

Job Description

Deputy Chief Fire Officer

Reference:

Date: January 2026

Job Family:	Strategy and Transformation / Executive Leadership Strategy and Performance
Level:	5
Band:	17
Career Track:	Executive

Job Purpose

To provide strategic leadership and effective management of the Fire and Rescue Service, deputising for the Chief Fire Officer as required, and contributing to corporate management and decision-making across all Fire and Rescue Service matters.

Service Purpose

NFRS exists to protect life, property and the environment by delivering an integrated Fire & Rescue Service for Northumberland—focused on prevention, protection, emergency response and resilience. The Service works collaboratively with communities and partners to reduce risk, improve safety and wellbeing, and ensure preparedness for major incidents and civil emergencies, in line with statutory duties and the Council's vision of making Northumberland a safer place for all.

Duties and Responsibilities

Statutory and Operational Command Responsibilities

- Discharge all statutory and operational Gold Command responsibilities under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and associated legislation, acting on behalf of the Chief Fire Officer.
- Deliver rostered 24/7 strategic and critical Gold Command emergency response as part of the Principal Officer Group, including regional and national mobilisation.
- Hold direct responsibility for the management of executive, administrative, and operational matters relating to Gold Command arrangements.

Deputising for the Chief Fire Officer

- Support and deputise for the Chief Fire Officer as the Principal Advisor to the Authority on all Fire and Rescue Service matters, including policy and service standards for the protection of life, property and humanitarian services.
- Deputise for the Chief Fire Officer in all Business Continuity and resilience matters for Northumberland County Council.

- Undertake any duties consistent with the role and deputise for the Chief Fire Officer as required by the Chief Fire Officer or Chief Executive.

Strategic Leadership, Policy and Planning

- Provide strategic management and professional advice on all strategy and policy matters relating to Fire and Rescue Service issues, ensuring plans, policies and statutory requirements are effectively developed and implemented.
- Ensure policies and strategies are aligned and integrated with wider corporate, directorate and partner agency priorities.
- Establish and oversee mechanisms for monitoring the standard and effectiveness of Fire and Rescue Service policies, strategies and practices.
- Participate in corporate planning and management activities, ensuring full compliance with Council policies and processes across the Fire and Rescue Service.

Resource and Performance Management

- Determine the effective utilisation and deployment of human, physical and financial resources to deliver Council priorities and statutory responsibilities within allocated budgets.
- Ensure robust performance management across the service, including monitoring revenue and capital budgets.
- Provide strategic leadership to managers to support continuous performance improvement.

People Leadership and Workforce Development

- Establish and maintain effective management and communication systems to ensure employees understand their roles, responsibilities and changes to legislation or Council policies.
- Promote staff support and development through appraisal, mentoring, training and development programmes.
- Maintain constructive employee relations and positive working relationships with trade unions.

Partnerships, Representation and External Engagement

- Promote the role of the Council in Fire and Rescue Service activities and policies at local, regional and national levels.
- Ensure effective joint working and planning with external agencies to maximise the Council's influence across all aspects of Fire and Rescue Service provision.
- Promote strong working relationships with all Council services to support coordinated service delivery.

Service Leadership and Functional Oversight

- Work alongside the Chief Fire Officer to provide strategic leadership and management of all service departments as head of service. Officer.

Person Specification

Professional and Technical Requirements

Qualifications

- Evidence of continuous professional development in leadership, emergency management, or strategic command.
- Skills for Justice Level 7 qualification in Incident Command and Multi Agency Gold Incident Command (MAGIC) trained, with ongoing maintenance of operational competence.
- Relevant degree or equivalent professional qualification, or extensive senior-level experience in lieu of formal academic qualification.
- Management or leadership training appropriate to executive-level responsibilities.

Knowledge, Experience and Skills

- Extensive knowledge of Fire and Rescue Service legislation, national frameworks and statutory responsibilities, including Gold Command arrangements.
- Substantial strategic management experience in a Local Authority Fire and Rescue Service, including strategic planning and organisational management.
- Demonstrable experience operating at Gold Command level, with the ability to lead strategic incident response in complex, high-risk scenarios.
- Comprehensive understanding of resilience, business continuity and emergency planning frameworks at local, regional and national levels.
- Proven ability to lead and manage specialist functional areas, such as Fire Control, Support Services, Operational Training, Learning and Development, or operational delivery.
- Strong financial and resource management experience, including oversight of multi-million-pound budgets and ensuring value for money.
- Ability to apply political awareness and operate effectively in a democratic, multi-stakeholder environment, including engagement with elected Members and national bodies.
- High level of professional credibility, with the ability to represent the Service at regional and national forums.
- Awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion principles, and the ability to embed these across service delivery and workforce practices.
- Experience developing and implementing organisational policies and strategic plans, ensuring alignment with statutory, corporate and regional requirements.
- Familiarity with NFRS's CRMP priorities and Northumberland's risk profile (wildfire, flooding, rurality, heritage and industrial risks).
- Track record of delivering improvements with a focus on HMICFRS findings and leading cultural change.

Core Competency Requirements

- **Working with Partners:** Work collaboratively across services and departments to deliver corporate excellence and with external partners to deliver excellent service. Seek opportunities for partnership working at a local, regional, national and European level and contribute effectively to multi-partner projects
- **Serving Our Communities:** Promote the community plan and seek and act on feedback from the community. Influence service and corporate plans to reflect community needs,

and develop, deliver and improve access to services based on an awareness and understanding of the diverse community. Promote equality of opportunity in service delivery

- **Working within the Political Arena:** Understand and actively support the role of councillors and actively support the democratic process within Northumberland County Council. Recognise the impact of government and legislation on council strategy and services, and consult, support and keep councillors informed
- **Delivering Excellence:** Understand how corporate performance is measured and monitor and evaluate services in relation to objectives and performance indicators. Establish a culture that embraces the agreed vision and values and be a positive ambassador for the organisation. Contribute to strengthening corporate leadership capacity, whilst identifying opportunities where organisational performance could be improved
- **Focusing on the Future:** Scan the external environment, look ahead, assess strategic options and develop the Council in the medium and long term and challenge what we do and how we do it. Influence relevant national and regional organisations and partners and connect plans, policies, strategies and services to provide consistent service delivery. Consider the implications of decisions across the council and act in the overall interests of Council performance
- **Building Shared Visions and Values:** Scan the internal environment and engage with employees in compelling visions of the future to create an environment in which a culture embracing our Vision and Values can thrive. Have a clear picture the direction of the organisation is taking and communicate it with insight, energy and vision and translate the Council vision into practical and achievable plans
- **Strengthening Corporate Leadership Capacity:** Continuously develop the political leadership and managerial interface and operate with others as a cohesive managerial team. Create time with staff and other managers for discussion about their development rather than fire-fighting and coach and mentor staff and other managers. Lead, delegate and empower others at a strategic level to identify and develop potential senior managerial successors
- **Promoting and Facilitating Change:** Critically evaluate the reasons that prompt change and take appropriate action to proactively steer internal change. Proactively manage the exchange of information between the public and the organisation and consider the resource implications of change. Anticipate and respond to emotional and morale issues brought about by change and monitor and evaluate the change process to ensure aims are met

Strengths

- **Strategic:** You look at the big picture. You consider the wider factors and long-term implications of decisions.
- **Confident:** You take charge of situations, people and decisions. You communicate with confidence and give direction.
- **Values and Behaviours:** You continually demonstrate and promote inclusive values and behaviours, ensuring that others do the same.

- **Change Agent:** You are positive and inspirational in leading and supporting others through change.
- **Preventer:** You think ahead to anticipate, identify and address risks or problems before they happen.
- **Influencer:** You influence others, you articulate the rationale to gain their agreement.
- **Resilient:** You have inner composure, recover quickly from setbacks and learn from them.

Desirable

- Experience of leading significant change initiatives at a strategic level.
- Awareness of the government agenda for greater devolution in England.
- Understanding of the North East of England and some of the key challenges that the region faces.