

1. In relation to the Fire and Rescue Service national response to COVID-19 the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services and the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) have all issued communications.¹
2. The NFCC, National Employers and Fire Brigades Union have also had discussions on the approach to this public health emergency and resolved to issue joint communications when it is appropriate to do so. This joint communication has a specific focus on a risk-based approach to fire and rescue functions, outlining areas where contact with the public was likely to take place and the associated control measures required to protect fire and rescue employees and the public.
3. All are in agreement that the well-being of fire and rescue service staff is extremely important, and so too is serving our communities during these difficult and challenging times. Therefore, a risk-based approach to service delivery will be adopted; it is also recognised that this will undoubtedly reduce the fire and rescue services' community-based activities.
4. Communications between the three organisations are very constructive and are in agreement on the need to protect fire and rescue staff and the public. Engagement will continue to ensure all three organisations are informed about their respective positions to deal with this national crisis.
5. The NFCC, Fire Brigades Union and the National Employers agree that the Fire and Rescue Service is a vital blue light service that can support communities through this emergency and should be recognised as a critical risk-based service in future.
6. With specific relation to service delivery:
 - For Operations attendance at incident types will be kept under review.
 - To minimise the impact of fire and other emergencies on our communities during the COVID-19 pandemic – we will adopt a risk-based approach to 'Prevention' activity. Prevention activity which poses a high-risk to both of cross-infection to the public and to personnel (Home Safety Checks / Safe and Well Visits) will be minimised but certain checks will take place - based on a suitable and sufficient risk assessment.
7. With specific relation to Protection activities:
 - To protect our communities from fire – we will adopt a risk-based approach to Protection activity, enforcement action will continue based on a suitable and sufficient risk assessment.

- In relation to protection activity we will restrict our access to premises where there may be potential risk to the occupancy. Crews and protection staff should avoid visiting hospitals, care and nursing homes or any other premises where people, especially vulnerable people, reside. Where a specific request is made by the homeowner or premises staff, a visit may be made subject to express permission from higher service management according to interim Service arrangements.
- Enforcement action will continue subject to a suitable and sufficient risk assessment.

8. We will monitor central and devolved governments' request for any further activities to support our diverse communities.

24 March 2020

ⁱ <https://www.fbu.org.uk/circular/2020hoc0161mw/coronavirus-fbu-position-non-essential-outside-activities>

https://www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk/write/MediaUploads/COVID-19/NFCC_POSITION_STATEMENT_COVID_19_March_2020_FINAL.pdf

<http://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/NJC-1-20%20-%20Coronavirus.pdf>