

Public Document Pack

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10 June 2021

Fire & Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee

A meeting of the committee will be held at **11.30 am** on **Friday, 18 June 2021** at **County Hall, Chichester, PO19 1RQ.**

Note: In response to the continuing public health restrictions, there will be limited public access to the meeting. Admission is by ticket only, bookable in advance via: democratic.services@westsussex.gov.uk

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The meeting will be available to view live via the Internet at this address:

<http://www.westsussex.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

Agenda

- 11.30 am 1. **Committee Membership**
- The Committee to note the County Council appointments to the Committee as follows: -
- Cllr Boram, Cllr Charles, Cllr Dunn, Cllr Milne, Cllr Pendleton, Cllr Richardson and Cllr Turley.
- 11.32 am 2. **Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman**
- (a) **Election of Chairman**
- The Committee to elect its Chairman. If the election is contested a secret ballot will be held in accordance with Standing Order 2.15B.
- (b) **Election of Vice Chairman**
- The Committee to elect its Vice Chairman. If the election is contested a secret ballot will be held in accordance with Standing Order 2.15B.

- 11.37 am 3. **Declarations of Interest**
- Committee members and officers must declare any pecuniary or personal interest in any business on the agenda. They should also make declarations at any stage such an interest becomes apparent during the meeting. Consideration should be given to leaving the meeting if the nature of the interest warrants it. If in doubt please contact Democratic Services before the meeting.
- 11.39 am 4. **Urgent Matters**
- Items not on the agenda which the Chairman of the meeting is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency by reason of special circumstances, including cases where the Committee needs to be informed of budgetary or performance issues affecting matters within its terms of reference, which have emerged since the publication of the agenda.
- 11.41 am 5. **Terms of Reference** (Pages 5 - 6)
- The Committee is asked to note its terms of reference.
- 11.43 am 6. **Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee** (Pages 7 - 10)
- The Committee is asked to agree the minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2021 (cream paper).
- 11.45 am 7. **Fire and Rescue Service Strategic Performance Report Quarter 4 2020-21** (Pages 11 - 38)
- Report by the Chief Fire Officer.
- The report provides a context to the Performance and Assurance Framework for the purpose of future scrutiny of the Executive's approach to performance.
- 12.15 pm 8. **Priority Programme Update** (Pages 39 - 44)
- Report by the Chief Fire Officer.
- The report provides an overview of the priority programmes of work during Quarter 4 of 2020/2021 including progress against the People Action Plan, the Improvement Plan and the Integrated Risk Management Plan Action Plan.
- 12.45 pm 9. **Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services Covid Inspection Letter** (Pages 45 - 56)
- The Committee is asked to examine the letter received from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services and consider whether there is any learning from the

context that should be considered for inclusion as part of work programme planning of the Committee.

1.00 pm 10. **Work Programme Planning and Possible Items for Future Scrutiny**

The Committee is asked to review its current draft work programme taking into account the Forward Plan of Key Decisions and any suggestions from its members for possible items for future scrutiny.

(a) **Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

There are currently no entries in the Forward Plan of Key Decisions within the Committee's portfolio. If any relevant entries are added between the date of despatch of the agenda and the date of the meeting they will be tabled at the meeting.

(b) **Work Programme** (Pages 57 - 60)

The Committee to review its draft work programme for the year ahead taking into consideration the checklist at Appendix A.

1.14 pm 11. **Requests for Call-in**

There have been no requests for call-in to the Scrutiny Committee and within its constitutional remit since the date of the last meeting. The Director of Law and Assurance will report any requests since the publication of the agenda papers.

1.15 pm 12. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 1 October 2021. Probable agenda items include:

- Fire and Rescue Service Strategic Performance Report Quarter 1 2020/21
- Priority Programme Update

Any member wishing to place an item on the agenda for the meeting must notify the Director of Law and Assurance by 16 September 2021.

To all members of the Fire & Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee

Webcasting

Please note: this meeting may be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the County Council's website on the internet - at the start of the meeting the Chairman will confirm if all or part of the meeting is to be filmed. The images and sound recording may be used for training purposes by the Council.

Generally the public gallery is not filmed. However, by entering the meeting room and using the public seating area you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes.

Fire & Rescue Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference

1. To consider policies and the effectiveness of their delivery for the County Council's responsibilities as Fire and Rescue Authority for the County.
2. To plan and carry out its business in the context of the Council's ambitions and objectives associated with needs and aspirations of the community in relation to fire and rescue functions and associated responsibilities.
3. To undertake the scrutiny of the performance of the Council's fire and rescue services against the outcomes objectives and measures set by the Council.
4. To consider developing policies, proposals or decisions of the Executive in relation to fire and rescue responsibilities.
5. To review proposed decisions of the Executive including key decisions under delegated powers made by officers on behalf of the Executive (call-in).
6. To consider matters referred to the Committee by the Executive.
7. To consider a programme of work which the Committee believes is in the interests of the County Council, and to recommend it to the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee for approval by the County Council.
8. To consider a petition in accordance with the Petitions Scheme in accordance with Standing Order 3.43 (b) and to consider a request for a review of the County Council's response to a petition in accordance with the Scheme.
9. To consider any relevant report of joint scrutiny work undertaken under the auspices of the West Sussex Joint Scrutiny Steering Group and refer the report to the relevant Cabinet Member for consideration.
10. To encourage members individually or in a group to lead on specific topics within the Committee's remit, as agreed by the Committee.

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Fire & Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee

26 March 2021 – At a virtual meeting of the Fire & Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee held at 10.30 am Virtual meeting with restricted public access.

Present: Cllr Waight (Chairman)

Cllr Barnard, Cllr Barling, Cllr Edwards, Cllr M Jones and Cllr Smytherman

Apologies were received from Cllr Pendleton

Also in attendance: Cllr Crow

27. Declarations of Interest

27.1 Cllr Smytherman declared a personal interest as working with the Home Office on the changes to the regulations for the Fire Service Order 2005 on behalf of leasehold flat owners.

28. Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee

28.1 Resolved – that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2021 are approved as a correct record and are signed by the Chairman.

29. Fire and Rescue Service Strategic Performance Report Quarter 3 2020/21

29.1 The Committee considered a report by the Chief Fire Officer (copy appended to the signed minutes). A summary of responses to committee members' questions and comments is below: -

- Two rural fatalities highlighted the importance of smoke detectors which will be the focus of a publicity campaign over Easter
- Stations in the general area of an incident would be pre-alerted until the exact location was known to give a prompt response
- A station by station review will show where local recruitment is needed by summer
- The ongoing County Crewing pilot scheme may help retained appliance availability
- It is standard practice to move appliances around the county according to risk to ensure the best fire cover is available

29.2 The Chairman proposed the following recommendations which were seconded by Cllr Smytherman and agreed by the Committee: -

Resolved – That the Committee: -

- i. Supports the formation of a panel which reviews fire deaths in order to improve prevention of injury or death from fire incidents
- ii. Supports further work to refine data collection in an improved performance of 999 call answering but notes

- significant performance improvements since the last quarter
- iii. Supports the investigation of incidents where the mobilisation standard was not achieved
 - iv. Notes the improvement in Fire Station alert times but notes that more work is required including a pre-alert system
 - v. Notes the incremental improvements in second appliance attendance time to critical fires and critical special Service first attendance appliance attendance and supports a station by station review process to drive further improvement
 - vi. Supports post lockdown initiatives to improve adequate retained crewing on front line fire appliances
 - vii. Congratulates the service on the 100 percent safeguarding referral achievement
 - viii. Congratulates the fire service on the critical fires first appliance attendance exceeding the target for the fourth consecutive quarter

30. Priority Programme Update

30.1 The Committee considered a report by the Chief Fire Officer (copy appended to the signed minutes). A summary of responses to committee members' questions and comments is below: -

- The 100 staff spoken to about promoting the right values and culture were in a variety of roles within the service – although 29% did not find discussions meaningful, this was lower than before. More work would be done on the process to improve the 29% rate
- Surveys had been carried out during the pandemic to assess staff wellbeing with changes being made where necessary
- The Service reviewed Corporate Risk 60 and requested it remained on the risk register until the next inspection
- The Service is currently developing the next risk profile for the next IRMP which would later be shared with the Cabinet Member

30.2 The Chairman proposed the following recommendations which were seconded by Cllr Smytherman and agreed by the Committee: -

Resolved – That the Committee: -

- i. Notes the progress regarding protecting the public through fire regulation
- ii. Notes progress in the People Action Plan and the closure of the Independent Advisory Panel
- iii. Notes of performances improve whilst taking on additional duties during the covid pandemic

31. Report of the Task and Finish Group - Joint Fire Control Centre

31.1 The Committee considered a report by the Chairman of the Task and Finish Group (copy appended to the signed minutes). A

summary of responses to committee members' questions and comments is below: -

- New working methods meant fewer staff were needed than before and discussions were happening with Surrey Fire & Rescue Service over required staffing levels when East Sussex Fire Authority calls were also handled by the control centre
- The service was monitoring progress of the Emergency Services Network whilst continuing to use an upgraded version of the Airwave communication system
- The centre has a 'buddy' centre on Merseyside which also uses Airwave (a 'buddy' system is standard and effective) and is sufficiently informed to pass relevant information onto the Surrey centre
- 999 calls were queued when there were multiple calls per incident

31.2 The Chairman proposed that the recommendations of the Task & Finish Group be agreed by the Committee. This was seconded by Cllr Barnard. Cllr M Jones abstained from the vote.

31.3 Resolved – That the Committee agrees the Task & Finish Group's recommendations.

32. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services Covid Inspection letter

32.1 The Committee considered the COVID Inspection Letter from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (copy appended to the signed minutes) and learned that the service didn't review how it defined premises as high risk during the pandemic as it considered that existing risk ratings remained appropriate.

32.2 The Chairman proposed the following recommendation which was seconded by the Vice Chairman and agreed by the Committee - the Committee congratulates all those in the Fire Service who took on additional roles to assist the community during the pandemic whilst maintaining its statutory functions.

33. Work Programme Planning and Possible Items for Future Scrutiny

33.1 The Committee considered its work programme (copy appended to the signed minutes) and agreed to look at the proposed transfer of the Fire & Rescue Service to the Police & Crime Commissioner when appropriate.

33.2 Resolved – that the Committee notes its work programme.

34. Date of Next Meeting

34.1 The next meeting of the Committee will take place on 18 June 2021.

Agenda Item 6

The meeting ended at 12.13 pm

Chairman

Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee

18 June 2021

Fire and Rescue Service Strategic Performance Report Quarter 4 2020/21

Report by Chief Fire Officer

Summary

In March 2020, West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (WSFRS) formally adopted a new Performance and Assurance Framework (PAF) which was supported by the Cabinet Member for WSFRS and the Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee (FRSSC).

The PAF includes monitoring of service performance against 31 core measures that provide strong indication of organisational performance directly aligned to the delivery of the strategic commitments i.e. Integrated Risk Management Plan. This ensures the service is intelligence and evidence led and enables the service to react early when performance is not to the required level.

Appendix A of the report is the Quarter four Strategic Performance Report for the purpose of scrutiny of the Cabinet's approach to performance. This report covers data from the period of 1 January 2021 – 31 March 2021.

Focus for Scrutiny

Members of the Committee are invited to consider and comment on the Core Measures/Indicators detailed in Appendix A, designed to provide assurance concerning the delivery of the statutory functions of the Fire Authority.

Proposal

1 Background and context

- 1.1 West Sussex County Council is the Fire Authority and is responsible for making sure West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (WSFRS) performs efficiently and in the best interest of the public and communities it serves.
- 1.2 WSFRS was inspected in November 2018 by Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS). The full Inspection Report for the service was published on 20 June 2019. The report found that effectiveness of WSFRS "requires improvement", efficiency "requires improvement" and the way it looks after its people is "inadequate".
- 1.3 New scrutiny governance arrangements are now in place through the Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee.

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- 1.4 On behalf of residents, members of the committee are responsible for ensuring that WSFRS delivers excellent services and achieves outcomes as efficiently and effectively as possible. This involves the West Sussex County Council Fire Authority (WSCCFA):
- setting a high-level policy agenda (strategic objectives) for what the WSFRS should do and the outcomes it should achieve
 - setting a budget to fund delivery of the policy agenda
 - securing assurance that the budget is being spent wisely on delivering the policy agenda set by the authority
- 1.5 In order to secure assurance, it is necessary for effective scrutiny to be an integral component of WSCCFA governance arrangements. Scrutiny is there to hold the Cabinet to account concerning the decisions taken relating to WSFRS.
- 1.6 The role of scrutiny is also to contribute to the development of solutions and ideas to support continuous service improvement. The Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee may need to be flexible in the way it scrutinises the service and the Cabinet's decisions. On occasions, members of the committee may wish to 'drill down' on certain specific issues, but still at a strategic level with the focus being the interests of all West Sussex residents and businesses.

2 Proposal details

- 2.1 The proposal information for this item for scrutiny is set out in the attached appendix (listed below). As it is a report dealing with performance management the assessments and implications are not required.

Sabrina Cohen-Hatton
Chief Fire Officer

Contact Officer: Sabrina Cohen-Hatton, Chief Fire Officer

Appendices

Appendix A - FRS Scrutiny PAF Core Measures Report Quarter 4 2020-21

Background papers

None

West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service Performance Report Quarter 4

Deputy Chief Fire Officer
Mark Andrews

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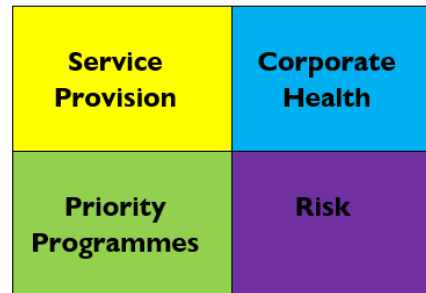
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Strategic Performance Board Quarterly Report

Quarter 3 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:



- 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 of 1st January 2021 – 31st March 2021.

Cabinet Member Summary

The performance information contained within this report for WSFRS is for the fourth quarter of 2020/2021, a period which has continued to see the effects and impacts of COVID 19 on service delivery of WSFRS and wider county council services. Therefore, it is with great credit to all the teams that make up WSFRS that the impact of COVID 19 has not significantly affected the Service's performance in the delivery of its critical services to our residents.

During this quarter the Service also welcomed a revisit inspection from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary & Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) on the WSFRS causes of concern, which identified significant improvement in areas where improvement was needed.

Officers continue to focus on the areas in this report where improvement still needs to be made and as the pandemic begins to ease we will be focussed on how we can support economic and community recovery whilst maintaining the well-being and support to all our staff.

Chief Fire Officer Summary



This quarter was once again affected by the pandemic with continued efforts from all our staff to maintain the appropriate standards of safety to protect themselves and the public. This meant that our business continuity arrangements were still fully in force with crews and corporate staff carrying out restricted duties and visits to only the most vulnerable people.

During this quarter we also welcomed the HMICFRS to look once again at our Causes of Concern. The subsequent letter forms part of today's meeting and I am very proud of the 'significant' improvement identified by the Inspectors during their visit and once again their recognition of the assurance and governance that assist us in delivering continued improvements in performance.

In this report I am particularly pleased to see that 1st Appliance (Fire Engine) Attendance to critical fires has once again exceeded the target which is now for all four quarters of the year demonstrating our commitment to get the right fire service resources to those that need us most quickly and efficiently. I am also very pleased with the consistently low sickness levels, despite of the pandemic, which hints at a strong organisational culture of support and well-being for all colleagues and positive provision of occupational health and rehabilitation to those that need it. The well-being of our service remains a top priority and as the pandemic begins to ease we will continue to carefully monitor the impact both inside and outside of our organisation.

Performance Summary

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

At the end of Quarter 4 2020-21 the following performance against 31 Core Measures was recorded:

16 measures had a green status, 7 were amber and 8 were red. Of the 13 comparable measures that were red or amber last quarter, 8 have shown improvement and 5 a decline. One measure moved from red to green status and another from red to amber.

The following red and amber measures have been selected for examination by the Scrutiny Committee:

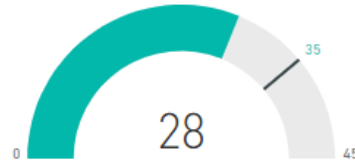
- CM1: Total number of Fire Deaths
- CM6: Number of Safe and Well Visits Completed
- CM8: High Risk Safe and Well Visits Delivered on Time
- CM9: Fire Safety Audits Completed under the Risk Based Inspection Programme
- CM13: Number of False Alarms in Non Domestic Premises
- CM18: Critical Fires - 2nd Appliance (Fire Engine) attendance

Performance Summary for all core measures at the end of Quarter 4 (1 of 2):

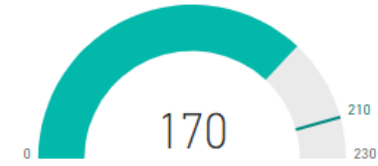
CM1: Fatalities in Fires



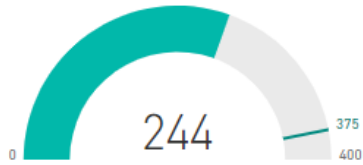
CM2: Injuries in Fires



CM3: Deliberate Primary Fires this FY



CM4: Deliberate Secondary Fires this FY



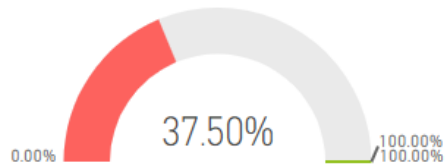
CM5: Safeguarding Created within 24 Hours of Concern Last Quarter



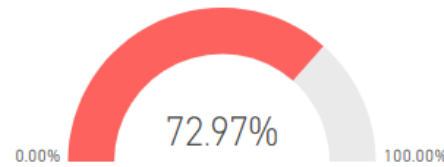
CM6: Safe and Well Visits



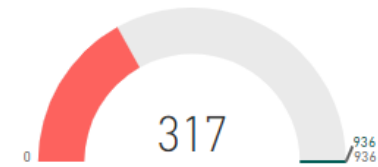
CM7: V High Risk Safe & Well on Time Last Quarter



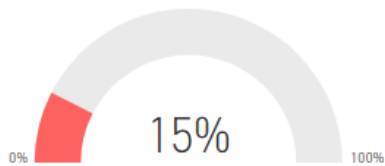
CM8: High Risk Safe & Well on Time Last Quarter



CM9: Fire Safety Audits - Year to Date



CM10: Unsatisfactory Inspections Last Quarter



CM11: Prosecutions



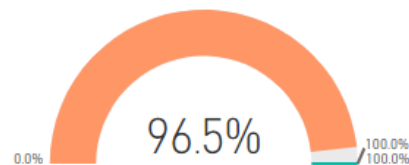
CM12: Consultations on time Last Quarter



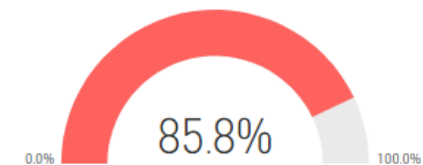
CM13: Unwanted Fire Signals YTD



CM14: % Calls answered in 7 seconds last quarter

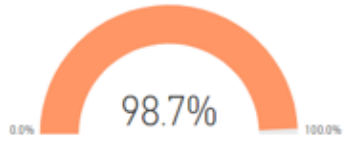


CM15: % 2 minute Send last quarter

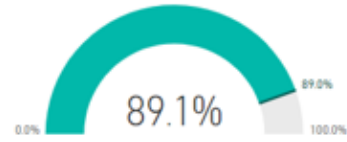


Performance Summary for all core measures at the end of Quarter 4 (2 of 2):

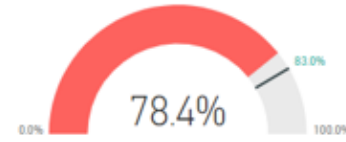
CM16: % Level 2 Officer Mobilised Last Quarter



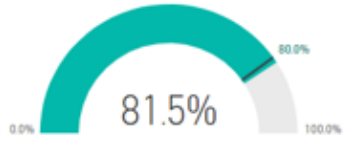
CM17: Pass Rate 1st Appliance Last Quarter



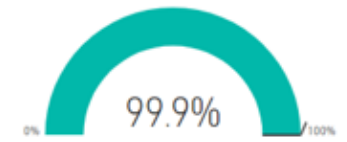
CM18: Second Appliance Attendance Time Last Quarter



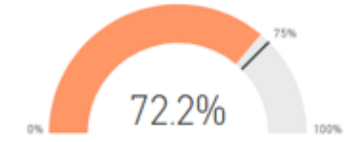
CM19: Special Service Performance Last Quarter



CM20: Group Crewed Fire Engines On the Run



CM21: Retained Crewed Fire Engines On the Run



CM22: Customers Satisfied Last Quarter



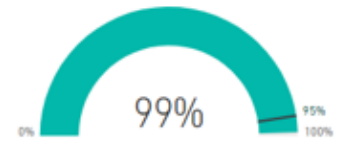
CM23: Customers Satisfied Last Quarter



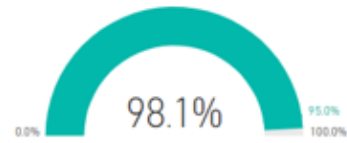
CM24: Customer Satisfied last quarter



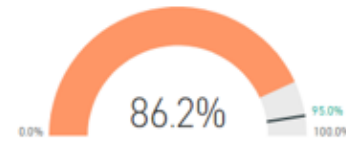
CM25: Safe and Well Feedback Last Quarter



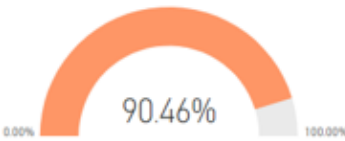
CM26: % Staff Sickness



CM27: Percentage of Fitness Tests in Time



CM28: % of operational staff in qualification



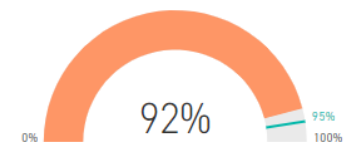
CM29: % of Fire Safety Staff Qualified or Working towards Level 4 D...



CM30: RIDDOR



CM31: % of Projects Currently On Target



Selected Measures (Red and Amber Status)

Quarter 4

(1st January 2021 – 31st March 2021)

Core Measure 1: Total number of Fire Deaths in West Sussex over a year period starting from April

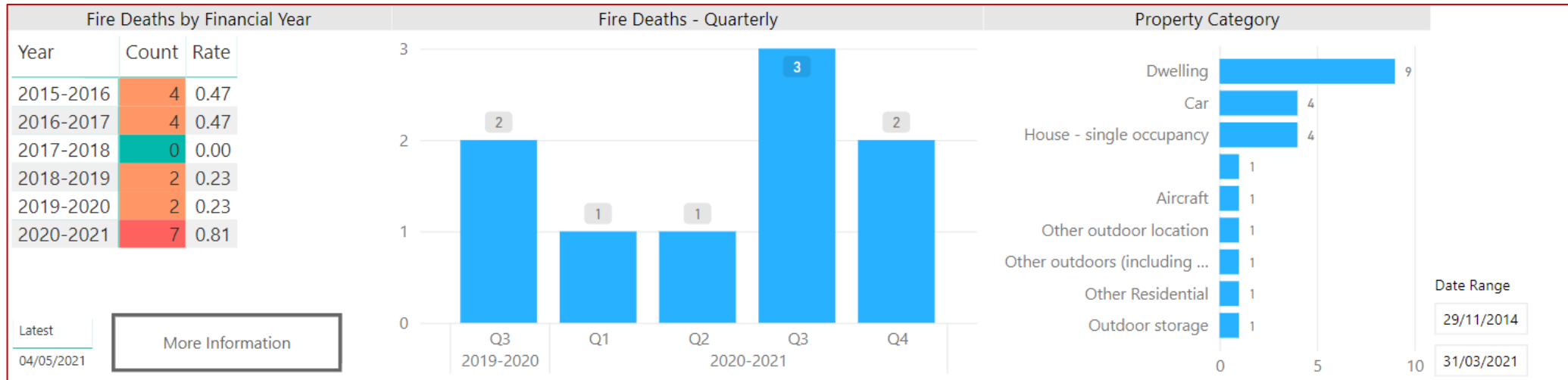
7 Fatalities in Fires Since April 2020

Agenda Item 7

The total number of deaths that occur as a result of a fire. This includes a person whose death is attributed to a fire, even when the death occurs weeks or months later. This includes injuries/fatalities resulting from all types of fires including dwelling fires, non-domestic fires and vehicle fires, whether deliberate or accidental.

Annual Target:
Annual Target: 0 Green, Amber, 7 + Red.

Nicki Peddle
Service Owner
Prevention Area



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Commentary

Two fatalities occurred during this Quarter. 1 in Horsham as a result of an electrical fire and the other in Pulborough which was smoking related. We may be seeing an increase in ADF fire fatalities due to Covid, as a result of partner agencies visiting fewer properties, vulnerable people being reluctant to have people visit their homes and seek assistance. Whilst this is the highest number of fatal fires for some years there is no correlation with the number of accidental dwelling fires (ADFs) or ADF injuries both of which have shown significant reductions this year. The number of ADFs is 387 which is 46 below the 7 year average and perhaps more importantly the number of ADF injuries is down to 18 which is 10 fewer for the same time last year.

Actions

Treat: Both incidents have been subject to an operational performance and a fire fatality case review. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) chaired the panel which carried out an intensive review of the incident and its background. The reviews considered both the background and the follow up fire prevention activity which took place immediately afterwards, as well longer-term prevention activity which will be influenced from the findings of this process. There are a number of activities that will take place through partnerships to develop an understanding of fire risk and any immediate prevention actions that can be taken. Sadly, despite all our very best prevention and protection efforts, these accidents do still happen and this is why we focus so hard on getting the fire engine to the scene as quickly as possible and train our crews relentlessly on choosing the right tactics to save lives and property once we are in attendance. These 2 incidents take the total fire deaths in 2020/21 up to 7 and officers will be preparing an additional annual report focusing on the background to these incidents and along with other serious fires identifying any trends or patterns that may inform future prevention plans for next year.

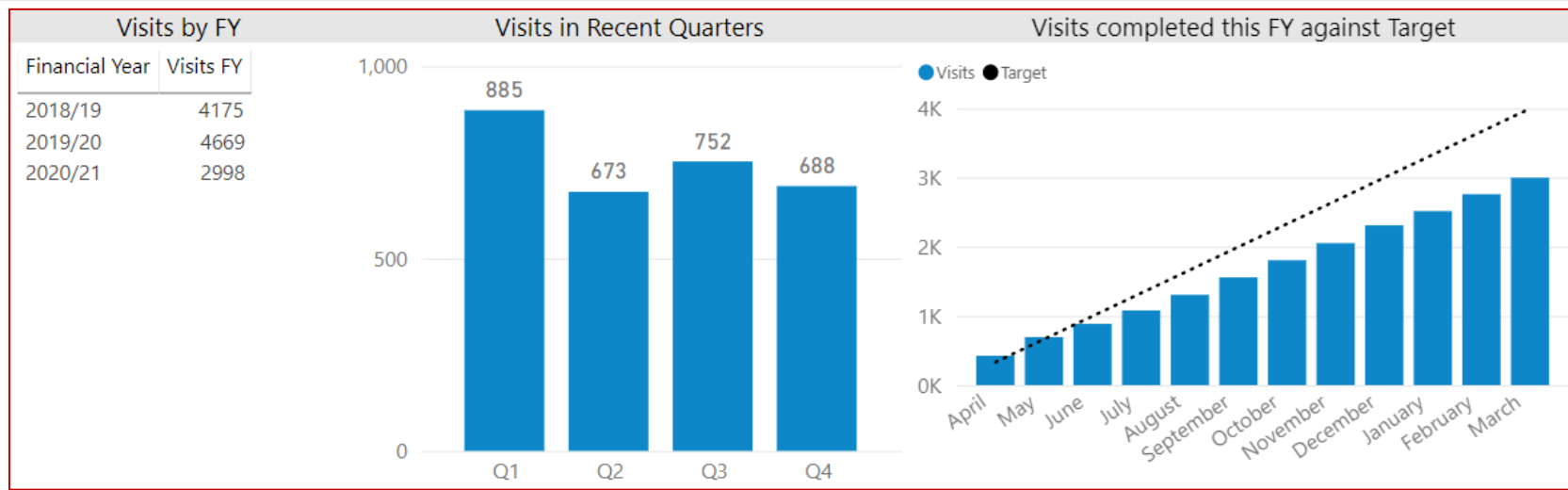
Core Measure 6: Number of safe and well visits (S&WVs) delivered to those who are at very high risk or high risk.

2998 safe & Well visits
Since April 2020

Number of Safe and Well Visits (S&WVs) delivered to those who are at very high or high risk of dying or being injured in the event of a dwelling fire over a year period starting from April. Target is 4000 Safe and Well Visits per Financial Year.

Annual Target:
Annual Target:
4,000 Green,

Nicki Peddle
Service Owner
Prevention
Area



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Commentary
The quarterly target based on the annual target of 4000 visits is 1000 visits each quarter. In Quarter 4, 688 visits were made to the property to completed a Safe and Well Visit. Extensive activity continues to increase the number of requests and referrals for a visit. Despite the commencement of vaccinations, our target audience remain reluctant to have our staff enter their homes. The annual figure is 36% down on the previous year, which is a result of the pandemic (lockdown and shielding) many of our target audience are clinically extremely vulnerable. A total of 3460 visits (at all risk levels) were completed in person with an additional 822 being complete over the telephone with the resident declining a visit to their property due to Covid. Cumulatively due to strong performance pre Covid, we are still on target to meet our target of 19800 by March 2022, (4000 per year is a milestone).

Actions
Treat: Activity continues to increase the number of visits through introductions to the fire service and through direct community activity with warm calling (leaflet drops and follow up door knocking). The new campaign promoting smoke detectors and SWVs has now commenced and its impact will be monitored.

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Core Measure 8: High Risk safe and well visit referrals delivered within 7 working days

72.97% of HR S&WV Completed on Time this quarter

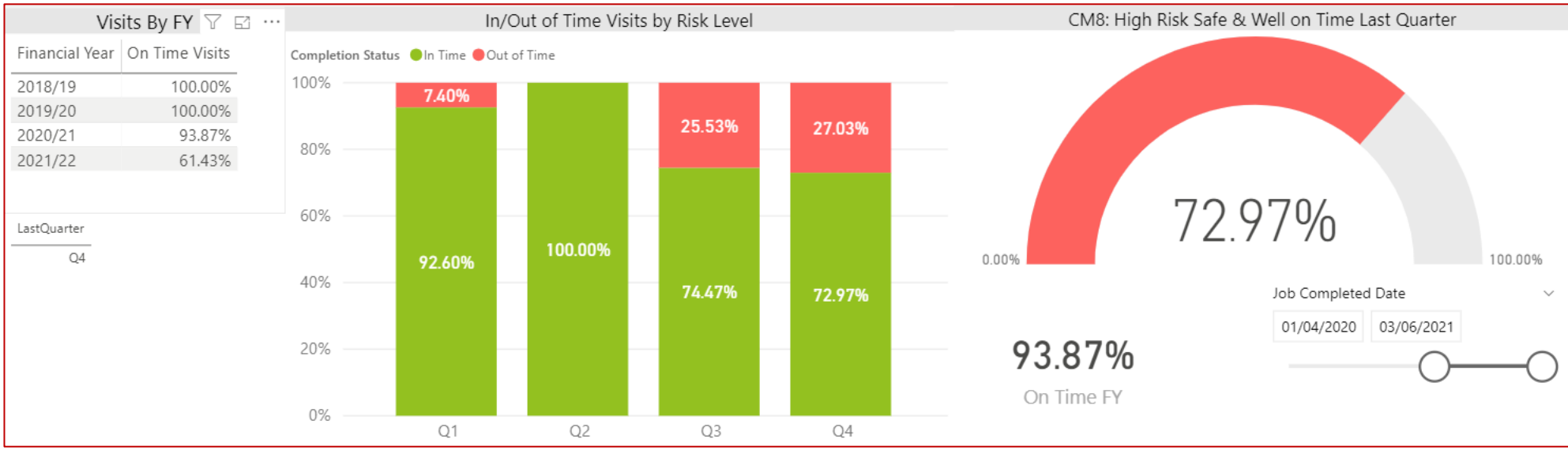
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The percentage of safe and well visit referrals for individuals assessed as high risk of dying or being injured in the event of a dwelling fire, completed within 7 working days. Target is 100% completed on time.

Annual Target:
Annual Target: 100% on time Green,

Nicki Peddlar
Service Owner
Prevention Area

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Commentary

During Q4 there were 40 visits where it was not possible to agree a visit with the customer within the 7 days requirement set out in our Standard Operating Procedure as reflected in this measure with 27% not in the timescale. Data indicated that 100% of high-risk customers were contacted within the timeline. There are a number of reasons why residents decline a visit within 7 days, very similar to those in the very high category. For example, the resident requesting a delay or being uncontactable. 100% of visits were completed within 7 days when the resident permitted access to their property.

Actions

Treat: The pandemic and recent period of lockdown continues to have an impact on this measure given that some residents will not allow the Service to access to their homes which inevitably builds in a delay to a visit over the 7-day reporting period. However, in all cases where an 'in person' safe and well visit to a vulnerable person was requested, and who were happy for us to make a home visit, these have been completed within 7 days. Officers continue to work hard at alternative ways of delivering this service over the telephone to at least ensure the basic fire safety messages are conveyed until the 'in person' assessment can be made.

Core Measure 9: Number of Fire Safety Audits completed under the Risk Based Inspection Programme

317 Audits completed Since April 2020

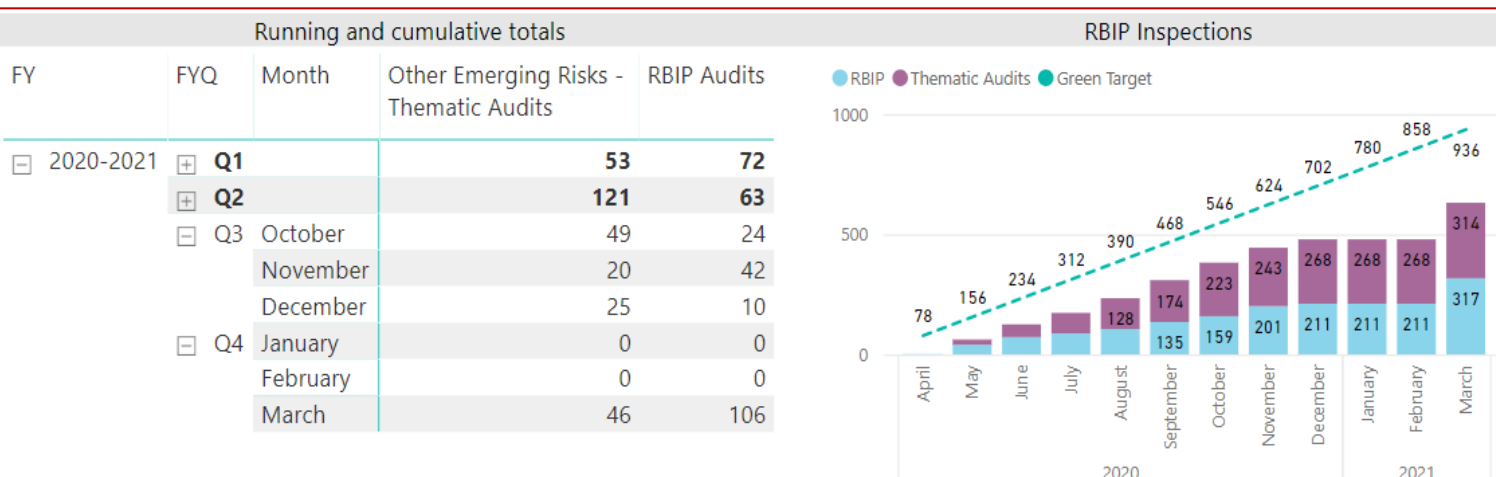
The total number of full Fire Safety Audits carried out to enforce The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order 2005) each financial year, starting in April.

Annual Target:
Annual Target:
936 Green, <936
Red

Steve Ash
Service Owner
Protection
Area

Commentary and Mitigating Actions

The Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP) is the work we plan to deliver every year so that we are effectively enforcing the Fire Safety Order. The RBIP is a combination of the activities on known sleeping risks, specific risk premises, thematic risks and IRMP work. At the core of the RBIP is a regular inspection program for 1533 known sleeping risks. To achieve this target an average of 936 visits per year is required. In 2019, 1391 audits were completed which has meant that less planned re-inspections are required this year than the average. There is no backlog of outstanding re-inspections. Lockdown in this quarter has had an impact on the type of work that is either required or possible. While inspecting Officers have continued to carry out remote and tabletop audits, owing to the strict C-19 conditions many premises remain closed with no response or contact. Those that are open have been contacted to find the best way to offer advice and to ensure we keep premises safe. We have sent out communications and sent letters to some premises outlining what actions they should be considering as they remain open to the public. We have also responded to 100% of all licensing consultations where premises are seeking changes to their licensing conditions so they can be Covid safe. We have also worked as part of the multi-major incident response to Covid to ensure new risks - such as increased oxygen use in hospitals or convalescence hotels are safe from fire. We have also used inspecting officers to undertake essential data quality tasks in this quarter. This is to ensure the move to the new fire safety database has the best possible starting point. Finally, we have also used inspecting officers to support the delivery of improvement projects such as website redesign and the production of AFA reduction education resources. As the roadmap to recovery continues, we are supporting local business and booking more on-site audits ensuring the safety of our staff and the service users.



Recommendation to SPB: (Tolerate or Treat)

Treat: The delivery team have reviewed how to maximise their output and continue to deliver a safe service whilst reviewing the impact of Covid, new ways of working with current restrictions and phased returns to a full audit process. Audits for high rise blocks of flats are being carried out as part of the national program for in-person audits and will be completed within the agreed time scales despite the pandemic. The new Farynor system continues to create internal efficiencies that will increase the capacity to undertake a higher number of audits along with more staff being recruited to vacant and new posts.

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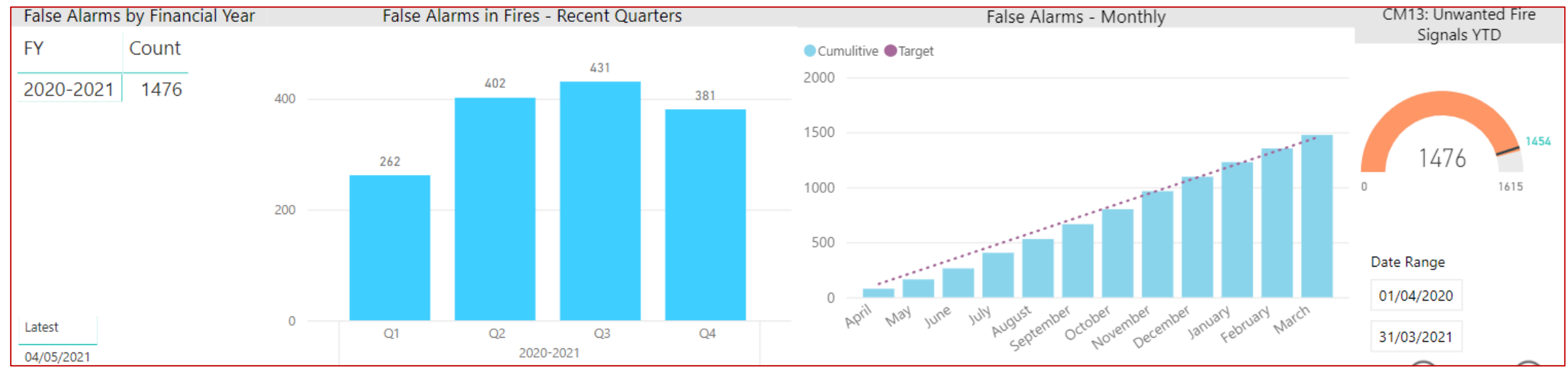
Core Measure 13: The number of incidents each year which are unwanted fire signals (false alarms) from fire alarm systems in non-domestic premises.

1476 un-wanted fire signals YTD

Annual Target:
Green 10% reduction, 2% Amber, <2% Red

Steve Ash
Service Owner
Protection Area

Agenda Item 7



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Commentary
This measure records the number of incidents to which a least one fire engine was sent where the origin of the call was an automatic fire alarm (AFA) system, the property type was non-residential or other residential and the incident was recorded as a False Alarm. AFA data is analysed monthly with actions taken to reduce the number of AFAs. Our AFA policy has recently been reviewed and an improved policy will be implemented to increase our impact in this area. The change in the use of buildings due to Covid 19 restrictions has had an impact on the number of AFAs attended and as such the reduced number of incidents of this type in this financial year cannot be wholly attributed to the fire service demand reduction activity

Recommendations (Tolerate or Treat)
Treat: Training is being delivered to ensure AFA reduction activity takes place at all relevant incidents. This, along with a suite of other measures, should assist in driving down unwanted fire signals to meet the annual 10% reduction on our historical average.

Core Measure 18: Critical Fires – 2nd Appliance Attendance

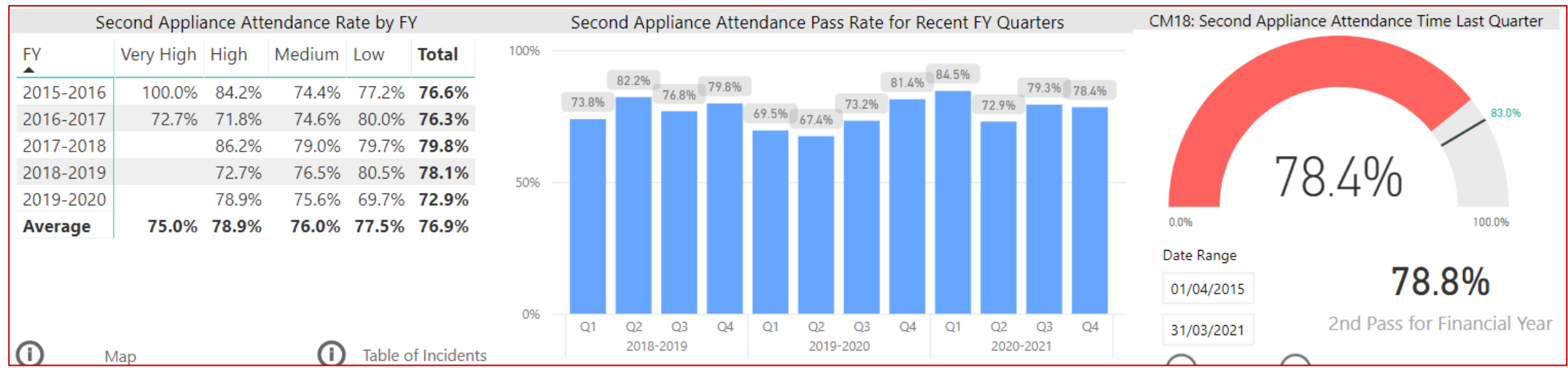
78.4% Q4
78.8% YTD

Jon Simpson
Service Owner
Response Area

West Sussex FRS categorises risk into four types being Very High, High, Medium and Low. It has also set a different attendance time target against each risk type. This measure examines occasions where the second fire engine arrives at an emergency incident within the target number of minutes from the time the emergency call was answered.

Core Measure 18 Targets:
11 minutes to Very High risk
13 minutes to High risk
15 minute to Medium risk
17 minutes to Low risk
83% Target for Green

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Commentary
Performance against this measure is currently below target at 78.4%, this represents a 0.9% reduction from Q3. End of year performance is 78.8% which represents a 6% improvement when compared to the 2019/2020 financial year. This has been achieved by increasing the availability of our retained fire engines through previously identified projects, all of which are having a positive impact on our performance. Whilst this performance represents an improvement on the previous year, we recognize that there is still more to do, the learning and improvements will be taken forward into our next IRMP to ensure continuous improvement.

Recommendation to SPB: (Tolerate or Treat)
Treat: The retained Marginal Gains project continues to make incremental improvements to the availability of our retained fire engines. This is being further supported by a station-by-station review to identify the specific availability needs of each station. This review will result in a workforce action plan for each of our 23 retained stations.

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Areas of Significant Improvement and Success

Quarter 4

(1st January 2021 – 31st March 2021)

Areas of Significant Improvement and Success (1 of 2)

The Performance and Assurance Framework of which this report is a part of has continued to demonstrate fire and rescue service performance and provide 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 success in Quarter 4:

Core Measure 2: The number of Fire Injuries are significantly lower in 2020/2021 than in previous years, possibly as a result of occupiers detecting fires sooner and taking evasive action

Core Measure 4: The number of Deliberate Secondary Fires shows significant reduction/improvement in 2020/21 compared to previous years. Targeted arson reduction programmes and campaigns to raise awareness have been effective here, though good performance may also be attributed in part to COVID lockdowns.

Core Measure 5: Safeguarding Referrals have been completed within 24 hours of discovery on 100% of occasions throughout 2020/21. The new process for safeguarding has resulted in all referrals being made in a timely and direct way addressing one of the concerns identified by the 2018 HMICFRS Inspection.

Continued on next slide...

Areas of Significant Improvement and Success (2 of 2)

- **Core Measure 17: Critical Fires - 1st Appliance (Fire Engine) Attendance** time pass rate has exceeded the target for all four quarters of the year (five consecutive quarters and the highest in recent years). This indicates 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.
- **Core Measure 19: Critical Special Services - 1st Appliance (Fire Engine) Attendance** has exceeded the target in Q4 and as an average for the year 2020/21.
- **Core Measure 26: Sickness levels** have remained consistently low throughout 2020/2021 despite additional factors that have been in force throughout the COVID 19 pandemic.

The following corporate measure has shown notable improvement in Quarter 4:

- **Core Measure 21: Adequate Crewing on Retained Frontline Fire Engines** has seen sustained improvement throughout the year. Though some crew availability may be attributed to the effects of COVID19 lockdown, a number of initiatives have supported an improvement in performance for this measure throughout the year.

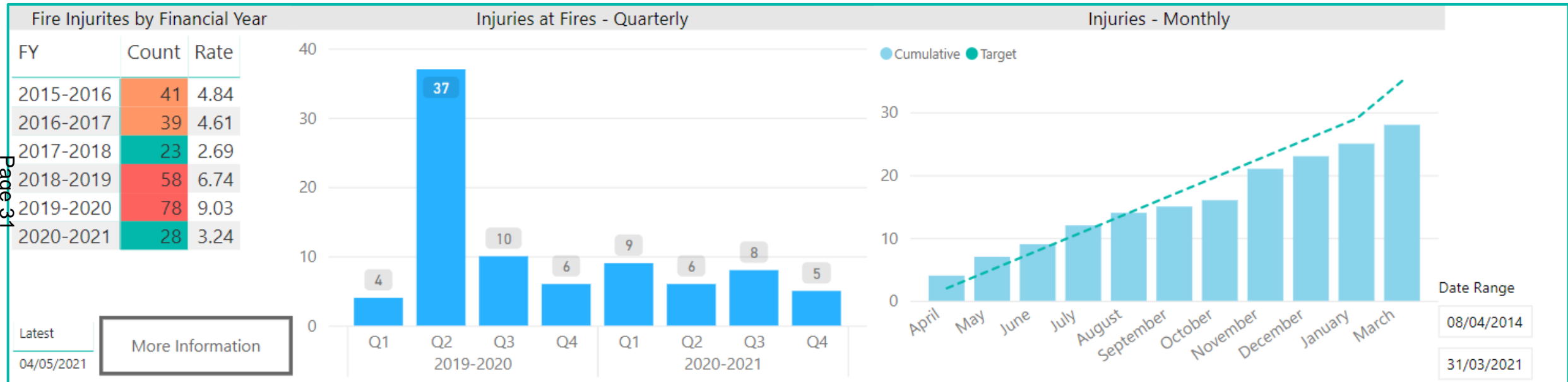
Core Measure 2: Number of fire casualties in West Sussex over a year period starting from April

28 Casualties in Fires Since April 2020

The total number of casualties that occur as a result of a fire. This includes a person or persons whose injuries may be slight or serious and require hospital treatment and which are attributed to the fire.

Annual Target:
Annual Target:
<26. < 35 Green,
35-45 Amber, >
45 Red

Nicki Peddle
Service Owner
Prevention
Area



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Latest 04/05/2021 [More Information](#)

Commentary
Five cases all with slight injuries, slight burns and smoke inhalation. These incidents were inside someone's home, the majority were cooking related. This year's figure (28) is 64% lower than last years figure, which may be as a result of Covid and more people being at home and detecting fires earlier and taking evasive action.

Recommendations to SPB
Treat: Continue to use learning from incidents to educate and inform our communities via press releases and through the delivery of the local risk management plans, as well as the annual kitchen safety campaign.

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Core Measure 4: The number of deliberate secondary fires in West Sussex over a year period starting from April

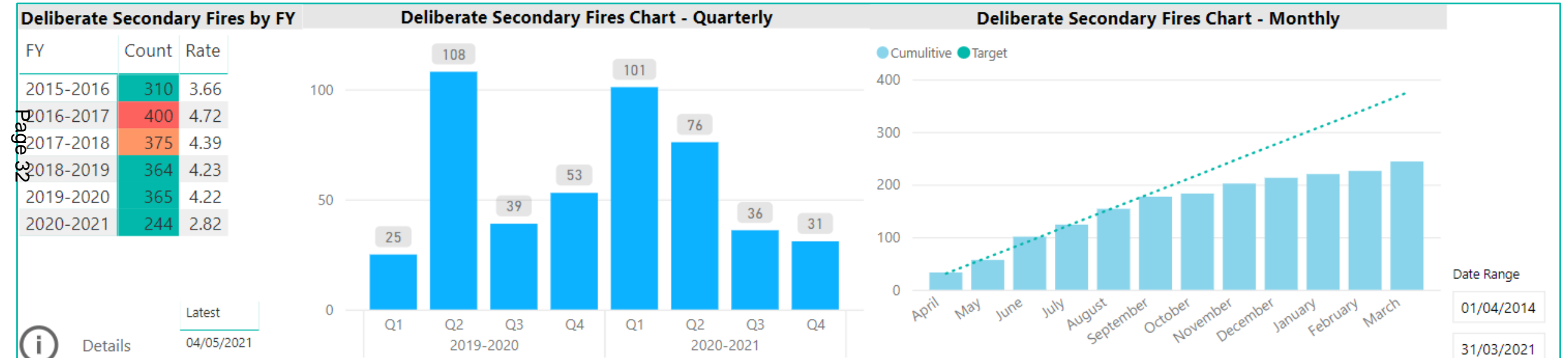
244 Deliberate Secondary Fires Since April 2020

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Rubbish and grass are examples of secondary fires. This is the total number of secondary fires, where the cause has been identified that the fire was started deliberately through the criminal act of arson. The number of deliberate secondary fires over a year.

Annual Target:
 <375 Green, 375
 - 400 Amber,
 >400 Red

Nicki Peddie
 Service Owner
Prevention Area



Commentary

Worthing and Crawley have the highest proportion of deliberate secondary fires. Over 70% of the fires took place outside. The year has ended with a 33% reduction on the previous year.

Recommendations to SPB

Treat: Hotspots are indicated through the data that has been used to build the local risk manage plans. Community based activity will be directed to these areas.

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Core Measure 5: Safeguarding referrals made to Social Care colleagues in West Sussex County Council within 24 hours of discovery

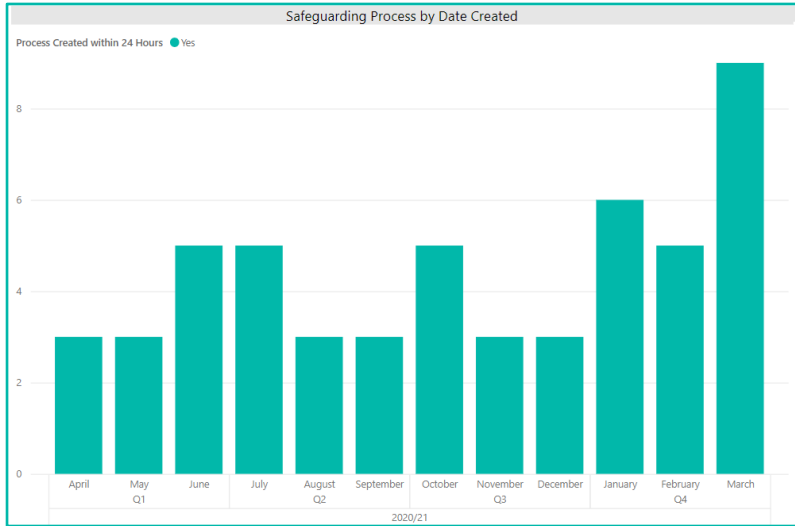
100% of concerns were dealt with within 24 hours in the last quarter

Safeguarding referrals made to Social Care colleagues in West Sussex County Council within 24 hours of discovery over a year period, starting from April. To ensure that safeguarding referrals are made in a timely manner for the protection of individuals considered at risk in West Sussex. This is the time taken from the Duty Officer or Safeguarding Coordinator being made aware of a safeguarding case, to the referral being made to the local authority

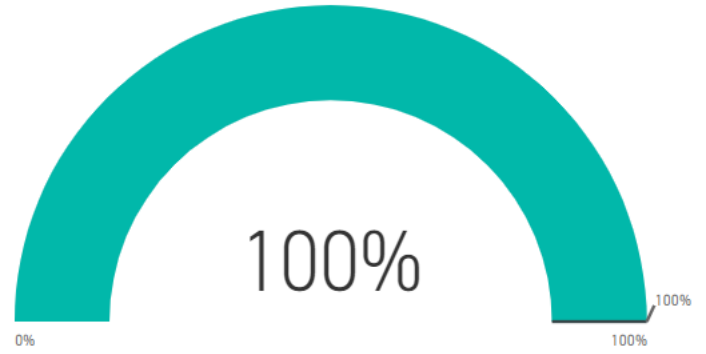
Annual Target:
Annual Target: 100% Green.
<100% Red

Nicki Peddle
Service Owner
Prevention Area

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CM5: Safeguarding Created within 24 Hours of Concern Last Quarter



100%
Year to Date Pass Rate

Commentary and Mitigating Actions
20 safeguarding referrals were made in Q4 and 100% were completed on time. This has been achieved as a result of staff being able to identify vulnerability and take the appropriate action by making a referral using our new electronic form. The new process has resulted in the safeguarding referrals all being made in a timely and direct way addressing one of the concerns identified by the 2018 HMICFRS Inspection report.

Recommendation to SPB: (Tolerate or Treat)
Treat: Continue to monitor and feedback to the person making the referral to support the ongoing development of our safeguarding process and risk management.

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Core Measure 17: Critical Fires – 1st Appliance Attendance

89.1% Pass Rate 1st Appliance Last Quarter

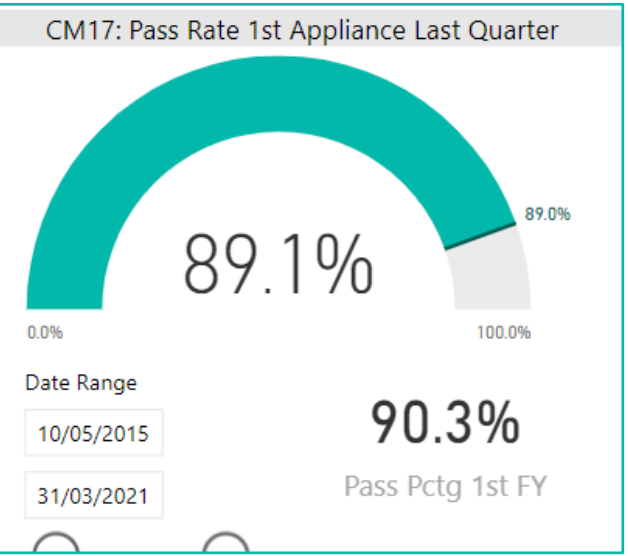
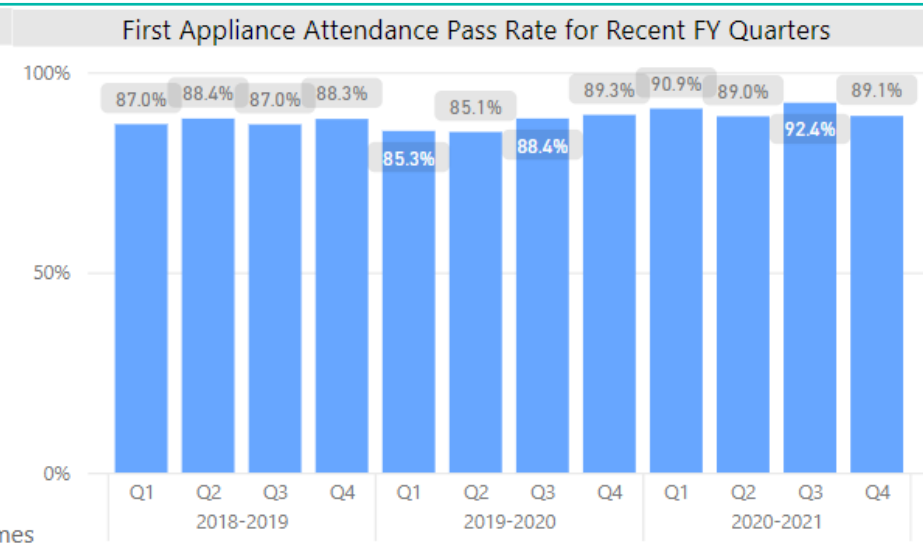
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Jon Simpson
Service Officer
Response Area

Targets:
8 minutes to Very High Risk
10 minutes to a High Risk
12 minutes to a Medium Risk
14 minutes to a Low Risk
89% Target for Green

West Sussex FRS categorises risk into four types being Very High, High, Medium and Low. It has also set a different attendance time target against each risk type. Occasions where the first fire engine arrives at emergency incident within the target number of minutes from time the emergency call was answered.

First Appliance Attendance Rate by FY					
FY	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Total
2015-2016	100.0%	84.5%	86.8%	89.2%	87.7%
2016-2017	75.0%	88.6%	83.7%	89.9%	86.5%
2017-2018		100.0%	89.0%	90.0%	90.3%
2018-2019		93.9%	88.4%	86.3%	87.7%
2019-2020		96.2%	87.2%	85.8%	87.0%
Average	78.6%	91.6%	86.9%	88.3%	87.9%



Data prior to Q4 2019/20 has been recalculated following system changes and may differ from previously reported percentages

Map | Table of Incidents | Average Times

Commentary
Performance is again strong in Q4 with attendance standards met on 89.1% of occasions. Whilst this reflects a 3.3% reduction from Q3 it does mean that West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service has achieved its emergency response standard for critical fires in all quarters within the financial year, with year end performance of 90.3% being achieved. This is also the fifth consecutive quarter that this target has been achieved. We are maintaining a strong focus on sustained improvements in our retained fire engine availability and our associated projects have led to an 8.7% improvement when compared to Q4 of 2019/20.

Recommendations to SPB
Tolerate: The Retained Marginal Gains project continues to make incremental improvements to the availability of our retained fire engines. This is being further supported by a station-by-station review to identify the specific availability needs of each station, this review will result in a workforce action plan for each Of our 23 retained sections.

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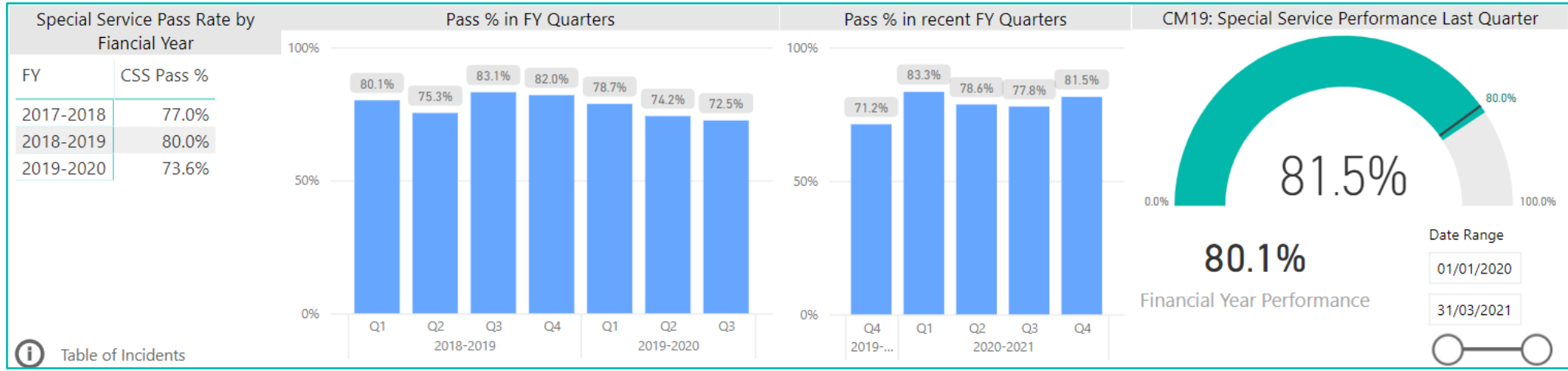
Core Measure 19: Critical Special Service – 1st Appliance Attendance

81.5% arrived within 13 minutes

Annual Target:
First Fire Appliance is in attendance at a critical special service within 13 minutes. **Target 80%**
Green

Jon Simpson
Service Owner
Response Area

West Sussex FRS categorises risk into four types being Very High, High, Medium and Low. It has also set a different attendance time target against each risk type. Occasions where the first fire engine arrives at an emergency incident within the target number of minutes from time the emergency call was answered.



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Commentary

Q4 performance is 81.5% which is a 3.7% improvement from Quarter 3. When compared to Q4 of 2019/20 a performance improvement of 10.3% has been achieved. The year end performance of 80.1% means that WSFRS has achieved its emergency response standard for critical special services. A significant number of these incident types involve Road Traffic Collisions and assisting other emergency services, due to the nature of these incidents, information passed between emergency services can sometimes be delayed such as time taken to identify incomplete address information. This can lead to longer call handling and mobilisation times.

Recommendations to SPB

Tolerate: The Retained Marginal Gains project continues to make incremental improvements to the availability of our retained fire engines. This is being further supported by a station-by-station review to identify the specific availability needs of each station, this review will result in a workforce action plan for each of our 23 retained sections. Officers from the Joint Fire Control regularly meet with multi-agency emergency control room partners to ensure call information is passed in a timely and accurate manner.

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Core Measure 21: Adequate crewing on all retained frontline fire engines (based on 24/7 crewing)

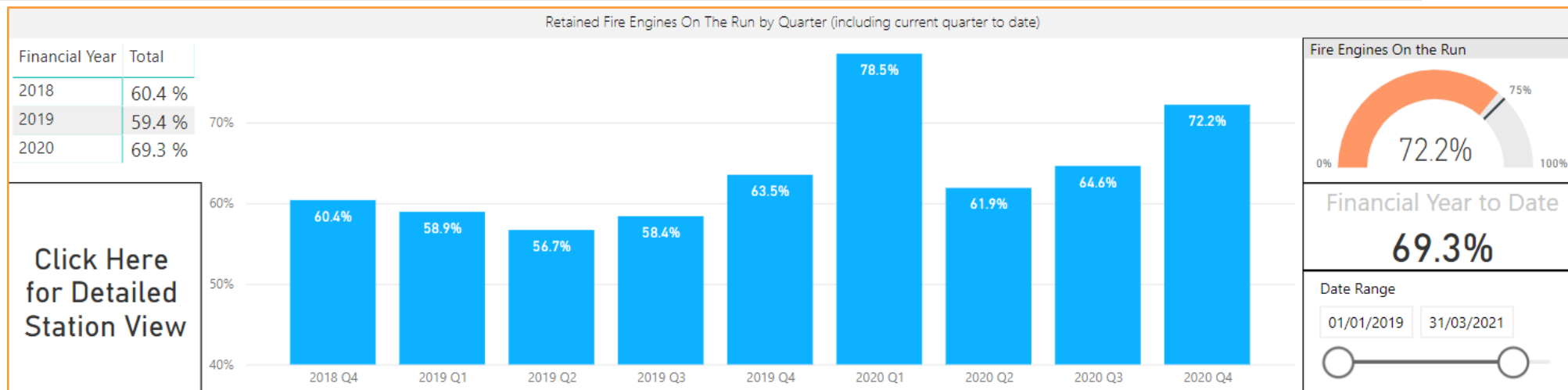
72.2% availability in the last quarter

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Annual Target:
Green: 75-100%
Amber: 65-74%
Red: <65%

Jon Simpson
Service Owner
Response Area

Retained frontline fire engines are crewed mainly by on-call fire fighters who are based at stations in more rural locations and, when they receive the can via their pagers, leave their place of work or home and attend emergencies from the local retained station. Four qualified people are required on a frontline fire engine to ensure safety. This measure examines the percentage of hours where there are sufficient minimum qualified fire fighters (4 personnel) on retained fire engines.



[Click Here for Detailed Station View](#)

Commentary

Retained Duty System (RDS) availability has improved in Q4 by 76% when compared to Q3. RDS availability has improved by 3.7% compared to the same period in 2019/20. The year end performance is 69.3% against target of 75%, whilst this remains a constant focus for WSFRS it does represent a 9.9% improvement in overall availability when compared to the previous financial year. The Service Delivery Centre (SDC), Retained Liaison Officers (RLO), Crewing Optimisation Group (COG) and the County Crewing pilot continue to support and maximise RDS fire engine availability. COG have made RDS fire engines available on 163 occasions. County Crewing has supported RDS fire engine availability on a further 99 occasions during weekday and weekend periods. The County Crewing system utilises spare RDS staff to cover crewing deficiencies at other RDS fire stations for a specific period of time.

Recommendations to SPB

Treat: The RDS Marginal Gains project continues to make incremental improvements to the availability of our retained fire engines. This is being further supported by a station-by-station review to identify the specific availability needs of each station, this review will result in a workforce action plan for each of our 23 retained sections. Work is progressing to widen County Crewing opportunities to include whole-time staff. This will increase the number of staff available to support the availability of RDS appliances and will allow WSFRS to expand the number of stations that we deploy County Crewing staff to.

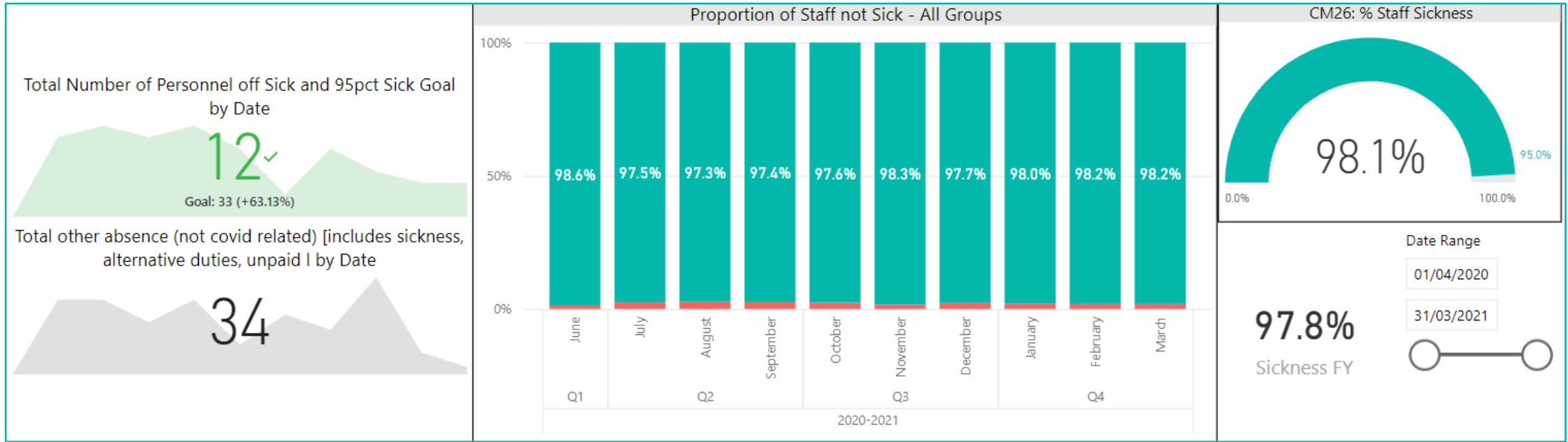
Core Measure 26: Working time lost to sickness across all staff groups

98.1% staff well

Annual Target:
 Staff wellness
 Green: >95%
 Amber: 90-95%
 Red: <90%

People
Area

This measure examines the proportion of staff not sick



Commentary
 The target of 95% attendance has been achieved consistently over the last quarter and throughout the year, with the proportion of staff not sick at 98% or above each month. Staff that are off sick benefit from being managed in line with the Sickness Absence policy ensuring the appropriate wellbeing and support is in place and medical advice is obtained, as necessary. This very positive set of figures provides a good indication of the levels of communication and pastoral support afforded to colleagues when they are poorly and a culture whereby staff engage with the absence management processes to return to work in a safe and timely manner.

Recommendation to SPB: (Tolerate or Treat)
Tolerate: All sickness cases are reviewed monthly by managers and HR to ensure these are being progressed in a timely manner and staff can return to work safely and with the appropriate support/adjustments.

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Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee

18 June 2021

Priority Programme Update

Report by Deputy Chief Fire Officer

Summary

This report provides an overview of the priority programmes of work during Quarter 4 of 2020/2021. This includes progress against the People Action Plan, the Improvement Plan and the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Action Plan.

This is a standing item on the Work Programme for the Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee.

Focus for Scrutiny

The Committee is asked to review the progress reported in relation to the priority programmes, which include the IRMP Action Plan, the Improvement Plan and the People Action Plan and provide any comments to the Cabinet Member.

Proposal

1 Background and context

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Improvement Plan

- 1.1 The Inspectorate identified four 'causes of concern', as well as ten additional specific areas for improvement that the Service needed to address.
- 1.2 HMICFRS revisited the service in February 2021 to review progress against the Causes of Concern and latest revisit letter from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services was published on 21 May 2021.
- 1.3 The focus of the revisit was the causes of concern that were reported after their inspection of West Sussex FRS in November 2018. The inspectors said they continue to see 'significant' improvement in areas where the service needed to improve.
- 1.4 HMICFRS round two inspection for West Sussex Fire & Rescue is still forecast to commence in Autumn 2021/22.

2 Cause of Concern 1 - Preventing Fire and Other Risks

- 2.1 Only one outstanding action remains in relation to this Cause of Concern with considerable work having been undertaken to enable the service to recommence the activity as COVID restrictions lift.
- 2.2 The delivery of Safe and Well Visits (SWV) and Safeguarding training has been evaluated using observed visits, this is to assure the service of the quality of the visits. Volunteers have been surveying a sample over the telephone in Quarter 4.
- 2.3 In the 2018 report the HMICFRS observed that in reference to the Volunteer group *'The Service could develop this group more and increase its capacity to do prevention work'*. This comment is being addressed through the volunteer development plan, with one element being to increase volunteer numbers. Training programmes have been written and delivered to develop and upskill existing volunteers so they can undertake a broader range of prevention work. This is supported by a clear operating procedure, Volunteer induction development and a skills audit to ensure that the service is mindful of the Volunteers' skills and training to offer and engage them in appropriate and meaningful activities.
- 2.4 Volunteer Recruitment, as previously highlighted, has been delayed until Spring 2021. Volunteers have largely been self-isolating through the pandemic which has proved a challenge with existing volunteers as they understandably are being more cautious in the community engagement, as well as limited opportunities for them to undertake community work.
- 2.5 Recruiting new volunteers at the present time could result in them feeling disengaged through a lack of community engagement or station contact due to COVID restrictions. Volunteer recruitment will commence in May 2021 with a soft launch, and in June 2021 there will be a more widely publicised campaign.

3 Cause of Concern 2 - Protecting the Public Through Fire Regulation

- 3.1 All actions have been undertaken with regards to this Cause of Concern and considerable work has been undertaken to enable the service to recommence the activity as COVID restrictions lift.
- 3.2 A clear approach has been agreed in relation to the attraction and retention of staff. This structure has a better balance of the number of Green and Grey Book posts and it provides a better career path for both employee groups. This balance is key to ensure the service maximises the resources to the work requirements based on the required skills across the role maps.
- 3.3 Utilising the apprenticeship levy will allow WSFRS to offer an entry route into the service for those wishing to deliver fire safety/fire engineering, which has been a positive addition to the team structure to be implemented by April 2021. This has also been further strengthened with further government funding which has been allocated to support protection activity.

4 IT system for Prevention & Protection

- 4.1 The Farynor implementation project is now closed and the system now in place to be used under business as usual.

- 4.2 The Prevention Team went live with Farynor on 7 October 2020, Protection went live on the 19 November 2020 and Response followed on the 7 December 2020.
- 4.3 The development of the Premises Risk Management module continues with delivery on track to be completed in Quarter 1 2021/22. All future development will be undertaken through the Information & Systems group.
- 4.4 The legacy system, Terian was fully decommissioned by 31 March 2021 when the contract ended demonstrating efficiency and delivery of the project objectives.
- 4.5 As part of the ongoing improvements, all underpinning IT systems are being reviewed to ensure that the service is replacing and upgrading these in a timely manner.

5 People Action Plan

- 5.1 Our People Action Plan has been able to continue to keep its momentum despite the pandemic and some key fundamental changes have been implemented to support the service with its improvement. The staff engagement and the cultural change aspects will take longer to achieve the required level of change, in order to deliver this successfully the service has ensured that the plan allows time for the appropriate staff engagement.
- 5.2 The Causes of Concern are addressed below, and a significant level of progress has been achieved.

6 Cause for Concern 3 - Promoting the Right Values and Culture

- 6.1 Values and behaviours have now been linked to National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) framework and embedded in all staff appraisals.
- 6.2 Further Mental Health Awareness Workshops were delivered in February and March 2021. Mental Health Knowledge Training, which consists of a series of online modules has been commissioned by West Sussex County Council and is on track to be rolled out and will be compulsory for all WSFRS managers.
- 6.3 WSFRS staff commenced Mental Health First Aider (MHFA) training in Quarter 4 and will be qualified by the end of Quarter 1 2021/22. The service currently, in addition to the above, have two qualified MHFAs within the service.
- 6.4 There is strong leadership at all levels of the organisation and the service promotes strong values in terms of learning, support, listening and development. The service is striving for a culture that promotes psychological safety, that supports difference and seeks to promote talent in a way that recognises different skills, experience and encourages change and adaptability. The service also knows that it needs to help prepare its leaders in a way that will ensure it can work across multiple disciplines and expand their knowledge in readiness for future changes to the organisation.
- 6.5 The service has reviewed senior leadership positions in order to underline its commitment to continuous improvement, career opportunity and operational preparedness. This review has resulted in some Area and Group Manager moves ensuring greater resilience and shared learning for the service.

- 6.6 These changes allow for future flexibility between roles and responsibilities, to ensure colleagues are genuinely able to work across disciplines and across the service and to create a greater awareness between teams. It also clearly signals the intent to further invest in identification of the support and development provided to these moves and the firm commitment the service has made to all colleagues to enhance and support personal development whatever role they undertake as part of the organisation.

7 Cause for Concern 4 - Ensuring Fairness and Promoting Diversity

- 7.1 A Diversity & Inclusion Steering Group has been developed made up of representatives from across the service, to set the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategic direction, support the Diversity Champions and hold the People & Organisational Development team accountable for delivery of EDI objectives. The inaugural meeting was held on 16 March 2021.
- 7.2 A full review of the Promotions Board Process has been undertaken, following the listening group feedback which highlighted staff dissatisfaction in the fairness of the current process. This has been implemented to ensure that staff are promoted in a fair and consistent manner. The promotions Board has been replaced with Assessment Centres to which 92% of respondents confirmed was a fairer and more transparent process. The service is currently undertaking a Station Manager Assessment Centre to ensure succession planning and creating a talent pool for future leadership roles.
- 7.3 A Dignity and Respect Framework is in development, which is aimed at outlining the expectations of staff, managers and senior leaders, the roll out is being supported in conjunction with the County Council.
- 7.4 A Shadow Board has been implemented, aimed at improving the connection and engagement between staff and the principal officers. It will also enable the Service Executive Board (SEB) members to hear directly from employees about the impact of decisions made on operational and support staff, including hearing voices of those with lived experience of being underrepresented in the service. The first meeting was held on 22 March 2021, this has been positively received by staff on the board as well as other FRS recognising this and wanting to adopt this approach in its services.
- 7.5 A review of the current recruitment and attraction methods for WSFRS new recruits has been undertaken and has been embedded into the new firefighter recruitment process launched on 5 March 2021. The success of the changes will be known after the recruitment process ends in October 2021.

8 Areas for Improvements updates

- 8.1 Local Risk Management Plans have progressed well, with some activity having required adaptation due to the current pandemic. There has been a challenge with some resources to undertake the updates to the Community Risk Data which is being addressed and progress is now being made. Engagement sessions with appropriate members is to be planned once restrictions lift. This is a really key activity when it comes to developing the IRMP.
- 8.2 Responding to false alarms is an unnecessary demand on the service, reducing the overall effectiveness, which was highlighted by HMICFRS as an area for improvement.

- 8.3 This quarter has seen a considerable amount of work being undertaken in relation to a variety of special appliances that are planned within the capital programme for replacement ahead of the next IRMP. This includes consideration of options appraisal, the associated risks, vehicle location and ensuring that the operational functionality is future proofed.

9 Integrated Risk Management Plan 2018-22 (IRMP)

- 9.1 In strengthening the collaborative approach for the 4 Fire (4F programme) the service has led and implemented an Operational Alignment board in order to generate a specific focus on the key operational/interoperability benefits between Kent, East Sussex (ESFRS) and Surrey Fire & Rescue Service (SFRS). This will be a significant benefit as the service adds ESFRS as an additional partner to the Joint Fire Control later this year.
- 9.2 A considerable amount of work has been undertaken with regards to ensuring that the specialist vehicles that the service has are fully reviewed to ensure they still meet the risk in the county. This review specifically included the High Volume Pump; 4x4 capability; Aerial Ladder Platforms and Bulk Water Carriers.

10 Other options considered (and reasons for not proposing)

- 10.1 Updates on priority programmes are agreed through the Work Programme of the Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee at each meeting.

11 Consultation, engagement and advice

- 11.1 Continuous consultation with staff and members on the work of the Fire and Rescue Service Priority Programmes, including discussion at each meeting of the Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee.

12 Finance

- 12.1 Most of the WSFRS's £26.8 million budget is invested in frontline services including firefighting, rescue operations and community safety activity. This is summarised as the following:

12.1.1 Firefighting and rescue operations: £22,011,154

12.1.2 Community Fire Safety: £4,352,772

12.1.3 Fire Service Emergency Planning and Civil Resilience: £390,071

13 Risk implications and mitigations

- 13.1 Further information on risk for the Fire and Rescue Service is contained in the Integrated Risk Management Plan.

14 Policy alignment and compliance

- 14.1 This report has positive implications for the community, and it supports the benefits of an effective Fire and Rescue Service to all residents in West Sussex.
- 14.2 In terms of environmental sustainability, the IRMP makes clear the Authority's commitment to reducing the environmental impact of its operations and provides an indication of work done to date.

Sabrina Cohen-Hatton
Chief Fire Officer

Appendices: None

Background papers: None

Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee

9 June 2021

COVID Inspection Letter

Summary

In August 2020, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) was commissioned by the Home Secretary to inspect how fire and rescue services in England were responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. This letter (detailed at Appendix A) to West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service sets out the assessment of the effectiveness of the service's response to the pandemic.

Focus for Scrutiny

The Committee is asked to examine the letter (attached at Appendix A) received from the HMICFRS and consider whether there is any learning from the context that should be considered for inclusion as part of work programme planning of the Committee.

Proposal

1 Background and context

- 1.1 In August 2020, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) was commissioned by the Home Secretary to inspect how fire and rescue services in England were responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. This letter (detailed at Appendix A) to West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service sets out the assessment of the effectiveness of the service's response to the pandemic.
- 1.2 The pandemic is a global event, which has affected everyone and every organisation. Fire and rescue services have had to continue to provide a service to the public and, like every other public service, have had to do so within the restrictions imposed
- 1.3 For this inspection, the HMICFRS was asked by the Home Secretary to consider what is working well and what is being learned; how the fire sector is responding to the COVID-19 crisis; how fire services are dealing with the problems they face; and what changes are likely as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 1.4 West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service was inspected between 5 October and 16 October 2020. The letter at Appendix A summarises the findings of that inspection.
- 1.5 The letter commented on the positive and constructive way the service engaged with the inspection and the positive contribution the service made to the community during the pandemic.

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- 1.6 The HMICFRS proposes to restart the second round of effectiveness and efficiency fire and rescue inspections in spring 2021, when it will follow up on the findings.

2 Finance

- 2.1 Conclusions from this inspection have no financial implications to the Council.

3 Risk implications and mitigations

- 3.1 The Fire Authority and members of the Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee will continue to monitor the performance of the fire and rescue service to ensure that any risk from ceasing this process is mitigated through effective performance management through the Performance and Assurance Framework.

4 Policy alignment and compliance

- 4.1 This report has positive implications for the community as it supports the continued improvement journey of the Fire and Rescue Service to all residents in West Sussex.

Sabrina Cohen-Hatton

Chief Fire Officer

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Appendix A – COVID Inspection letter

Background papers

None



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Matt Parr CB
Her Majesty's Inspector of Fire & Rescue Services
Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary

Dr Sabrina Cohen-Hatton
Chief Fire Officer
West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service

Councillor Duncan Crow
Cabinet Member
West Sussex Fire and Rescue Authority

22 January 2021

Dear Dr Cohen-Hatton and Cllr Crow,

COVID-19 INSPECTION: WEST SUSSEX FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

In August 2020, we were commissioned by the Home Secretary to inspect how fire and rescue services in England are responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. This letter sets out our assessment of the effectiveness of your service's response to the pandemic.

2. The pandemic is a global event, which has affected everyone and every organisation. Fire and rescue services have had to continue to provide a service to the public and, like every other public service, have had to do so within the restrictions imposed.
3. For this inspection, we were asked by the Home Secretary to consider what is working well and what is being learned; how the fire sector is responding to the COVID-19 crisis; how fire services are dealing with the problems they face; and what changes are likely as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. We recognise that the pandemic is not over and as such this inspection concerns the service's initial response.
4. I am grateful for the positive and constructive way your service engaged with our inspection. I am also very grateful for the positive contribution you and your service have made to your community during the pandemic. We inspected your service between 5 October and 16 October 2020. This letter summarises our findings.
5. In relation to your service, Sussex Local Resilience Forum (LRF) declared a major incident on 20 March 2020.
6. In summary, we were impressed by how the service continued to provide its statutory functions and support the wellbeing of staff throughout the pandemic.

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7. Our last inspection identified areas of concern. The service has received extra funding from the county council to support improvement and increase its workforce. The increased workforce has helped to make the service more resilient and productive. The service implemented new ways of working to maintain appropriate levels of prevention, protection and response. It gave additional support to the community. Staff visited the most vulnerable people and wore personal protective equipment (PPE) when they made these visits. This meant the people of West Sussex were well supported throughout the pandemic.

8. The service prioritised the wellbeing of its staff and introduced new ways to achieve this. Staff engagement was a priority. The service carried out a staff survey at the start of the pandemic to understand their needs (such as caring responsibilities and the need to shield). It used this information to identify flexible working arrangements to support staff. The service's financial position has not yet been significantly affected by COVID-19. It has invested in virtual meeting platforms to support new ways of working. It has also used technology to give training, and to communicate with staff and the public.

9. We recognise that the arrangements for managing the pandemic may carry on for some time, and that the service is now planning for the future. In order to be as efficient and effective as possible, West Sussex FRS should focus on the following areas:

(a) It should determine how it will adopt for the longer-term, the new and innovative ways of working introduced during the pandemic, to secure lasting improvements.

(b) It should evaluate how effective its extra activities have been. It should then consider how its activities can give local communities the most benefit in future.

Preparing for the pandemic

10. In line with good governance, the service had a pandemic flu plan and business continuity plans in place which were in date. These plans were activated. They were detailed enough to enable the service to make an effective initial response, but understandably didn't anticipate and mitigate all the risks presented by COVID-19. The service has reviewed its plans to reflect the changing situation and what it has learnt during the pandemic.

11. The plans now include further detail on what elements of the service should maintain response capability if loss of staff is greater than normal. These are the degradation arrangements. They cover prevention, protection, response and support functions, social distancing, making premises COVID secure, remote working, mutual aid, and supply of PPE.

Fulfilling statutory functions

12. The main functions of a fire and rescue service are firefighting, promoting fire safety through prevention and protection (making sure building owners comply with fire safety legislation), rescuing people in road traffic collisions, and responding to emergencies.

13. The service has continued to provide its core statutory functions throughout the pandemic in line with advice from the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC). This means the service has continued to respond to calls from the public and attended emergencies. In continuing its prevention and protection work, it has prioritised its work and has done more remotely. It has made safe and well visits to the most vulnerable people in the community. And it has introduced desktop fire safety reviews for high-risk premises.

Response

14. The service told us that between 1 April and 30 June 2020 it attended fewer incidents than it did during the same period in 2019.

15. The overall availability of fire engines was better during the pandemic than it was during the same period in 2019. Between 1 April and 30 June 2020, the service's average overall fire engine availability was 83.1 percent compared with 65.2 percent during the same period in 2019. We were told that this was the result of lower sickness levels among wholetime staff and an increased number of on-call firefighters being available to respond to emergencies due to being furloughed from their primary employment.

16. The service didn't change its crewing models or shift patterns during this period.

17. The service told us that its average response time to fires improved during the pandemic compared with the same period in 2019. This was due to several reasons, including lower sickness levels, better fire engine availability, and less road traffic during this period. This may not be reflected in [official data recently published by the Home Office](#), because services don't all collect and calculate their data the same way.

18. The service shares its control room with Surrey Fire and Rescue Service. The two services had adequate arrangements in place so that its joint control room had enough staff during the pandemic.

19. This included effective resilience arrangements, such as training more staff for control room roles, introducing temperature monitoring equipment into the building, and restricting access to the premises to only staff who work there.

Prevention

20. The NFCC issued guidance explaining how services should take a risk-based approach to continuing prevention activity during the COVID-19 pandemic. The service adopted this guidance.

21. The service conducted fewer safe and well visits than it would normally undertake. It didn't review which individuals and groups it considered to be at an increased risk from fire as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Through its work with the LRF, the service shared data on vulnerable people with partner organisations. Prevention staff contacted those people who the service considered to be at high risk from fire. They made initial contact by telephone. Staff only made face-to-face visits if they believed the person was at higher risk.

22. The service decided to continue offering face-to-face safe and well visits because it could give staff suitable PPE. However, it also introduced the option of a safe and well visit by telephone or virtual meeting platform instead of face-to-face safe and well visits. The service followed up the remote contact by posting a fire safety leaflet to the person they had contacted.

Protection

23. The NFCC issued guidance on how to continue protection activity during the COVID-19 pandemic. This included maintaining a risk-based approach, completing desktop audits and issuing enforcement notices electronically. Activity included carrying out audits on those premises that are at the greatest risk from fire. The service broadly adopted this guidance.

24. The service didn't review how it defines premises as high risk during the pandemic. But it changed its approach. The service initially contacted care home owners to explain that it didn't want to visit in order to reduce the risk of infection. Instead, the service explained fire safety requirements, and gave advice and guidance. During the pandemic, the service re-started fire safety audits in care homes. It did this on a risk-assessed basis.

25. The service conducted fewer fire safety audits than it would normally undertake. It decided to continue face-to-face fire safety audits and enforcement work because it could give staff suitable personal protective equipment. It introduced risk-based desktop appraisals instead of face-to-face audits to minimise face-to-face contact between members of staff and the public.

26. The service continued to issue enforcement notices and prohibition notices. It also continued responding to statutory building control consultations. It also introduced other measures to reduce social contact, such as using telephone calls to make the initial contact and completing more desktop assessments. It also updated information on its website, liaised with business associations to give information and guidance, and had fewer staff carrying out visits.

27. The service has continued to engage with those responsible for fire safety in high-risk premises with cladding similar to that at Grenfell Tower, in particular, premises where temporary evacuation procedures are in place.

Staff health and safety and wellbeing

28. Staff wellbeing was a clear priority for the service during the pandemic. It identified wellbeing problems, and responded to any concerns and further needs. Senior leaders actively promoted wellbeing services and encouraged staff to discuss any worries they had. In March 2020, the service carried out a staff impact survey. The results allowed the service to understand how staff would be impacted by COVID-19. The survey highlighted staff who had caring responsibilities, those who needed to shield, and those who would be supported by flexible working arrangements. The service introduced flexible working patterns to support its staff.

29. Most staff survey respondents told us that they could access services to support their mental wellbeing if needed. Support put in place for staff included occupational health, counselling, and peer support. The service used external support, such as specialist counselling, for those staff who were receiving support before the pandemic.

30. Staff most at risk of COVID-19 were identified effectively, including those from a black, Asian and minority ethnic background and those with underlying health problems. The service worked with staff to develop and implement processes to manage the risk. The service offered an individual risk assessment and issued guidance to managers on how to complete it, including for higher risk members of staff such as those from a black, Asian and minority ethnic background.

31. Wellbeing best practice was also shared with other services. The service doesn't yet intend to discuss with its staff how it should plan for the potential longer-term effects of COVID-19 on its workforce.

32. The service made sure that firefighters were competent to do their work during the pandemic. This included keeping up to date with most of the firefighter fitness requirements. The service assessed the risks of new work to make sure its staff had the skills and equipment needed to work safely and effectively

33. The service provided its workforce with appropriate PPE on time. It participated in local arrangements and the national fire sector scheme to procure PPE, which allowed it to achieve value for money.

Staff absence

34. Absences have decreased compared with the same period in 2019. The number of days lost due to sickness absence between 1 April and 30 June 2020 decreased by 34.8 percent compared with the same period in 2019.

35. The service updated the absence policy so that it could better manage staff wellbeing and health and safety, and make more effective decisions on how to allocate work. This included information about recording absences, self-isolation, testing, training for managers, and bereavement. Data was routinely collected on the numbers of staff either absent, self-isolating or working from home.

Staff engagement

36. Most staff survey respondents told us that the service provided regular and relevant communication to all staff during the COVID-19 pandemic. This included regular virtual team meetings, written correspondence, one-to-ones with a manager or equivalent, weekly newsletters, weekly video briefings from principal officers, and regular evening briefings from the chief fire officer with staff about wellbeing and health and safety.

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37. Most on-call firefighter survey respondents told us that they received either the same amount of, or more, communication than usual during the pandemic. The service made use of telephone, email, social media, messaging services, and virtual meeting platforms when communicating with on-call staff during the pandemic. In addition, the chief fire officer wrote to all on-call firefighters to thank them for their efforts during the pandemic.

38. The service intends to maintain changes it has made to its ways of working in response to COVID-19, including its use of virtual meetings; staff have given positive feedback about them. In September 2020, the service conducted an evaluation, asking staff for their views. It intends to use this feedback to inform its future approach.

Working with others, and making changes locally

39. To protect communities, fire and rescue service staff were encouraged to carry out extra roles beyond their core duties. This was to support other local blue light services and other public service providers that were experiencing high levels of demand, and to offer other support to its communities.

40. The service carried out the following new activities: in co-ordination with neighbouring fire services, it trained staff to drive ambulances (although they were not required to do so). Staff delivered food and medicine to vulnerable people, delivered PPE, and carried out checks on vulnerable people in their homes.

41. A national 'tripartite agreement' was put in place to include the new activities that firefighters could carry out during the pandemic. The agreement was between the NFCC, National Employers, and the Fire Brigades Union (FBU), and specified what new roles firefighters could agree to engage in during the pandemic. Each service then undertook local consultations on the specific work it had been asked to support, to agree how any health and safety requirements including risk assessments would be addressed. If public sector partners requested further support from services with additional roles that were outside the tripartite agreement, the specifics would need to be agreed nationally before the work could begin.

42. The service consulted locally to implement the tripartite agreement with the FBU, the Fire Officers Association and the Fire and Rescue Services Association. Other unions were engaged, including UNISON, if their members were asked to do extra work, including under the tripartite agreement. All of the new work done by the service under the tripartite agreement was agreed on time for it to start promptly and in line with the request from the partner agency.

43. There were extra requests for work by partner agencies that fell outside the tripartite agreement, including visiting vulnerable people in their homes to check on their safety, when other organisations were not able to do so. This work was agreed and undertaken on time and in line with the request from the partner agency.

44. All new work, including that done under the tripartite agreement, was risk-assessed and complied with the health and safety requirements. No extra allowance was paid to staff who carried out additional roles.

45. The service hasn't yet fully reviewed and evaluated its activities to support other organisations during this period. It hasn't identified which to continue.

Local resilience forum

46. To keep the public safe, fire and rescue services work with other organisations to assess the risk of an emergency, and to maintain plans for responding to one. To do so, the service should be an integrated and active member of its LRF. West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service is a member of Sussex LRF. It was an active member of the LRF during the pandemic. The service told us that the LRF's arrangements enabled the service to fully engage in the multi-agency response.

47. As part of the LRF's response to COVID-19, the service was an integral member of the strategic co-ordination group. It was a member of the PPE and vulnerable people sub-groups. The service was able to allocate suitably qualified staff to participate in these groups without affecting its core duties.

Use of resources

48. The service's financial position hasn't yet been significantly affected by the pandemic. It has made robust and realistic calculations of the extra costs it has faced during the pandemic. Its main extra costs were staff overtime. It fully understands the effect this will have on its previously agreed budget and anticipated savings.

49. At the time of our inspection, the service received £14,000 of extra government funding to support its response. It spent this money on staff overtime. It has shown how it used this income efficiently, and that it mitigated against the financial risks that arose during this period.

50. The service didn't use any of its reserves to meet the extra costs that arose during this period. When used, overtime was managed appropriately. The service made sure that its staff who worked overtime had enough rest between shifts.

Ways of working

51. The service changed the way in which it operates during the pandemic. For example, it supported staff working from home. Staff could take chairs and IT equipment home to work safely. It had the necessary IT to support remote working where appropriate. Where new IT was needed, it made sure that procurement processes achieved good value for money. The service supported staff returning to work in its premises. It made a video, showing the new working arrangements in its buildings. There was an emphasis on showing social distancing arrangements, such as screens and one-way systems.

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52. The service could quickly implement changes to how it operates. This allowed its staff to work flexibly and efficiently during the pandemic. The service plans to consider how to adapt its flexible working arrangements to make sure it has the right provisions in place to support a modern workforce.

53. The service has had positive feedback from staff on how they were engaged with during the pandemic. As a result, the service plans to adopt these changes in its usual procedures and consider how they can be developed further to help promote a sustainable change to its working culture.

54. The service made good use of the resources and guidance available from the NFCC to support its workforce planning, and help with its work under the tripartite agreement.

Staffing

55. The service had enough resources available to respond to the level of demand during the COVID-19 pandemic, and to re-allocate resources where necessary to support the work of its partner organisations.

56. Arrangements put in place to monitor staff performance across the service were effective. This meant the service could be sure its staff were making the best contribution that they reasonably could during this period. Extra capacity was identified and reassigned to support other areas of the service and other organisations.

57. As well as performing their statutory functions, wholetime firefighters volunteered for extra activities, including those under the tripartite agreement. For most of the pandemic, the main role for wholetime firefighters was to provide the service's core responsibilities, while work under the tripartite agreement was done by other parts of the workforce. Non-operational staff carried out activities agreed in the tripartite agreement. We expect services to keep their processes under review to make sure they use their wholetime workforces as productively as possible. This approach was taken because the service felt this was the best way to make sure it had the resources it needed to meet its foreseeable risk.

58. The on-call workforce took on extra responsibilities covering most of the roles agreed as part of the tripartite agreement and the shifts of absent wholetime staff.

Governance of the service's response

59. Each fire and rescue service is overseen by a fire and rescue authority. There are several different governance arrangements in place across England, and the size of the authority varies between services. Each authority ultimately has the same function: to set the service's priorities and budget and make sure that the budget is spent wisely.

60. Members of West Sussex Fire and Rescue Authority were actively engaged in discussions with the chief fire officer and the service on the service's ability to discharge its statutory functions during the pandemic.

61. The fire and rescue authority maintained effective ways of working with the service during the pandemic. This made sure the service could fulfil its statutory duties as well as its extra work supporting the LRF and the tripartite arrangements. The fire and rescue authority put arrangements in place to give its members relevant and regular information about how the service responded to the pandemic. It made use of technology and held meetings virtually.

62. During the pandemic, the fire and rescue authority continued to give the service proportionate oversight and scrutiny, including of its decision-making process. It did this by regularly communicating with the chief fire officer and receiving the service's written briefings.

Looking to the future

63. During the pandemic, services were able to adapt quickly to new ways of working. This meant they could respond to emergencies and take on a greater role in the community by supporting other blue light services and partner agencies. It is now essential that services use their experiences during COVID-19 as a platform for lasting reform and modernisation.

64. West Sussex FRS has improved how it works with other organisations during the pandemic. This includes its work with representative bodies and the LRF.

65. The health and wellbeing of the workforce is a priority for the service. It has offered flexible working arrangements, where possible, to accommodate any personal requirements and to support safe working practices. The service has invested in virtual meeting platforms to support new ways of working, provide training, and communicate with staff and the public. The service carried out an internal evaluation process to capture learning from all members of staff. This learning includes wellbeing as well as operational issues. It set up the Reset and Reboot group to consider how to use this learning in the future.

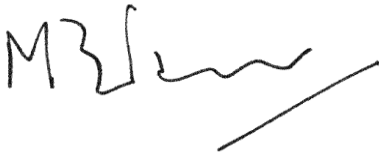
66. Good practice and what worked was shared with other services through the NFCC. The service met regularly with neighbouring services before the pandemic. The established working groups continued to meet virtually to share information in the initial stages of the pandemic. Staff met with counterparts to share information on prevention, protection and staff wellbeing. These meetings discussed best practice and how to apply NFCC guidance.

Next steps

67. This letter will be published on our website. We propose to restart our second round of effectiveness and efficiency fire and rescue inspections in spring 2021, when we will follow up on our findings.

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Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Parr', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Matt Parr CB

Her Majesty's Inspector of Fire & Rescue Services

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary

Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee Work Programme June 2021 – March 2022

Topic/Issue	Timing
Performance & Assurance Framework	18 June 2021
Priority programmes: IRMP update, Improvement update	18 June 2021
Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services Revisit Letter	18 June 2021
Work Programme Planning	18 June 2021
Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman	18 June 2021
Performance & Assurance Framework Core Indicators	1 October 2021
Priority programmes: IRMP update, Improvement update	1 October 2021
Work Programme Planning	1 October 2021
Performance & Assurance Framework Core Indicators	7 January 2022
Priority programmes: IRMP update, Improvement update	7 January 2022
Work Programme Planning	7 January 2022
Performance & Assurance Framework Core Indicators	30 March 2022
Priority programmes: IRMP update, Improvement update	30 March 2022
Work Programme Planning	30 March 2022
Legacy Items from Previous Committee to be considered by new Committee for scheduling	Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP)
	Recruitment Diversity
	Retained Firefighters
	Inspection Preparedness Report (when appropriate)
	Update on Joint Fire Control Centre (Due January 2022)

Appendix A - Checklist

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Scrutiny Work Planning Guide and Checklist

1. Principles

- (a) Scrutiny should improve outcomes for West Sussex by providing:
 - Robust challenge to the executive and service performance; and
 - Timely opportunities to influence budget and policy planning
- (b) Scrutiny holds the executive to account and should be objective, evidence-based, transparent and constructive
- (c) It acts as a critical friend to the decision-maker to enable the most effective delivery of the Council's priorities.
- (d) It takes a strategic perspective, focussing on the wider community needs and outcomes for all residents and service users
- (e) It should aim for consensus and avoid party politics.

2. Work Programme Planning

2.1 The Committee plans its business and considers what to scrutinise. Business emerges from sources including:

- The Forward Plan or items referred by a Cabinet Member
- Member requests for an item to be considered
- Performance issues identified from the Total Performance Monitor or other sources
- A proposed decision being 'called-in'
- The annual process of developing budget and corporate priorities

2.2 Committee members should have a good understanding of the budget and performance issues for their portfolio. The Committee should prioritise business to ensure time for detailed scrutiny of the most important issues within the resources available, using the checklist at paragraph 5.

2.3 Scrutiny Committees should have a **clear focus on the objectives and desired outcomes** for their work. This should inform work prioritisation, planning agendas and the approach to managing meetings. The Committee should do so by use of the checklist set out below which should focus on key lines of enquiry.

2.4 **Performance and Finance Select Committee (PFSC)** should ensure all scrutiny arrangements are effective and are dealing with the most important issues for the Council. It may do so by receiving and considering scrutiny committee work programmes from time to time. An annual report for PFSC allows it to monitor the scrutiny work programme and developments and to highlight best practice and training needs. As set out in Standing Orders, paragraph 8.12), the scrutiny work programme should be reviewed by the end of May each year by PFSC and then by County Council.

3. Agenda Planning

3.1 A pre-agenda meeting (PrAM) is held two weeks before the formal meeting attended by the chairman and vice-chairman, Democratic Services officers, and the officers preparing reports. It is a brief session of no more than one hour to:

- Ensure the agenda and approach meet the needs of the committee
- Agree scrutiny aims or outcomes from each item
- Plan the management of the meeting (timing, presentations, witnesses)
- Decide whether a pre-meeting would be helpful
- Discuss what information members may need for effective scrutiny

3.2 The pre-agenda meeting should identify the key lines of enquiry for scrutiny of the subject and ensure that the report covers what is required for the scrutiny focus. Its role is not to review draft reports.

3.3 Agendas should be short to allow time and focus to produce meaningful outcomes. Items for information only must not be taken. Information gathering and questions of detail should be dealt with outside formal meetings.

4. **Committee Tasks**

Task	Objective
Programme setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree outline committee work programme
Programme planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritisation of business • Prepare a balanced work programme to ensure priority items have sufficient time • Consider the best and most timely approach
Performance and Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the Performance Monitor quarterly to identify issues for the committee.
Agenda planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining the scrutiny aims of agenda items • Identification of witnesses and evidence
Project Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up Scrutiny Task and Finish Groups (TFGs) • Identify other ways to carry out work
Publicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify how best to promote the work of the committee and how to engage the public

5. **Business Planning Checklist**

5.1 **Priorities** - Is the topic

- a corporate or service priority? In what way?
- an area where performance, outcomes or budget is a concern? How?
- one that matters most to residents? Why?

5.2 **What is being scrutinised and Why?**

- What should the scrutiny focus be?
- Where can the committee add value?
- What is the desired outcome from scrutiny?

5.3 **When and how to scrutinise?**

- When can the committee have most influence?
- What is the best approach - committee, TFG, one-off small group?
- What research, visits or other activities are needed?
- Would scrutiny benefit from external witnesses or evidence?

5.4 **Is the work programme focused and achievable?**

- Have priorities changed – should any work be stopped or put back?
- Can there be fewer items for more in-depth consideration?
- Has sufficient capacity been retained for future work?