out of electric vehicles and targeted funding in excess of £0.240m towards charging infrastructure and solar panels.
- **Site optimisation/ rationalisation of Estates:** In an effort to better utilise our estate, non-operational office space, which is surplus to requirement, has been identified and will be disposed of within the forthcoming years. We anticipate proceeds of c£2m which will be recycled into our capital programme.
- **Implementation of a revised target operating model (TOM):** by 2024/25 a detailed programme of transformational change will be presented to the Authority for approval which will guarantee the future financial stability of the organisation in line with the reductions outlined in our summary Medium Term Financial Plan below

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Reductions required	£4.3m	£5.2m	£6.0m	£5.5m
% of core revenue budget	4.5%	5.4%	5.9%	5.4%



## Section B: Charging policies

Under section 18A of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 fire authorities may charge for non-emergency services, as long as they do not make any profit.

The Service does not charge for attending incidents, but charges are applied for special services such as copies of fire reports, provision of some fire safety equipment to businesses, attending automatic false alarms to repeat locations and interviews with officers.

Further information can be found here:-

[Standard charges | Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service \(dsfire.gov.uk\)](https://www.dsfire.gov.uk)



## Section B: Asset and Technological investment

### Fleet

- There are 112 rescue pumping appliances across the Service area based on three different sizes and capabilities and a range of specialist and support vehicles and equipment.
- Since 2011, through our fleet replacement programme, we have altered the specification of our assets to reflect local evolving risks which has led to a £1.8m reduction in our capital programme. The fleet review will continue the process of realigning appliances to match greatest risk and introducing new fleet and capabilities to the latest standards with a view of making further reductions to our capital spending plans.

2011 Front Line profile			Agreed Front Line profile			
112			112			
MRP	LRP	RIV	MRP	LRP	RIV	4x4 MRP
63	37	12	49	38	17	8



## Section B: Asset and Technological investment cont...

### Implementation of new ICT systems:

- **Asset management:** upgrade of systems to enable reporting of availability and defects for all vehicles and critically identified equipment which includes dashboards and status performance reporting and is linked to mobilisation system.
- **Human resource management systems:** The introduction of the new system will enable greater self-service and workforce planning across the organisation and will enable greater alignment between HR and finance systems. This will remove the need for several manual processes across the service and boost productivity
- **Management of Risk Information Application (MORI):** The introduction of the operational risk app has already realised benefits of increasing productivity through changes in systems and processes. This has reduced the level of overdue level 1 premises risk inspections from 16.9% down to just 1.75% in less than 12 months. This project will now continue to improve system and process capability in other areas of our community safety function.
- **Microsoft 365, Power-BI:** Increased ability for virtual/flexible working and increased visualisation of performance data.
- **Telematics:** Telematics have been introduced which ensures we have the intelligence available to determine where our light vehicle fleet should be based to enable optimum utilisation. It will also be used to determine the priority roll-out of the Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure as we will know who travels where and when.



## Section B: Resourcing

- **Contingency cover:** Wholetime and on-call firefighters are offered the opportunity to provide additional hours of availability to provide contingency cover. Historically, these additional hours were paid at an enhanced rate whereas from 2022/23 this cover is now offered on 'flat-rate' basis.
- **Resourcing shifts:** During 2022/23 we have reviewed the arrangements for covering vacant wholetime and on-call shifts to reduce pre-arranged overtime. This has changed the order of selection in which cover is decided to ensure the most effective means of providing resilience. (E.g. surplus resource on neighbouring stations and uniformed day duty staff ahead of overtime shifts)

These changes combined have resulted in an estimated saving of c£0.755m in the 2022/23 financial year.

- **Crewing levels:** We have introduced utilising crews of less than 4 to provide relief firefighters at protracted incidents. This is in contrast to previous arrangements which would have seen relief provided from further afield and the crews of less than 4 remaining unproductive.
- **Aggregate crewing:** During 2023/24 we are planning to introduce aggregate crewing response to incidents. This will see us move a step further to provide primary response by crews of less than 4 where it is safe and practical to do so. Further system investment is underway to ensure the Service is able to report on this benefit.
- **Review of asset mobilisation:** We have analysed the efficiency of response and will be reviewing our standby policy and pre-determined attendances during 2023/24. We anticipate that this will lead to a reduction in mobilisation of assets and, by extension, increasing productivity without adversely increasing risks.



## Section B: Procurement

- **Collaboration with external partners:** we are on the NFCCs Strategic Commercial Board (Procurement Hub) and are one of the NFCC's five Commercial Leads- responsible for the 'Fleet' category. As part of this role we work closely with UK FRS's and BlueLight Commercial on the identification of Emergency Services Collaborative opportunities – promoting them across the sector. As a Service, we lead on the National NFCC Emergency Response Vehicles Framework, collaborating with the sector and its suppliers on its development. DSFRS have also led on other sector wide collaborative procurements including the NFCC Self Contained Breathing Apparatus Framework. Additionally, we routinely collaborate with Dorset & Wiltshire, Hampshire and Kent FRS for procurements related to its Network Fire Service Partnership.
- **Use of national frameworks:** DSFRS are users of the Police/Fire Contract Management and E-Tendering Portal (InTend). Contracts are recorded on this system and collaborative procurements can be identified from our register and procurement documentation. As a matter of policy, we require the use of national collaborative procurements and there would need to be a strong business case to consider any procurement not being conducted through national approaches. DSFRS are represented on the project team (led by Kent FRS) developing the next NFCC National PPE/Workwear Framework.
- **Cost savings:** over the last four years DSFRS have recorded savings of c£0.108m per annum from procuring with a number of collaborative partners within a single procurement process. This does not include the overall savings associated with the use of national frameworks which would be considerably higher.



# Appendix- watch work patterns

## Day shift

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
0900-0915	Parade and Briefing	Parade and Briefing	Parade and Briefing	Parade and Briefing	Parade and Briefing	Parade and Briefing	Parade and Briefing
0915-0945	Checks	Checks	Checks	Checks	Checks	Checks	Checks
0945-1000	Break / Topography	Break / Topography	Break / Topography	Break / Topography	Break / Topography	Break / Topography	Break / Topography
1000-1200	Practical Response Training (Training with local stations, station risk training)	Practical Response Training (Training with local stations, station risk training)	Practical Response Training (Training with local stations, station risk training)	Practical Response Training (Training with local stations, station risk training)	Practical Response Training (Training with local stations, station risk training)	Practical Response Training (Training with local stations, station risk training)	Hydrant Inspections / Response Awareness
1200-1300	Fitness		Fitness		Fitness		Fitness
1300-1400	Meal Break	Meal Break	Meal Break	Meal Break	Meal Break	Meal Break	Meal Break
1400-1600	Prevention / Protection	Prevention / Protection	Prevention / Protection	Prevention / Protection	Prevention / Protection	Prevention / Protection	Prevention / Protection
1600-1700		Fitness		Fitness			
1700-1800	Clean / Prep Admin / Handover	Clean / Prep Admin / Handover	Clean / Prep Admin / Handover	Clean / Prep Admin / Handover	Clean / Prep Admin / Handover	Clean / Prep Admin / Handover	Clean / Prep Admin / Handover



# Appendix- watch work patterns cont...

## Night shift

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1800-1815	Parade and Briefing	Parade and Briefing	Parade and Briefing	Parade and Briefing	Parade and Briefing	Parade and Briefing	Parade and Briefing
1815-1845	Vehicle Checks	Vehicle Checks	Vehicle Checks	Vehicle Checks	Vehicle Checks	Vehicle Checks	Vehicle Checks
1900-2000	Prevention / Protection	Practical Response Training (Training with local stations, station risk training)	Prevention / Protection	Practical Response Training (Training with local stations, station risk training)	Prevention / Protection	Practical Response Training (Training with local stations, station risk training)	Practical Response Training (Training with local stations, station risk training)
2000-2100							
2100-2200	Meal break	Meal break	Meal break	Meal break	Meal break	Meal break	Meal break
2200-0000	Station routines	E-learning / Admin /Self Study	Station routines	E-learning / Admin /Self Study	Station routines	E-learning / Admin /Self Study	Station routines / Appliance Bay Cleaning
0000-0700	Rest period	Rest period	Rest period	Rest period	Rest period	Rest period	Rest period
0700-0730	Admin	Admin	Admin	Admin	Admin	Admin	Admin
0730-0800							
0800-0900	Clean / Prepare handover	Clean / Prepare handover	Clean / Prepare handover	Clean / Prepare handover	Clean / Prepare handover	Clean / Prepare handover	Clean / Prepare handover