

## **Fire & Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee Quarterly Report: Quarter 1 2020-2021**

The aim of this Quarterly Performance Report is to summarise how West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service/Directorate has performed over the previous three months, and to capture how performance contributes cumulatively to the year-end performance outcomes.

The report retrospectively presents information from the Performance and Assurance Framework (PAF) including the core measures and targets for the year which are current at the time of publishing. The report contains performance across the four elements of the PAF Quadrant namely:

<b>Service Provision</b>	<b>Corporate Health</b>
<b>Priority Programmes</b>	<b>Risk</b>

The explanations, mitigations and actions contained within this report are those endorsed by the Service Executive Board (SEB).

This report covers data from the period 1 April 2020 – 30 June 2020.

### **Cabinet Member Summary**

This first quarter has seen the service operate under unprecedented circumstances. The restrictions imposed to deal with the pandemic put significant pressure on all public services. I am incredibly proud of the work that the fire and rescue service has undertaken to help the community during this period, such as welfare visits, delivering food and medicine for people who were unable to leave their homes. Despite this, the service has shown a very positive direction of travel in terms of its performance against statutory functions outlined in the IRMP, particularly in terms of responding quickly, delivering prevention activity and undertaking fire safety enforcement activity. Most of the challenges to performance outlined are as a result of the Covid-19 restrictions and therefore outside of its direct control. The additional investment into the service has seen it able to respond quickly to the pent-up demand of safe and well visits and fire safety audits quickly and efficiently.

### **Chief Fire Officer Summary**

The service has undergone a significant improvement journey over the last twelve months which has resulted in a great degree of change. We have also faced an unprecedented challenge in the face of the Covid-19 crises which has caused us to pivot and reassess how we can continue to make people safer in a different way, in line with the restrictions that were necessary as a result of the pandemic. As a result of shielding arrangements, we were not able to deliver the number of safe and well visits that we had planned in person, so wherever possible, we delivered advice over the phone. Because businesses were closed, we were unable to undertake many of the fire safety audits we had planned. We undertook desktop audits wherever possible to continue to reduce risk

and keep people safe. However, the impact of the improvement work is evident as the service has already cleared much of the pent-up demand that built up during Covid-19. The changes experienced during the pandemic also saw our retained appliance availability rise as many of our retained firefighters were at home and were available for emergency calls. This resulted in the service exceeding its response targets, and more people in West Sussex received a fire engine faster. Whilst this is a really positive outcome for the service, I am also mindful that this has come at a cost to many retained firefighters, who may have been experiencing great uncertainty in relation to their primary employment. The longevity of this positive trend is unknown as we progress through the pandemic and people's working arrangements change, so a focus on operational resilience remains a key priority for the service.

Whilst there are still areas of our performance that we need to improve, the direction of travel is a positive one. I am incredibly proud of all of our staff, their commitment, willingness to innovate and their determination to persevere during the pandemic made a significant difference to the communities we are all so proud to serve.

## Performance Summary

Scrutiny Members to note that with the exception of Core Measures CM22, 23, 24, 25 and 31, all of the remainder are directly associated with the statutory functions and requirements of West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service.

At the end of Quarter 1 2020-21 the following performance against 31 Core Measures was recorded:

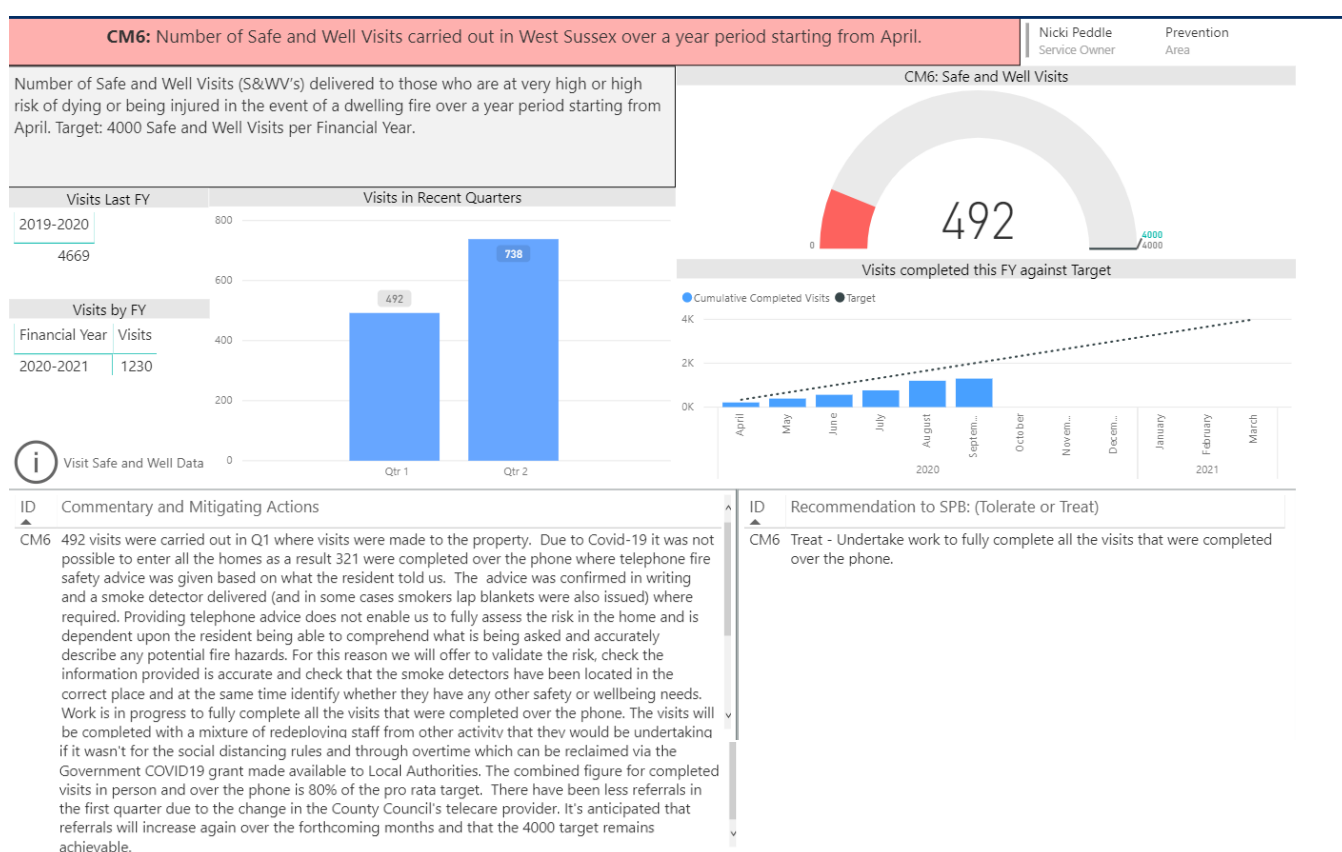


Of the 31 measures, 16 had a green status, 2 were amber and 8 were red.

There were 5 measures for which data is not yet available:

- CM16: The % of Level 2 Officer mobilisations has not yet been supplied by Joint Fire Control
- CM24: Feedback from Fire Safety Audits has not yet been obtained at a level suitable to report on in this quarter. The process of data collection continues to be reviewed.
- CM26, CM28, CM29: Staff sickness and qualification levels are maintained within Firewatch and the data is not yet available at this reporting level. We anticipate we will be able to report on this retrospectively in the Q2 report.

The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee have selected the following measures to be examined by the Scrutiny Committee:

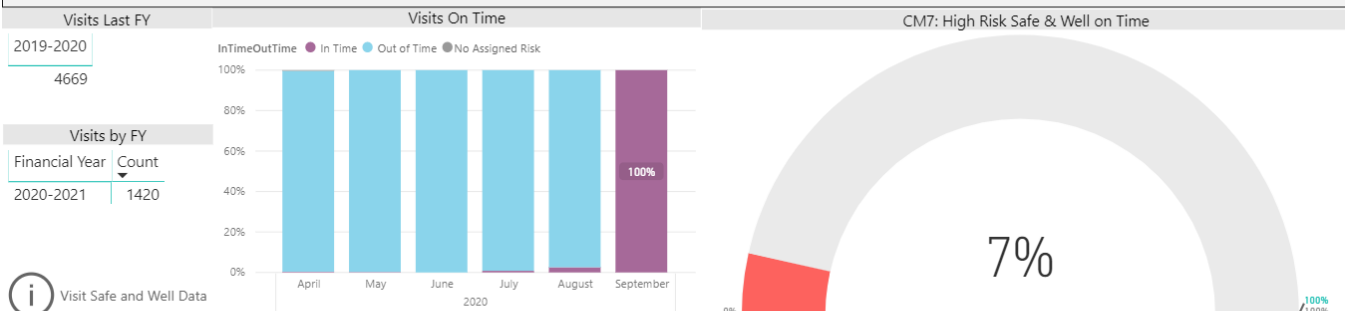


### CM7: Number of Safe and Well Visits carried out on time in West Sussex over a year period starting from April.

Nicki Peddle  
Service Owner

Prevention  
Area

Number of Safe and Well Visits (S&WV's) delivered to those who are at high risk of dying or being injured in the event of a dwelling fire over a year period starting from April.  
100% Completed on Time



Visit Safe and Well Data

#### ID Commentary and Mitigating Actions

CM7 Due to Covid-19 (lockdown and shielding) it was not possible to complete the visits in person so they had to be carried out over the phone (as described in CM6). In many of the cases the advice was provided to relatives or carers who are in the home and have been able to relay accurate information to us and test existing smoke detectors.

#### ID Recommendation to SPB: (Tolerate or Treat)

CM7 Treat - Address pent up demand in August following the removal of the requirement for people to shield. Progress has already been made and customers who were given a telephone visit have now been offered a visit in person. Whilst clearing the demand took longer than expected due to some extended operational incidents, only 5 of the 321 in person visits remain outstanding.

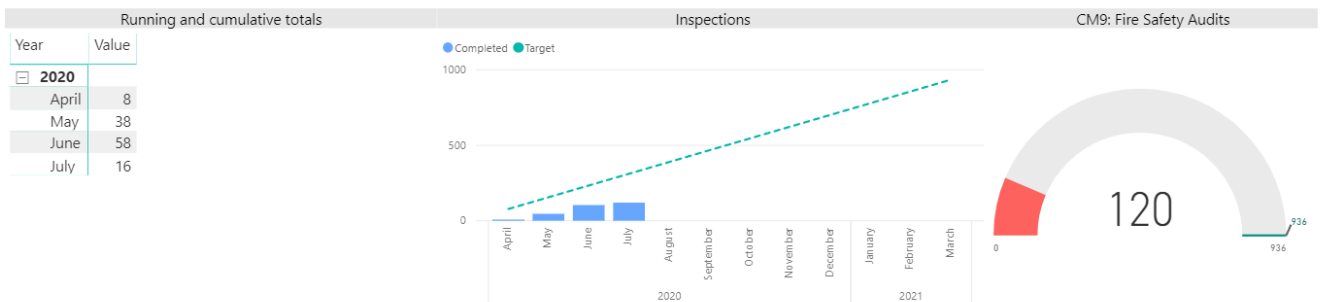
### CM9: Number of Fire Safety Audits completed under the Risk Based Inspection Programme

Adrian Murphy

Protection

CM9 : The total number of Fire Safety Audits carried out to enforce The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 each financial year. Total Number of Full Fire Safety Audits carried out over a year starting in April.

CM9 Targets:  
936 Green. <936 Red.



#### Commentary and Mitigating Actions

The RBIP has been significantly impacted by the Covid-19 lock down and whilst WSFRS adopted NFCC approved remote techniques, a pent up demand of 120 audits was caused by lock down precautions. This pent up demand is being reduced and is now down to 43 audits, however the Covid-19 risks in Care & Health premises remain a challenge.

Fire Safety is focussed on catching up on the pent up demand, and it is reducing with the expectation to catch up on the RBIP in late September 2020. All Inspecting Officers have been focussed on audits with a target of 5 per calendar week per inspector.

#### Recommendation to SPB: (Tolerate or Treat)

Treat - Address pent up demand following the easing of lockdown with focussed activity. Whilst no further resource is currently required, the use of overtime will be explored to increase capacity if adequate progress has not been made by the end of Q2

## CM10: Proportion of Unsatisfactory Fire Safety Inspections

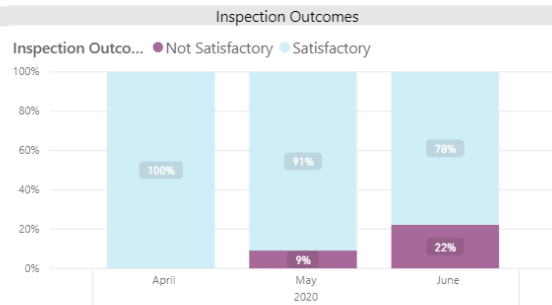
Adrian Murphy Protection

**CM10 :** The percentage of fire safety inspections in which the inspector found a deficiency in the fire safety arrangements of that premises. Inspectors aim to focus inspections only on those premises which have inadequate fire safety arrangements.

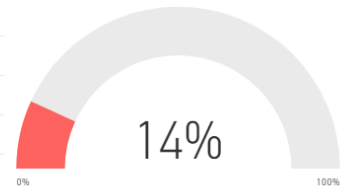
### CM10 Targets:

>50% Green. <30% Red.

Inspection Outcomes			
Year	Incomplete	Not Satisfactory	Satisfactory
2020			
April	78	2	80
May	137	1	148
June	214	2	223



### CM10: Unsatisfactory Inspections



#### Commentary and Mitigating Actions

There is National Guidance on better regulation, which directs the FRS not to repeatedly inspect 'Broadly Compliant' premises as they are safe and the burden of reinspections is unnecessary. This measure is designed to keep our fire safety activity focussed on Non-Compliant (unsatisfactory) buildings. The figures are still reflecting a low level, some of this is due to mis-coding during Covid-19 desk top audits, this data is now being cleansed. All fire safety staff have been trained on this new coding recording method, and this figure will continue to improve.

This measure is deep dived at the Protection monthly performance meeting to ensure full focus is maintained on auditing buildings that need improved fire safety.

#### Recommendation to SPB: (Tolerate or Treat)

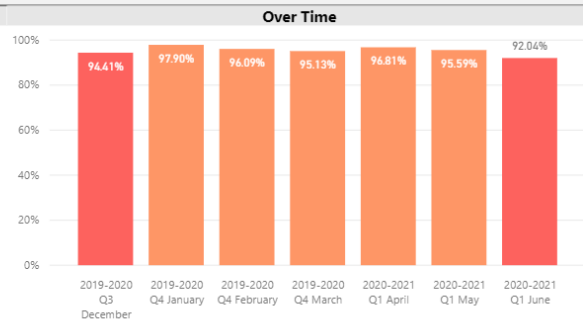
Tolerate - Continue to monitor performance following increased staff training and quality assuring reports by Fire Safety Delivery team

## CM14: Time taken to answer the 999 call by Surrey/West Sussex Joint Fire Control Room over a year period starting from April

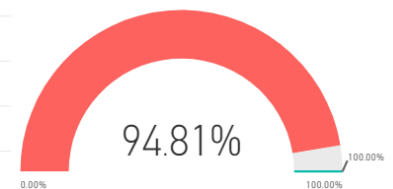
Jon Simpson  
Response

This measure looks at the time taken from when the Fire Control Room Operator answers the phone when a 999 call is received by the Fire Control Room 100% of calls answered within 7 seconds and 100% of calls answered through the Surrey/West Sussex Joint Fire Control Room.

% Calls answered in 7 seconds	
FY	Average of %
2019-2020	95.88%
2020-2021	94.81%



### CM14: % Calls answered in 7 seconds



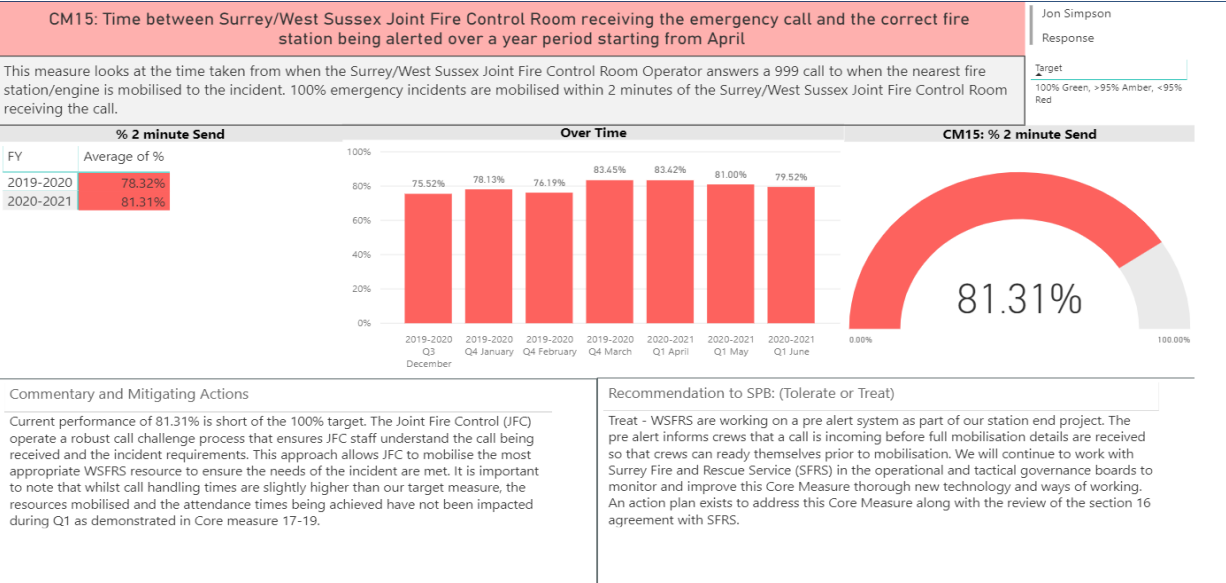
#### Commentary and Mitigating Actions

Current performance of 94.81% is short of the 100% target. This performance figure is a percentage of every call received into the Joint Fire Control (JFC) for all emergency incidents across both Surrey and West Sussex and does not differentiate between incidents that attract multiple calls from the public to the same incident, the first call received into JFC is the most critical and ensures a swift and effective response. As an example, up to 40 calls for some incidents in prominent or populated areas can be experienced, as such the way in which the first few calls are managed is critical to our response.

The collaboration partnership is nearing one year in operation and we continue to work with Surrey Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) to improve performance.

#### Recommendation to SPB: (Tolerate or Treat)

Treat - Work with Surrey Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) to refine data collection methods, concluding in a review of our legal section 16 agreement. We also require SFRS to produce an action plan for improvement in line with the current section 16 agreement.



## CM31: Percentage of Projects/programmes within WSFRS Programme Management Office (PMO) that a...

Sabrina Nemori... PMO

Percentage of Projects/programmes within WSFRS Programme Management Office (PMO) that are on track to be delivered within agreed tolerances.

Target

>95% Green, 95% - 85% Amber, <85% Red



### Commentary and Mitigating Actions

Over this quarter 11 projects have been completed and closed. Out of the remaining 47 projects, 32 are green equating to 68%. These are progressing well and are on track to be successfully delivered within the anticipated timeframe. A further 13 projects are amber status (30%), which means they have manageable risks that are proactively being addressed. The service has one only project that is red status (2%) and one project is due to commence shortly (2%) so has not been allocated a RAG status.

The red status project is entitled 'Customer Centred Value for Money'. This project was previously completed. However, the project has been re-opened for a full review to ensure the direction of travel aligns with the new structure and service operating model as many areas have changed due to improvements. It was an early identified dependency across the IRMP. A review of the existing strategy will result in an action plan to be delivered in Year 3 & 4 of the IRMP.

Our Amber projects include National Operational Guidance; Local Risk Management Plans & Farnor which are still making good progress and due to delays associated with COVID-19 have been shown as an amber status until we can baseline re-plan an ensure that the timeline is approved through governance. These three are key service priorities and as such have been mitigated with additional resources and strategic focus.

Despite the disruption caused by COVID-19 in Q1, momentum has been maintained. Some new ways of working have been adopted by the service that have enabled the projects to progress.

COVID has presented the service with an unforeseen opportunity, due to staff being restricted in the activity they could undertake during the pandemic, we have been able to redirect their time to increase their knowledge around their local risk management plans and how they can plan their visits to respond in an effective way to local risk. It has also presented a second wider opportunity of increased use of technology which has been beneficial for the service to engage in learning and tracking of projects virtually.

### Recommendation to SPB: (Tolerate or Treat)

Tolerate and Monitor - Remedial action plan agreed through Programme Steering Board and to be taken forward by newly appointed Area Manager Risk & Improvement and will conduct a review of the Customer Centred Strategy. A methodology will be implemented to ensure accurate collation of feedback from customers and the clear definition of customers by Q2.

Tolerate and Monitor - Projects that are Amber for 3 months or more will provide a more detailed update to the PSB to enable an improved monitoring of those areas that are not where we would like them and can address issues quickly. PSB will action this from

September 2020.



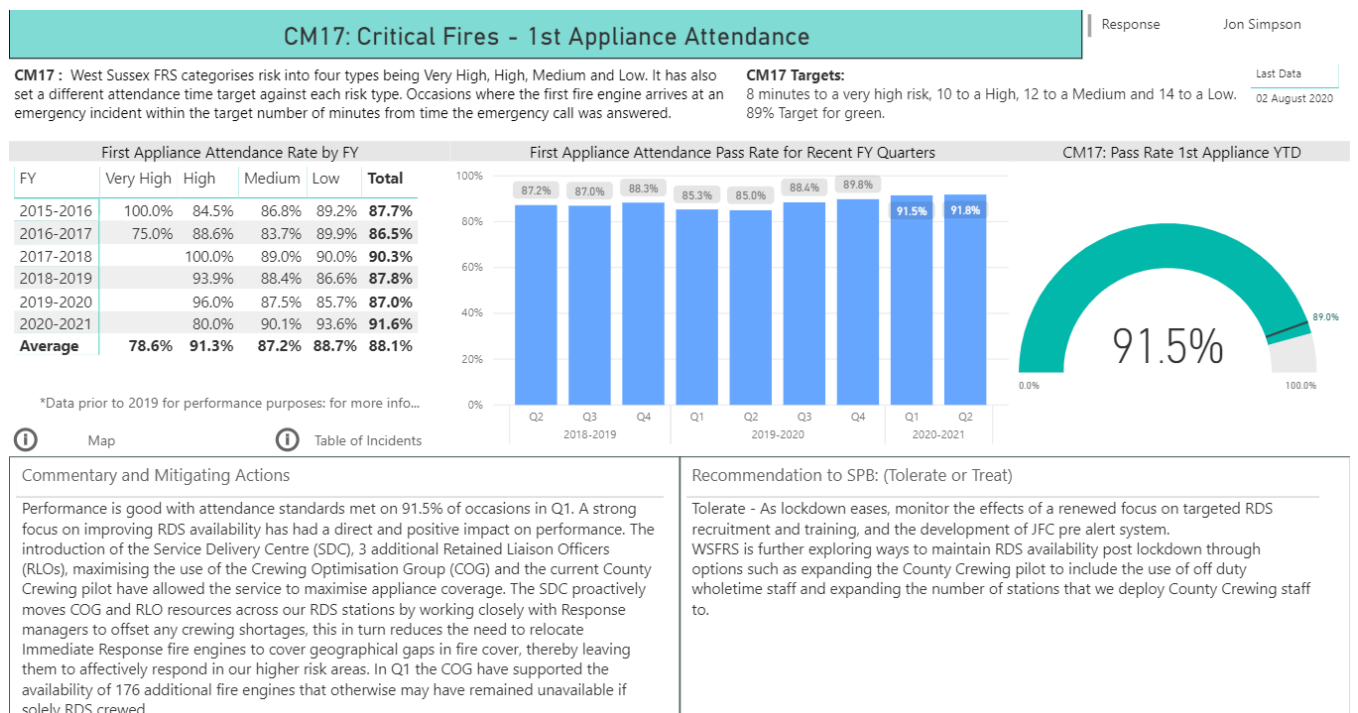
## Areas of Significant Improvement and Success

The introduction and training of the PAF of which this report is a part of has been received well by staff and Members and will continue to evolve over the coming months and years demonstrating fire and rescue service performance and providing assurance to members and the public.

Enormous credit to all our staff in successfully improving our performance during this quarter despite of the impacts of COVID 19.

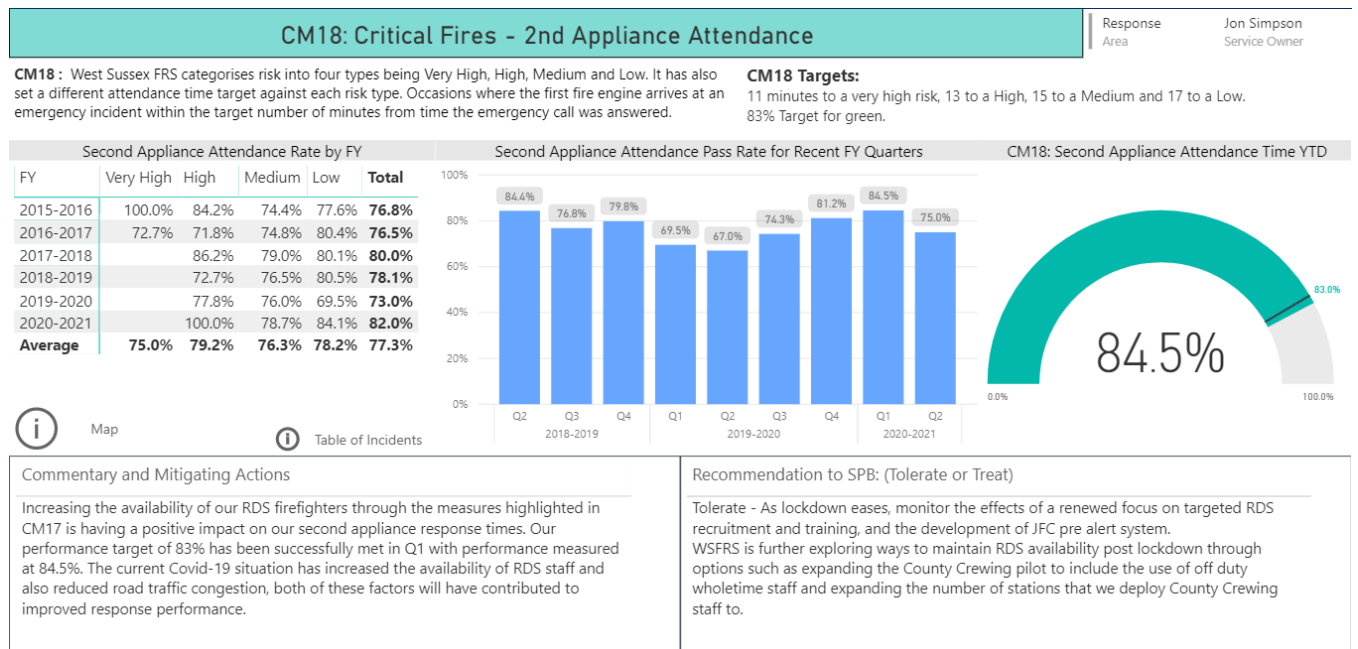
The following corporate measures showed notable improvements and/or success:

**CM17 – Critical Fires – 1st Appliance (Fire Engine) Attendance** exceeded target indicating the investment into the Service Delivery Centre, the additional 3 Retained Liaison Officers (RLO's), the County Crewing pilot and maximising the Crewing Optimisation Group (COG) establishment is having a positive effect on crewing of fire engines leading to improving attendance standards

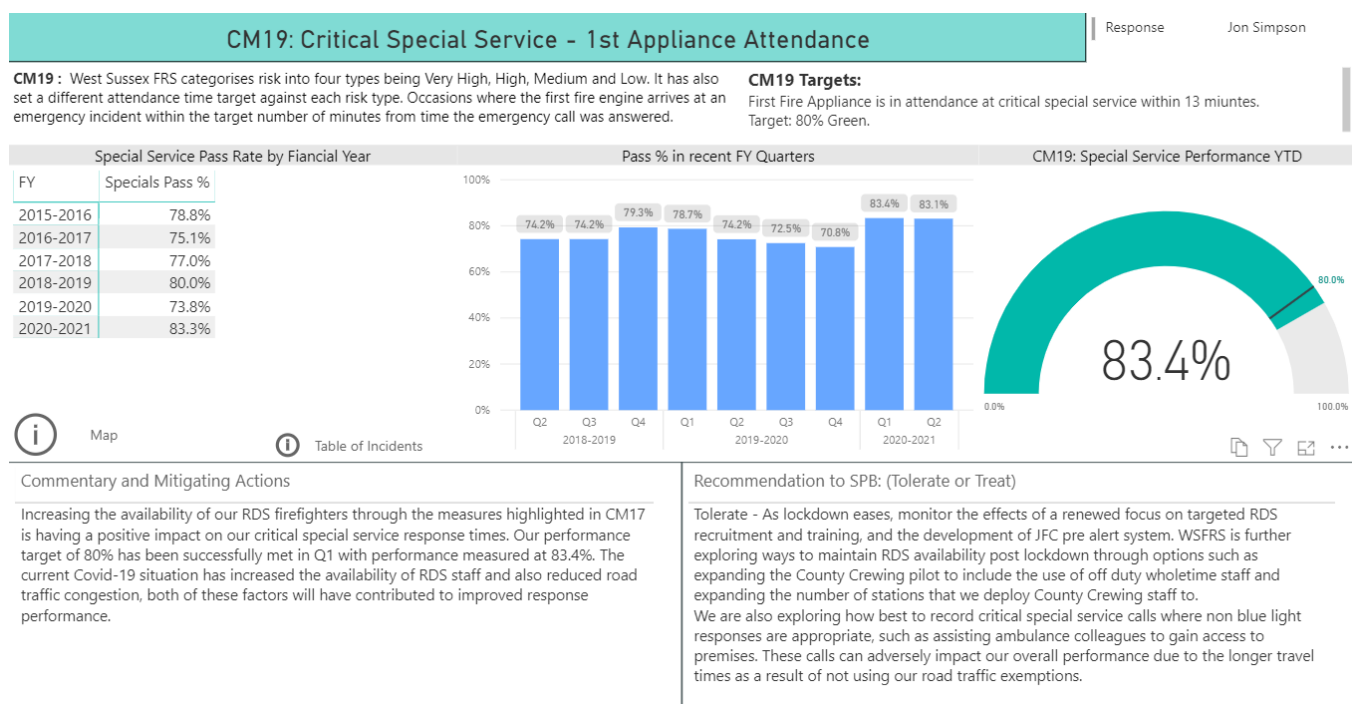




CM18 – Critical Fires – 2nd Appliance (Fire Engine) Attendance exceeded target indicating the investment into the Service Delivery Centre, the additional 3 Retained Liaison Officers (RLO's), the County Crewing pilot and maximising the Crewing Optimisation Group (COG) establishment is having a positive effect on crewing of fire engines leading to improving attendance standards.



CM19- Critical Special Service's 1st Appliance (Fire Engine) Attendance exceeded target indicating that the investment into the Service Delivery Centre, the additional 3 Retained Liaison Officers (RLO's), the County Crewing pilot and maximising the Crewing Optimisation Group (COG) establishment is having a positive effect on crewing of fire engines leading to improving attendance standards.



CM21 – Adequate crewing on Retained Duty System fire engines exceeded target for the first time in many years indicating the investment into the Service Delivery Centre, the additional 3 Retained Liaison Officers (RLO's), the County Crewing pilot and maximising the Crewing Optimisation Group (COG) establishment is having a positive effect on crewing of fire engines. The effect of COVID 19 which has meant more of our Retained Duty Staff have been available in their communities to crew fire engines 24/7 is we believe also a factor in this performance improvement

