

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

26 JUNE 2023

1. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2023/24

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 THAT Authority Members approve the Corporate Performance Indicators (PIs) and targets for 2023/24 as set out in Appendix 1.
- 1.2 THAT Authority Members approve the proposed supplementary sub-PIs which will complement the existing suite of PIs.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 This report is submitted to seek approval for the corporate PIs and targets for 2023/24 and to provide information to Authority Members regarding the rationale that formulates the revised targets.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 During 2022/23, the Service was able to operate in a manner reflecting a return to business as usual, following two years of fluctuating circumstances experienced as a result of business continuity and business recovery due to the Covid 19 pandemic.
- 3.2 The combination of the impact of the pandemic, and the knock-on effects of the business continuity and business recovery phases, have impacted upon incident numbers and other performance indicator figures, and in some cases, these can be observed through the three-year averages. Examples include historically low numbers of certain incident types being recorded, changes to the delivery of Safe and Wells, and the pausing and limiting of recruitment.

- 3.3 In accordance with its planning framework, the Service has reviewed its Three-Year Rolling Strategy 2023-26 and its annual plan, 'Our Plan' 2023-24.
As part of this approach, Members approved the revised Strategic Objectives and Annual Priorities at the meeting of the full Fire Authority on 13 February 2023. These are set out in Our Plan and are enablers to achieving our vision of "Making West Midlands Safer, Stronger and Healthier".
- 3.4 Following approval of the objectives and priorities set out in The Plan, key stakeholders have:
- Considered past performance results and forecasting based on the three-year average.
 - Reviewed the internal strategies and approaches and external influencers that will shape the 2023/24 performance and drive the target setting.
 - Identified the appropriate PIs and targets for 2023/24.
- 3.5 In accordance with the Service's commitment to enabling governance through effective engagement and transparency, targets were developed in conjunction with members of the Strategic Enabling Team.
- 3.6 It should be noted that the target setting process is undertaken during the February and March of each year, and as a result the targets are based upon forecasted figures. The schedule of Fire Authority meetings currently only allows for Members' retrospective approval of the targets. The proposal for an April Authority meeting will allow this approval to take place at a more appropriate time.

4. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2023/24

- 4.1 A review of the PIs has been carried out which has resulted in a number of proposed changes for 2023/24.
- 4.2 Proposals are to introduce additional sub-PIs which will complement the existing suite of PIs and to provide additional assurance. These supplementary sub-PIs have been developed to support the identification and monitoring of trends and direction of travel. As a result, these do not attract targets.

4.3 The proposals are:

- The introduction of sub-PI PI 1(a) 'The risk-based attendance standard – call handling', which is already reported regularly to Scrutiny Committee.
- The introduction of PI 6(a) 'The number of Safe and Well points achieved by the Brigade – average Safe and Well points per visit'
- The replacement of PI14 'The number of False Alarm Calls due to fire alarm equipment in dwellings and non-domestic premises with two sub-PIs, PI 14(a) and PI14(b) focussing on dwellings and non-domestic premises respectively.
- To develop and introduce a new measure to enable the reporting of PI 23 'To reduce the Fire Authority's carbon emissions'. Time will be required to develop such a measure and it will be implemented as soon as is practicable.

4.4 In addition to the light touch review, opportunities to further develop how the Service monitors and reports its strategic performance and suite of corporate PIs have been identified, and it is intended that these will be progressed over the coming months and following the outcomes of the public consultation of the Community Risk Management Plan.

5. **SETTING PERFORMANCE INDICATOR TARGETS 2023/24**

5.1 Graduated tolerances were introduced in 2017/18, which assist when the numbers are small at the beginning of the year. A larger tolerance is allowed in Quarter 1 which decreases as the year progresses through to Quarter 4. This is to aid the interpretation of performance indicators that could mislead by being rated red when the numbers are only marginally above the target.

5.2 The targets that have been set for 2023/24 take into consideration the impacts of the pandemic and the resultant Business Continuity arrangements that were implemented in 2020/21 and the recovery phase during 2021/22. 2022/23 marked a return to business as usual for the Service but the after-effects of the previous two years continue to be observed. As a result, it should be noted that the impact this performance has had on the three-year average means that setting levels of 0% against some PIs still represent challenging targets.

- 5.3 **PI 1** – The five-minute risk-based attendance standard remains the core response method for high-risk (Cat 1) incidents achieved through a diverse fleet arrangement. As of Quarter 4 2022/23, an average attendance time of 4 minutes 57 seconds had been achieved year to date. Performance for PI 1 remains below target as do the response times for the respective targets for category 2, 3 and 4 incident types.
- 5.4 **PI 2** – ‘Number of accidental dwelling fires’, the end of year forecast for 2022/23 of 1474 incidents represents a reduction of 2.0% on 2021/22 and is 6.2% below target. This would be the lowest yearly figure ever, with the previous lowest amount of 1592 recorded in 2016/17. It should be noted that the outstanding workbooks may contain some accidental dwelling fire incidents and the figures may change as a result.
- 5.5 The proposed target of 1514 incidents represents a 1% decrease compared to the three-year average. Even a 0% change (a target of 1530 incidents) would be below any pre-pandemic year. The target is based on the fact that the number of accidental dwelling fires recorded is the lowest level ever and that there are workbooks still to be completed. The continued impact of the cost-of-living crisis makes this a stretch target.
- 5.6 **PI 3** ‘Injuries from accidental dwelling fires (taken to hospital for treatment)’, the end of year forecast is 57, which would be 18.8% above target and a 32.7% increase on 2021/22 which saw the lowest number of injuries ever recorded.
- 5.7 The proposed target of 49 is seven incidents lower than the end of year forecast and represents a -2% change on the three-year average, which will be a stretch target considering the exceptionally low number of injuries.
- 5.8 **PI 4** ‘The number of deaths from accidental dwelling fires’, the Service seeks to minimise deaths from fires and there is no target for this performance indicator. Unfortunately, 9 fatalities were recorded during 2022/23.
- 5.9 **PI 5** ‘The percentage of Safe and Well visits referred by our partners’, it is proposed that the target is increased from 45% to 50%. This will reflect the increase in performance observed following the changes to the performance management of Safe

and Well removing the two per appliance expectation and a focus on building relationships with partners.

- 5.10 **PI 6** 'The number of Safe and Well points achieved by the Service', it is proposed that there is no change to the existing target of 260,000 points. The imminent launch of remote Safe and Well for triaging low risk referrals will see the Safe and Well checks recorded in Tymly rather than Activity Assistant, and performance will be measured on what mitigation of risk has been completed rather than the risk identified and recorded. There is a need to measure the impact of these changes before further consideration is given to this target in 2024/25.
- 5.11 Although not a corporate performance indicator, it is proposed that the target for the average assessment points for Safe and Wells is to remain 8.5. It is expected that an increase in the average assessment point will be observed as remote Safe and Wells are removed from the performance monitoring. This target will be reviewed in 2024/25.
- 5.12 **PI 7** 'The number of people killed or seriously injured (KSI) in road traffic collisions', there is no target for this performance indicator. There is a lag in the provision of data for this performance indicator due to its nature and as a result, figures for the whole of 2022/23 are not yet available at the time of writing.
- 5.13 **PI 8** 'The number of deliberate fires in dwellings', the end of year forecast is 177, 9.1% below target and represents an 8.3% reduction on 2021/22. Based on the three-year average, the forecast for 2022/23 is unusually low numbers. The proposed target of 181 may set the number of incidents at a higher level than the current year, it represents a 2% decreased compared to the three-year average.
- 5.14 **PI 9** 'The number of deliberate fires in non-domestic premises', the end of year forecast is 104 incidents, 10.9% below target and 9.2% below the number recorded in 2021/22. The proposed target of 108 represents a 0% change on the three-year average.
- 5.15 **PI 10** 'The number of deliberate vehicle fires', the end of year forecast is 550 incidents, 3.8% below target (which was a reduction of 5%) and will be the second lowest figure recorded after 2021/22. Deliberate vehicle fires have been reducing steadily since 2016/17 and have continued to do so throughout the pandemic, until potentially this year although the forecast

does not suggest it will rise to pre-pandemic levels again. This trend mirrors that of deliberate vehicle fires nationally. The proposed target of 543 incidents represents a 2% decrease against the three-year average.

- 5.16 **PI 11a** 'The number of deliberate rubbish fires', the end of year forecast indicates numbers to be 0.8% above target and 1.5% above the number of incidents recorded in 2021/22. However, the number of incidents is still not back to the numbers observed pre-Covid. The proposed target of 1321 represents a 0% change against the three-year average and has been noted to be stretch target due to the unusually low number of incidents recorded during 2020/21.
- 5.17 **PI 12** 'The number of deliberate fires in derelict buildings', the end of year forecast of 137 incidents is 20.5% above the target. However, it should be noted that the numbers are very small. The three-year average reflects that the number of incidents in 2020/21 at 89 were very low and 121 recorded in 2021/22 was also relatively low. The proposed target of 116 incidents represents a 0% change compared to the three-year average. This has been noted as a stretch target due to the need for a particular focus on and multi-agency approach to understanding and tackling the issues within the Black Country North Command Area where the number of incidents is high compared to other commands.
- 5.18 **PI 13** 'The number of accidental fires in non-domestic premises', the end of year forecast of 376 incidents would be 2.0% below target and would be a 3.9% reduction on last year. The number of incidents has increased back from the all-time low observed in 2020/21 but are still forecast to remain below pre-pandemic levels. The proposed target of 364 incidents represents a 0% change on the three-year average.
- 5.19 **PI 14** 'The number of false alarm calls due to fire alarm equipment in dwellings and non-domestic premises', the end of year forecast of 6690 incidents would be 14.8% above target and represent a 12.9% increase compared to 2021/22. A proposed target of 6082 incidents represents a 0% change compared to the three-year average, which itself has reduced due to the decrease in the number of incidents during Covid.

- 5.20 It has been highlighted that there is a need to review this Performance Indicator and there is a recommendation for the PI to be split into Dwellings and Non-Domestic. The introduction of two supplementary sub-PIs have been proposed (see 4.3).
- 5.21 False Alarms Equipment in Dwellings: In the last 10 years this PI has nearly always increased due to the increase of alarm systems in properties. During Covid there was a slight drop in false alarms which has reduced the three-year average. 2022/23 is forecast at 4,795, a target of 0% is a target of 4,678 for 23/24 which is a significant reduction on 22/23 (2.4%).
- 5.22 False Alarms Equipment in Non-Domestic Properties: Even with an increase in alarms in non-domestic properties, false alarms have come down in the last 10 years and has levelled out. The Automatic Fire Alarm project will not reduce this at present, it just reduces the type of resource going to False Alarms Electrical. During Covid there was a slight drop in false alarms which has reduced the three-year average. 2022/23 is forecast at 1,273, a target of 0% is a target of 1,197 for 23/24 which is a significant reduction on 22/23 (6.0%).
- 5.23 **PI 15** 'The percentage of employees that have disclosed their disability status', it is the intent that all employees feel confident to disclose their disability status and the target remains at 100%.
- 5.24 **PI 16** 'The number of female uniformed staff', the end of year forecast indicates 13.1% (182 females). The proposed target of 16.3% (226 females) is derived from recruitment targets. Of those recruited to firefighter roles, the target is that 50% will be female. This is based upon the working population of the West Midlands.
- 5.25 **PI 17** 'The percentage of all staff from BAME communities', the end of year forecast is 14.3%. The proposed target of 15.7% (293 members of staff from BAME communities) is derived from recruitment targets. Of those recruited to firefighter roles, the target is that 35% will be from a BAME background. This is based upon the working population of the West Midlands.
- 5.26 **PI 17a** 'The percentage of uniformed staff from BAME communities', the end of year forecast is 14.1%. The proposed target of 15.9% (220 members of staff from BAME communities) is set using the same method to PI 16 and PI 17.

5.27 The targets for the PIs related to the average number of working days / shifts lost due to sickness have been set in order to meet the budgeted for ridership factor of 17. Ridership is currently 21 and the ridership factor has been set using historical data and predictions based on a number of assumptions. The sickness target for non-uniformed staff has been set at the same percentage reduction as per uniformed staff. Proposed targets equating to a minus 29% change have been applied across all three PIs related to sickness:

- **PI 18** All staff: end of year forecast 9.7 against a target of 6.5. Proposed target of 6.9 (-29% change)
- **PI 19** Uniformed and Fire Control staff: end of year forecast of 9.6 against a target of 6.5. Proposed target of 6.8 (-29% change)
- **PI 20** Non-uniformed staff: end of year forecast of 9.8 against a target of 6.5. Proposed target of 7.0 (-29% change)

5.28 **PI 21** 'The total number of injuries' and **PI 22** 'The total number of RIDDOR incidents': no targets are set for these two PIs. This reflects the Service's position that any injury report is unwanted, and to encourage an open reporting culture that facilitates learning and improvement.

5.29 131 injuries were reported during 2022/23 which is broadly in line with previous two years (138 in 2021/22 and 120 in 2020/21). 14 RIDDOR injuries were reported, which is a reduction compared with the previous two years (21 in 2020/21 and 21 in 2021/22).

5.30 Injuries and RIDDOR are reviewed at quarterly performance meetings at Brigade and at local Health, Safety and Wellbeing meetings. These meetings explore trends and put in place actions where needed to try and influence a reduction. The main causes of injury continue to be manual handling and slips and trips. There is a Service wide project looking at enhancing manual handling assessments and this is one way of looking to influence that trend. Slips and trips occur across a wide range of environments and influencing this directly is more difficult but the work around risk assessments, personal protective equipment and other areas continues to raise general awareness, promote safe practices and suitable footwear.

- 5.31 The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team are continuing to enhance current arrangements, and these include auditing, risk assessment, policies and procedures and training. Levels of near hit reporting remain good and help identify any risk gaps or emerging issues. These are followed up to reduce the overall risk of injuries happening.
- 5.32 **PI 23** 'To reduce the Fire Authority's carbon emissions', is not currently reported on. Proposals are that a new set of measures are being developed which will resolve this with the aim to introduce a more reliable and effective performance indicator.
- 5.33 **PI 24** 'To reduce gas use of Fire Authority premises', the proposed target of 8714 MWh represents a 0% change against the three-year average. Analysis of data over the past three years shows an overall average reduction in gas usage. It is believed that this has been impacted largely by Covid 19, and the number of employees working from home under the Agile Working Policy. However, we are now experiencing an increase of support staff returning to HQ and therefore, no anticipated reduction in overall target consumption is predicted.
- 5.34 **PI 25** 'To reduce electricity use of Fire Authority premises', the proposed target of 4904 MWh represents a 0% change against the three-year average. Analysis of electricity use has shown as an organisation we have reduced our electricity usage from the previous year. However, as staff numbers returning to HQ continue to increase, a further reduction in electricity usage is not being predicted this year.

5. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1 In preparing this report an initial Equality Impact Assessment is not required and has not been carried out. The matters contained in this report do not relate to a policy change.

6. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

7. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. It should be noted that the Authority's approved 2023/24 budget is

aligned to and will support the delivery of Our Plan.

8. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Fire Authority Agenda Item 8, 13 February 2023: '3 Year Rolling Strategy 2023-26 and Annual Plan'.

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