



WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Monday, 23 October 2023 at 11:00

**To be held at Fire Service HQ and digitally via
Microsoft Teams**

Distribution of Councillors	
<u>Birmingham</u>	D Barrie B Mahmood G Atwal S Spence
<u>Coventry</u>	C Miks G Lloyd
<u>Dudley</u>	I Kettle W Little
<u>Sandwell</u>	P Kaur R Jalil
<u>Solihull</u>	P Hogarth MBE
<u>Walsall</u>	V Waters M Ward
<u>Wolverhampton</u>	G Brackenridge J Dehar
<u>Police & Crime Commissioner</u>	S Foster
<u>Representative - Assistant PCC</u>	Wasim Ali
<u>Co-opted Members</u>	Professor S Brake ABCA – Dave Brown
<u>Independent Member</u>	Mr M Ager
<u>Observers</u>	P Gwynn, UNISON
	D Gough, Fire Officer's Association
	S Hitchins, Fire Brigades Union

Please note: Meetings of the political groups will be held at 10.00 am.

Fire Authority

You are summoned to attend the meeting of Fire Authority to be held on
Monday, 23 October 2023 at 11:00

At Fire Service Headquarters, 99 Vauxhall Road, Nechells,
Birmingham B7 4HW

and digitally via Microsoft Teams

for the purpose of transacting the following business:

Agenda – Public Session

- | | | |
|----|---|--------------|
| 1 | <u>To receive apologies for absence (if any)</u> | |
| 2 | <u>Declarations of interests</u> | |
| 3 | <u>Chair's announcements</u> | |
| 4 | <u>Chief Fire Announcements</u> | |
| 5 | <u>Minutes of the previous Fire and Rescue Authority held on 26 June 2023</u> | 5 - 22 |
| 6 | <u>Pension Scheme Update</u> | 23 - 36 |
| 7 | <u>Contract Awards Summary for Period to 30 September 2023</u> | 37 - 40 |
| 8 | <u>Q2 - FRA Portfolio Management (3PT)</u> | 41 - 52 |
| 9 | <u>CRMP Consultation Evaluation Report</u> | 53 -
118 |
| 10 | <u>Budget Monitoring PO5 August 2023</u> | 119 -
124 |

Agenda (not open to public and press)

11 **Planned Procurement Exercise for 2023-24**

- Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information);

12 **Action to Prosecute**

- Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of a crime.

Agenda prepared by Chandni Patel

Portfolio, West Midlands Fire Service

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This agenda and supporting documents are also available electronically on the [West Midlands Fire Service Committee Management Information System](#)

This meeting of the West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority will be held at Fire Service Headquarters.

The meeting will also be held digitally via Microsoft Teams allowing observers to access remotely. To access the meeting, please contact a member of the Portfolio Team, West Midlands Fire Service, who will be able to provide login details (please note that Microsoft Teams is not required to join a meeting) or provide guidance if you wish to attend in person at HQ.

Clerk Name:	Karen Gowreesunker
Clerk Telephone:	0121 380 6678
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West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority

26 June 2023 at 1100 hours

Conducted as a public meeting at Headquarters and digitally via
Microsoft Teams

Present: Councillor Brackenridge (Chair),

Councillor Miks (Vice Chair),

Councillor Atwal, Councillor Barrie, Councillor Dehar,
Councillor Hogarth, Councillor Kaur, Councillor Kettle,
Councillor Jalil, Councillor Lloyd, Councillor Mahmood,
Councillor Little, Councillor Waters, Sasha Hitchins - Fire
Brigade's Union.

Virtual: Professor S Brake, Co-opted member, Mike Ager –
Independent Member, Wasim Ali – APCC, Paul Gwynn –
Unison, Darran Gough - Fire Officers Association, Dave
Brown - Co-opted member.

01/23 To elect the Chair of the Authority for the ensuing year

Councillor Dehar nominated Councillor Brackenridge to be re-
elected as Chair of the Authority for the ensuing year.
Councillor Jalil seconded.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that Councillor Brackenridge be re-elected
as Chair of the Authority for the ensuing year.

02/23 To elect the Vice-Chair of the authority for the ensuing year

The Chair of the Authority nominated Councillor Miks to be the
Vice-Chair of the authority for the ensuing year. Councillor
Mahmood seconded.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that Councillor Miks be elected as the Vice-Chair of the Authority for the ensuing year.

03/23 To receive Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Sybil Spence and Councillor Chris Bott.

04/23 Declarations of Interest

The Chair and Councillor Little declared a personal non-pecuniary interest due to being a member of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme(s). Councillor Hogarth declared a non-pecuniary interest due to a local government pension.

05/23 Chairs Announcements

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting of the full Fire Authority. The Chair reminded all members, special observers, and officers to be mindful of any pecuniary and/or conflicts of interest. It was vital that Members and Co-opted Members are clear on any declarations they feel appropriate to make. Equally, the principle of conflicts of interest applied to officers presenting reports or anyone contributing to the discussion so members of the public watching or reading the minutes are assured that the Authority and Brigade were operating with transparency and good governance in mind. The following questions were asked:

- Do any Members or Co-optees have any interests to declare?
- Do any officers or Special Observers have any interests to declare on any items on the agenda?

None were received.

The Chair gave a special thanks to departing members, Cllrs Iqbal, Hussain, Young and Miller. Their commitment to the work of the Authority was acknowledged. Letters of thanks were sent to them for their contributions. A special welcome was given to the four new members joining the authority: Cllrs Bott, Kaur, Mahmood and Little.

The Chair confirmed, that as per agenda item 11 on the agenda pack, the following nominations to be agreed were:

- Local Government Association General Assembly – nominees will be Chair, Vice-Chair, Leader of the Opposition and Councillor Parbinder Kaur (or their substitutes).
- Fire Service Commission – nominees will be Chair, Vice-Chair and Cllr Vera Waters (or their substitutes).
- West Midlands Road Safety Partnership – nominee will be Cllr Gurdial Singh Atwal.

The Chair thanked Mike Griffiths, Treasurer to the Authority, for his commitment and work conducted over the years and wished him all the best in his retirement. Members echoed these comments.

The Chair advised that the Democratic Services Officer had been expecting her first child and would be going on maternity leave at the end of July 2023. The governance team were in the process of appointing maternity cover and the successful candidate would be introduced to the Authority as soon as possible.

The Chair advised that on 8 May 2023 West Midlands Fire Service learned the extremely sad news that Station Manager Simon Wheatley had died suddenly. Simon first joined the service in May 1999 and had served in various roles across the service, including at Ward End, West Bromwich, Training Centre, Smethwick, Tipton, Wolverhampton and most recently as Station Manager at Haden Cross since December 2021. He received his Long Service and Good Conduct Medal in 2022. Many people, across several West Midlands communities, were today safer thanks to his 24 years of service. The funeral service for SM Wheatley would take place at Sandwell Crematorium on Wednesday 28 June 2023 at 12.15pm. Many members of the Authority and the service would be in attendance to pay respects.

As a mark of respect, all WMFS sites would be asked to remove the Pride flag and replace with the Union flag at half-mast at 08:00 hours on the day of the funeral (28th June) removing the Union flag and replacing it with the Pride flag to full mast at sunset that evening.

The Chair advised of the sad news regarding Crew Manager Iain Hughes, who went missing during a cross-channel swim for charity on Tuesday 20 June.

06/23 Chief Fire Officer's Announcements

The Chief Fire Officer (CFO) welcomed all attendees to the meeting with a special welcome to the new members of the Authority.

The CFO provided an up to date overview of the situation with Iain Hughes. He advised that Iain was based at Wednesbury Fire Station and planned a cross-channel swim for charity from Dover to France. Sadly, during the swim he went missing. Once alerted of his disappearance, the incident room was stood up at HQ. The family returned home on Wednesday following the French Coast Guard calling off the search, and Iain has been officially recorded as missing. The service released a press release with assistance from Acting DCFO Simon Barry following this. Iain wished to raise £21,000 for charity, the service pulled into action and did numerous car washes over the weekend to help raise the funds. The current total raised had been £52,000. The service had been providing support to the family and the CFO would be visiting them next week to offer his condolences.

A minute silence in memory of SM Simon Wheatley and in solidarity with the family of CM Iain Hughes was held.

07/23 Minutes of the Fire and Rescue Authority held on 13 February 2023

Resolved:

1. That the minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held on 13 February 2023 be approved as a correct record.

08/23 Membership of the Authority

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the Membership of the Authority for 2023-24 be noted.

09/23 **Questions on the Discharge of Functions**

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the members, as per the report, be nominated to answer questions on the discharge of functions of the Authority as required by Section 41 of the Local Government Act 1985.

10/23 **Political Balance and Membership of Committees and Panels**

Resolved:

1. That the political balance and membership of committees and panels for 2023/2024, as per the report, be approved.
2. The appointment of Mr Mike Ager to the role of Independent Member of the Audit and Risk Committee.
3. That the appointment of one co-opted member to Scrutiny Committee and Collaboration and Transformation Committee and appointment of both co-opted members to the Policy Planning Forum, be approved.
4. That the appointment to the roles of Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Committees and Panels, be approved.
5. That the appointment of Mr. Ray Tomkinson to the role of Independent Person appointed in pursuance of Section 28 of the Localism Act 2011, for the term of office expiring at the AGM June 2024, be approved.
6. That the appointment of the Police Crime Commissioner to the Collaboration and Transformation Committee be approved.

11/23 **Appointment of Representatives to Serve on Other Bodies**

The Chair of the Authority advised of the following nominations:

- Local Government Association General Assembly – nominees will be Chair, Vice-Chair, Leader of the Opposition and Councillor Parbinder Kaur (or their substitutes).
- Fire Service Commission – nominees will be Chair, Vice-Chair and Cllr Vera Waters (or their substitutes).
- West Midlands Road Safety Partnership – nominee will be Cllr Gurdial Singh Atwal.

Resolved:

1. That the Authority nominated representatives serve on the bodies set out in Appendix 1 of the report, for the one-year term of office expiring with the Annual Meeting of the Authority in June 2024, be approved.
2. That it be agreed that the following nominations be approved:
 - Local Government Association General Assembly – nominees will be Chair, Vice-Chair, Leader of the Opposition and Councillor Parbinder Kaur (or their substitutes).
 - Fire Service Commission – nominees will be Chair, Vice-Chair and Cllr Vera Waters (or their substitutes).
 - West Midlands Road Safety Partnership – nominee will be Cllr Gurdial Singh Atwal.

12/23 Member Attendance at Conferences, Seminars and Visits

The Chair of the Authority advised Members that should they be interested in attending any of the events, then to contact him directly and he would look into them attending as the Chair or Vice-Chairs nominee.

Resolved:

1. That the events for 2022-23, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, for the purpose of payment of travel and subsistence allowances and conferences fees, subject to necessary budgetary provision being available, be approved.

13/23 Governance of the Authority 2023-24

Karen Gowreesunker, Clerk to the Authority, presented the Governance of the Authority report for 2023-2024. She advised the Authority that the proposed dates for meetings were attached at appendix A for approval. The members allowance scheme, as per appendix B, outlined the allowances for members for 2023-2024 and proposed that an independent remuneration panel be commissioned during 2023-2024 to review the current scheme.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the calendar of meetings for 2023/24 as set out in Appendix A be approved.
2. That it be agreed that the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2023/24 as set out in Appendix B, be approved.
3. That it be agreed that the commissioning of an independent remuneration panel to review the Members' Allowance Scheme in the 2023/24 municipal year to report back to a future Authority meeting, be approved.

14/23 **Constitutional changes**

Tom Embury, Deputy Clerk, presented the constitutional changes report that outlined the proposed amendments to the Authority's Constitution.

The Authority were advised that following minor changes made to the constitution at the last Fire Authority in February 2023, a substantive review had taken place to make the constitution more user friendly to those accessing it. Key sections of the constitution were attached as per appendices to the report for members.

The Chair of the Authority thanked all officers involved.

Resolved:

1. That the amendments to the constitution as set out in the report, table of proposed changes and relevant appendices be approved.

15/23 **Portfolio Management (3PT)**

The CFO presented the Portfolio Management (3PT) report that outlined a strategic summary of the progression of delivery of the portfolio management through 'Our Plan'.

The authority were advised that to help highlight the importance of sprinklers and their ability to save lives, a press release was issued with a dramatic video. A link had been provided as per the report. The review of the services Incident Command capability had now

concluded, and a schedule of work for the next 12 months had been culminated.

The Authority were advised that consultation on increasing flexi-duty officers had recommenced, with engagement taking place with representative bodies on a weekly basis. Risk Based Crewing consultation closed on 6 June with an agreement to implement this approach at three multi-pump stations (Coventry; Walsall and Highgate).

A pilot had begun with Orbit Housing and Birmingham City Council to use the SafeLink's online Safe and Well tool to refer tenants. Following queries, the CFO advised that if successful, the pilot with Orbit Housing and Birmingham City Council would be rolled out further across the different areas.

The new fire investigation dog, 11-month-old working cocker spaniel, Giddy, completed her training in April 2023 alongside her handler Fire Investigator Alex Daw and they have both been attending incidents since. It had been a welcomed addition.

Work continued at HQ as part of the transformation project to provide agile working space, with all staff being relocated to the first floor to ensure collaborative working. The police had been located at HQ and the service was looking into further collaboration opportunities.

The new strategic goals, as per the report, were also highlighted.

Following acceptance of all 35 recommendations from the HMICFRS Spotlight Report, the service were working towards delivery of key milestones for all relevant recommendations.

A review of trainee firefighters training length and course content was underway and if/when the service move to apprentice level then they should be able to obtain a levee. Work is already conducted with cadets, with an offer for them to join once age applicable.

Following queries on the national 999 call handling outage, the CFO advised members that the 999 system went down at around

8.00am on Sunday 23 June with BT having issues with their systems, including their back up systems. A COBRA meeting had been called Sunday 23 June to discuss back-up options but members were re-assured that West Midlands had no real delays due to the contingency plans in place. As it had been a national issue, a national number had been circulated for all fire services to use. It was agreed that a single page briefing would be circulated to members to outline what happened.

The Chair of the Authority thanked Officers for their input and hard work.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the Portfolio Management (3PT) report be noted.
2. That it be agreed that single page briefing would be circulated to members to outline what happened with the 999 national outage.

16/23 **Community Risk Management Plan - Consultation**

The CFO presented the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) – Consultation report that outlined the planned consultation for July 2023.

The Authority were advised that consultation is required by the National Framework every three years on the CRMP for the service. The last consultation took place in October 2020 and helped inform the CRMP and three-year rolling strategy for 2021-2024 and created six projects, as per the report. These would continue to be within the CRMP. The key themes that would form the bases of future CRMP proposals were highlighted and would be included as part of the public consultation.

The Chair of the Authority praised the hard work of officers with the last consultation that had achieved over 11,000 responses. Members were informed that the target this year was to achieve an even higher number of responses.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the approach to Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) consultation in July 2023 as outlined within the report, including the consultation themes and questions, be approved.

17/23 Analysis of Progress of Quarterly Performance Against the Plan Qtr 4 2022-23

Richard Stanton, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the analysis of progress of quarterly performance against the plan Qtr. 4 2022-23 report that outlined the progress made in delivering the three strategic priorities within 'Our Plan' 2022-2025 and the status of key performance indicators for Qtr. 4 2022-23.

The Authority were advised that the key performance indicators had been RAG rated: Blue (over performance), Green (within tolerance levels) and Red (under performance). As per the report, P1 Response – all four categories of incident types had all performed against tolerance levels with the average attendance time for Category 1 incidents of 4 minutes and 57 seconds in Qtr 4. All Category 2, 3 and 4, incident types had remained in their targets.

Safe and Wells also had a targeted approach for those deemed as vulnerable. The target levels are underperformed but plans had been in place to improve this such as the policy with Orbit Housing. Work was also underway to try and improve false alarm repeats with collaboration with businesses. It was also acknowledged that further work to improve the percentage of the workforce declaring their disability and BAME status.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the status of the Services key performance indicators in the fourth quarter and for end of year of 2022-23 (Appendix 1), be noted.
2. That it be agreed that the progress made in delivering the three strategic priorities contained in 'Our Plan' 2022-2025 (Appendix 1), be noted.

18/23 **Corporate Performance Indicators 2023-24**

Simon Barry, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, presented the Corporate Performance Indicators 2023-24 report that outlined the corporate performance indicators and their targets.

The Authority were advised that targets had been set over a three-year period with performance indicators covering a one-year period. The key proposals, as outlined therein the report, were highlighted. It was acknowledged 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.

The Authority were advised that as per Appendix 1:

- PI 1 – to remain at five-minute target time.
- PI 2 – nationally doing well with target of 1514.
- PI 5 – increased to 50%.
- PI 16 – target increased to 226, with a 50% target for the firefighter training programme.
- PI 17/17a – target increased to 35% of recruits.

The Chair of the Authority praised staff and the progress made so far to build a diverse workforce.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the Corporate Performance Indicators (PIs) and targets for 2023-24 be approved.
2. That it be agreed that the proposed supplementary sub-PIs, that complement existing PIs, be approved.

19/23 **Independent Investigation into Pension issues**

Please note: the Chair of the Authority and Councillor Little excluded themselves from the room at 12 noon to avoid potential conflict of interest during agenda items 19 and 20. They returned

at 12:07pm. It was agreed that the Vice-Chair chair the meeting for agenda items 19 and 20 in the Chair's absence.

Satinder Sahota, Monitoring Officer, presented the Independent Investigation into Pension issues report that outlined the content and findings of the Independent Investigation into issues with the West Midlands Firefighters' Pensions Scheme.

The Authority were advised that issues began in 2021-2022 and were outlined within the report. The investigation found recommendations to assist in improvements to the management and administration of the scheme. The appointed investigator had conducted previous investigations and had conducted a thorough review. The full report had been confidential and circulated to all Fire Authority members. Thanks was given to the internal auditors for their involvement at the beginning of the process.

Resolve:

1. That it be agreed that the content and findings of the Independent Investigation into issues with the West Midlands Firefighters' Pensions Scheme be noted.
2. That it be agreed that all the recommendations within the Independent Investigation report and task officers and the delegated Scheme Manager with implementing the required improvements to the management and administration of the scheme, be accepted.

20/23 Change of Scheme Manager Delegation

Satinder Sahota, Monitoring Officer, presented the Change of Scheme Manager Delegation report that outlined the proposed transfer of the delegated role of Scheme Manager of the West Midlands Firefighter Pension Scheme from the Audit and Risk Committee to the Chief Fire Officer.

The authority were advised that the current delegation of Scheme Manager sat with the Audit and Risk Committee from the Fire Authority. The role of the scheme manager was highlighted as per report. It was emphasised that although the delegation would change, the Fire Authority still obtained responsibility. It was

proposed that the scheme of delegations for the CFO and the Audit and Risk Committee be amended, as per appendices to the report, if the change in delegation was approved.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the transfer of the delegated role of Scheme Manager of the West Midlands Firefighter Pension Scheme from the Audit and Risk Committee to the Chief Fire Officer, be approved.
2. That it be agreed that the Authorities continuing responsibility as Scheme Manager even with the change of delegation, be noted.

21/23 Monitoring of Finances 2023-24

Mike Griffiths presented the Monitoring of Finances report that outlined the finances of the Authority for the current financial year and covered revenue expenditure/capital programme.

The Authority were advised that, as per appendix A of the report, the revenue budget and the actuals were compared up to the end of May 2023. The actual spend to May 2023 had been £22.492m compared to a projected budget of £22.478m. As part of the current revenue budget, efficiency savings of £1.9m had been required. It was highlighted that the implementation of pay awards would make the service fall behind, but Risk Based Crewing had aided in the financial efficiencies required.

The Authority were advised that, as per Appendix C of the report, the capital programme for 2022-23 would be £10.028m.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the Monitoring of Finances report be noted.

22/23 Governance Statement 2022-23

Mike Griffiths presented the Governance Statement 2022-23 report that outlined the process to identify and prioritise risks for the achievement of the Authority's policies, aims and objectives.

The Authority were advised that the Governance Statement had been an annual report and covered the period up until 31 March 2023. The Governance Statement would be included within the Statement of Accounts. The report had been submitted to the Audit and Risk Committee for approval on 19 June 2023, with no amendments requested.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the Governance Statement 2022-23 be approved.

23/23 Service Provided Vehicles

Simon Barry, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, presented the Service Provided Vehicles report that outlined the rationale, benefits and financial implications for West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) to transition into a service provided vehicle scheme.

The Authority were advised that since 2013, WMFS had operated with a 'grey fleet' which resulted in responding officers utilising their own vehicles to respond to incidents. This resulted in a variety of different vehicles being used, and with limited assurance as to the roadworthiness of each vehicle. For safety, it was proposed that as a temporary measure the current vehicles used be subject to an enhanced monitoring process, with a view to provide fleet vehicles over the next 6-12 months. A procurement process would take place and it was predicted that the vehicles would be hybrid to align with the service's environmental commitments. The current scheme had cost around £150,000 per annum and it was anticipated that the new scheme would increase that cost to £380,000 per annum but would ensure that risks are mitigated and that officers are able to provide an appropriate response and effectively do their job. It was advised that a £2.1m capital investment would be required to obtain the vehicles however, given the value in second hand vehicles, it was anticipated that significant value would be retained which could be recouped when the vehicles are replaced at the end of their service life.

Following queries around insurance, reassurance was given that the service was looking to re-imburse individuals where insurances have been affected from incidents which were not their fault whilst on duty. It was emphasised that individuals should not personally be impacted.

Mike Griffiths advised that leasing had been considered but found to represent lower value for money as the value of purchased vehicles would be high. It was anticipated that the £2.1m would be borrowed. The procurement process would specify any requirements, including required quality and cost.

Sasha Hitchins, Fire Brigades Union, welcomed the recommendations. The Chair of the Authority emphasised the need to ensure the safety of officers.

24/23 Pay Policy Statement 2023-24

Richard Stanton, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the Pay Policy Statement 2023-24 report that outlined the new local government employee pay rates and pay awards.

The Authority were advised that the service must produce a pay policy statement for each financial year and outlined the service's approach and policies, as outlined within the report. The pay award for Grey Book staff and Green Book staff had been awarded and backdated.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the Pay Policy Statement for the financial year 2023-2024 be approved.

25/23 Result of Recent Fire Safety Prosecutions

The CFO presented the Result of Recent Fire Safety Prosecution report that outlined the result of prosecutions under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

The Authority were advised that following several visits from the service to the companies, as outlined within the report, there remained a lack of fire alarms and risk assessments for the

properties. As a last resort, the service issued an order which resulted in the defendant, Mr Christos Orthodoxou, receiving a prison sentence of 16 months suspended for 21 months. He was further ordered to pay a fine of £5,000 and £15,765 towards prosecution costs. KWB Property Management Limited were ordered to pay a fine of £80,000 along with a further £20,000 towards prosecution costs. Arista Restaurants Limited were ordered to pay £60,000 along with a further £20,000 towards prosecution costs.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the details of the Fire Safety Prosecution be noted.

26/23 Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2022-23

Councillor Atwal, Vice-Chair of the Scrutiny Committee, presented the Annual report of the Committee, that outlined the work conducted by the Committee during the 2022-23 municipal year.

Resolved:

1. That the Annual Report of the Scrutiny Committee 2022-23 be noted.

27/23 Minutes of Previous Committee Meetings

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the minutes of the following committee meetings, be noted:
 - Audit and Risk Committee – Monday 28 November 2022 and 20 March 2023
 - Collaboration and Transformation Committee – Monday 12 December 2022 and 27 February 2023
 - Scrutiny Committee – Monday 23 January 2023

28/23 Exclusion of Public and Press

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the public and press be excluded from the rest of the meeting to avoid the possible disclosure of exempt information under Paragraph 3 of the Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

29/23 Planned Procurement Exercise for 2023-2024

Mike Griffiths presented the Planned Procurement Exercise for 2023-2024 report that outlined the proposed tender exercise for the provision of various works, goods and services during 2023-2024.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the following tender exercises for the provision of various works, goods and services to West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority during 2023/24, be approved:
 - 1.1 ABLUTION REFURBISHMENTS
 - 1.2 UNIFORM
 - 1.3 CONTROL ROOM SYSTEMS REFRESH
 - 1.4 SERVICE PROVIDED VEHICLES FOR OFFICERS

30/23 Independent Investigation Update (verbal)

Please note: as per agenda items 19 and 20, the Chair of the Authority and Councillor Little excluded themselves from the room at 12:38pm to avoid potential conflict of interest. The returned at 12:41pm. It was agreed that the Vice-Chair chair the meeting for agenda item 30 in the Chair's absence.

Satinder Sahota, Monitoring Officer, advised the Authority that work was underway for all the recommendations outlined in the private report circulated with some already implemented.

The Vice-Chair of the Authority thanked all officers involved in the lengthy process. Cllr Dehar passed on her thanks for Cllr Miks, as the previous Chair of Audit and Risk Committee.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the independent investigation verbal update be noted.

The meeting ended at 12:45 hours.

Kirsty Tuffin
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Kirsty.tuffin@wmfs.net

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY ^{Item 6}

23rd OCTOBER 2023

1. **PENSION SCHEME UPDATE**

Report of the Scheme Manager (Chief Fire Officer)

RECOMMENDED

THAT Members note the Scheme Manager's update on the governance and administration of the West Midlands Firefighters' Pension Scheme.

2. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To provide an update on the work of the delegated Scheme Manager and the Local Pension Board.

3. **BACKGROUND**

3.1 **Change in Scheme Manager**

As was agreed at the Fire Authority AGM on 26 June 2023, delegated responsibility as Scheme Manager for the West Midlands Firefighters' Pension Scheme has transferred from the Audit and Risk Committee to Chief Fire Officer Wayne Brown. The CFO is supported in this role by Director for People, ACFO Richard Stanton.

3.2 **Pension Board Work Plan**

- 3.2.1 The Pension Board and Pension Administration team continue to deliver against the workplan agreed with The Pension Regulator in November 2022, as well as further items that have been added during the past year. The full Work Plan can be viewed in **Appendix A**.

3.2.2 It was agreed at the Pension Board meeting on 7 September 2023, that the Board would transition the workplan into an improved format through Microsoft Planner and it is intended that this occur in time for the next Board meeting on 2 November.

3.3 **Risk Register**

3.3.1 The Pension Board continues to maintain the risk register of key risks and issues which may impact upon the effective running of the scheme. A number of updates have been made to reduce the overall number of risks and align them more closely with those already identified within WMFS Corporate Risks.

3.3.2 It was also agreed at the Pension Board meeting on 7 September 2023, following input from the Scheme Manager, that the Board would transfer its risk register to the same format as is used by WMFS to ensure consistency. The service's Portfolio team will support in this transition and an updated version of the register will be shared with Authority at its next meeting in December 2023.

3.4 **Statistics and Key Performance Indicators**

3.4.1 The pension scheme has the following membership numbers as at 31st August 2023:

Active Firefighters	1,374
2015 scheme members	1,230
Non-members	144 (10.48%)
Pensioners	2,221
Dependants	426

3.4.2 The scheme administration has achieved the following performance against select key indicators as at 31st August 2023:

Indicator	Estimate Requests	Divorce Proceedings	Basic Information	Transfers – Other*
Received	32	10	87	4
Responded	31	1	35	9
Average Response Time	50 days	11 days	19 days	845 days
Cases outside target	3	0	1	8
Performance	90.3%	100%	97.14%	11.11%

**Please note that Transfers can only be “completed” when a final response is made and in many cases this may not happen for a number of years if scheme members choose to consider their options or gain external advice. This KPI is being reviewed to ensure it is an effective performance measure.*

3.5 **IDRP Submissions**

In the past two quarters the Scheme Manager has received three FFPS submissions through the Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP), one of which was determined not to be addressed as an IDRP. At stage one, these are dealt with by the ACFO and Director for People, with none yet progressing to stage two. A summary of each of the two that were heard at stage one is below:

- Individual had opted out of the 1992 pension scheme based on external advice that they had received. They were asking to be put back into the pension scheme. IDRP was not founded and the individual was advised to seek issue with the advice that they had received by the company/individual that had provided it.
- The Lump Sum Option form provided to a member outlined two possible alternative options for the member’s choice of Lump Sum. The first option – despite it detailing the correct annual figure – gave an incorrect monthly figure. The IDRP was not founded as the correct annual figure was shown and this is ultimately what the member will have based their decision on.

4 **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

As this is an update report, no initial Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken.

5 **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Public Services Pensions Act 2013 created a statutory requirement to have a Scheme Manager, and this is defined in regulations as the Fire and Rescue Authority. WMFRA have chosen to delegate the role of Scheme Manager to the Chief Fire

Officer. However, it is important to note that the power to delegate does not absolve the Fire Authority of the responsibility of the pension scheme. The responsibility to ensure the scheme is managed within the regulations rests with the Fire Authority and any fines resulting from errors will be the responsibility of the Fire Authority. It is therefore important that the Authority maintains oversight of the governance of the scheme.

6 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications associated with this update report.

7 **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no environmental implications associated with this update report.

8 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

The contact for this report is Richard Stanton, Assistant Chief Fire Officer and Director for People.

CFO Wayne Brown
West Midlands Firefighters' Pension Scheme – Scheme Manager

APPENDIX A – Pension Board Action Plan

WMFPS Pension Board – Action Plan

Completed	Recently Updated	Missed completion date
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Ref	Date	Subject	Action	Responsible	Completion date / Suggested timeframe	Status [Ongoing / Completed]
Actions arising from The Pensions Regulator Supervisory Report 2020/21 on the West Midlands Firefighter Pension Scheme						
A1	11/11	Skills and Training	Pension Board (PB) and Scheme Manager (SM) to undertake Training Needs Analysis to set a baseline for development of future training plans. Previous templates exist that can be used.	Pension Board Chair and Scheme Manager	Undertaken by March 2023	TNAs completed as of May 2023
A2	11/11	Pension Board Training and skills	PB to formalise their training plan, to be reviewed at least yearly, which will cover emerging themes, such as cyber security. This will be published on a joint Pension Board filing system/Teams site (see Recommendation D1) to ensure all PB member can review as required and bring forward suggestions for training and development.	Pension Board Chair	Implemented by July 2023	Agreed at July Pension Board
B1	11/11	Pension Board Succession	Clerk and PSS to develop a succession plan for both Scheme Member and Employer representatives, including undertaking a revision of role descriptions. This will include a proposal for hand-over between departing representatives and their replacements.	Clerk and PSS supported by Pension Board	Implemented by March 2023	Ongoing

B2	11/11	Pension Board Succession	PB and SM to review Terms of Reference with regards to representative tenures to ensure these are staggered and include a suitable handover period.	Pension Board Chair and Scheme Manager	Implemented by July 2023	Revised Terms of Reference drafted and agreed, staggered member replacement process agreed.
C	11/11	Pension Board Composition	Review appointment/election communications for Pension Board representatives to ensure they encourage diversity amongst the Pension Board membership and encourage the widest possible number and range of candidates to apply. TPR Equality, Diversity and Inclusion guidance to be utilised.	PSS/Pension Board/Portfolio Team	Implemented by January 2023	Completed – Election communications sent
D1	11/11	Pension Board Information Sharing	Review communications to Pensions Board and Scheme manager and ensure updates are provided when required.	Portfolio and Pensions Administration Teams	Implemented by March 2023	Complete
D2	11/11	Pension Board Information Sharing	Pension Board members to review information sharing arrangements and PB representatives' views on information sharing, knowledge and skills, with input from Scheme Manager.	Pension Board and Scheme Manager		Completed
E1	11/11	Business Continuity Planning	Pensions Board to receive a report on current BCP arrangements and testing and review their effectiveness with a view to making recommendations to Scheme Manager on whether a bespoke BCP outside existing WMFS arrangements is necessary.	Pensions Board Chair and Pensions Manager	To be approved in July 2023 .	Pension Board BCP agreed with minor additions at July 2023 PB meeting.

E2	11/11	Business Continuity Planning	Pension Administration Team to develop and share with the Scheme Manager and Pension Board a set of procedural notes for key pensions administration tasks. Content may be impacted by implementation of remedy.	Pensions Administration Team	Update to March 2023 Audit and Risk Committee Meeting—subject to Remedy roll out. Report expected to September Pensions Board	Partial set of notes created for some tasks, and work continues but not expected until end 2023.
F	11/11	Information Sharing between SM, PB and Pension Administration Team	Written (rather than verbal) reports to be provided by the Pension Team on key issues to both the Pension Board and Scheme Manager as a standing item for all meetings.	Pensions Administration Team	To begin from March 2023 Audit and Risk Committee	Completed
G	11/11	Conflicts of Interest	Conflict of Interest Register, based on the TPR template, to be created and stored on system where all PB members have access. Will be a standing item for all PB meetings. This document to be shared with The Pension Regulator.	Portfolio Team and Pensions Board	To begin from implementation of new system as of February 2023	Completed
H1	11/11	Risk Management	<p>PB Risk Register Sub Group to consider TPR recommended changes or improvement in formatting of the Risk Register:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • utilising a cover sheet to provide a snapshot of the current risks, helping to clearly identify the current major risk(s) to the Scheme. The Scheme may wish to identify emerging risks in this location as well. • ensuring all risks have mitigating actions and owners • documenting closed risks 	Pensions Board RR sub group	Completed by January 2023	Complete – PB agreed to maintain current RR approach.

			Incorporate relevant WMFS Corporate Risks within the PB Risk Register, to include Cyber Security (CR 7.3).			
H2	11/11	Risk Management	PB Risk Register to be incorporated into Audit and Risk Committee risk updates.	Scheme Manager	To begin from March 2023 A&R Meeting	Completed
I	11/11	Digitisation of records	All records to be digitised and accessible to support data collection.	Pensions Manager supported by Data and Governance Team	Completed	Completed
J	11/11	Data Improvement policy	Pensions Team to work with Data and Governance team on ensuring a Data Improvement Policy is in place for Pensions Data, either drawing on existing policy or developing a new policy if required. To be taken forward following roll out of ALTAIR update.	Pensions Administration Team & Data and Governance Team	Completed following implementation of new Altair system March 2023 June 2023	Ongoing. Altair update now complete and data improvement policy and data review to now be progressed
K	11/11	Data Improvement Plan	Pensions Team, drawing on the Annual Data Review (Action L) to develop a Data Improvement Plan for any areas where data scores are not complete. This to be reported to both Scheme Manager and Pension Board, and shared with TPR. To be taken forward following roll out of ALTAIR update.	Pensions Administration Team	Following completion of Annual Data Review	Ongoing. Altair update now complete and data improvement policy and data review to now be progressed
L	11/11	Annual data review	Pensions Team to undertake a pension data review, to assess the accuracy and completeness of member data, to be reported to the Pension Board and Scheme Manager.	Pensions Administration Team	Completed by June 2023 Completed by October 2023 Scores to be	Ongoing – date reviewed Updated planned for

					shared as part of annual return to TPR	future PB meeting
M	11/11	Recording data scores	Pensions administration team to record common and scheme specific data scores gathered as part of the Annual Data review (Action L) in Exchange as part of annual return to The Pension Regulator.	Pensions Administration Team	Completed by June 2023 Scores to be shared as part of annual return to TPR	Ongoing – date reviewed Updated planned for future PB meeting
N1	11/11	Review of KPIs	Scheme Manager to inform Pensions Board which KPIs it wishes to have developed and to receive regular updates on. PB to develop and agree with Pensions Team, and utilise a traffic light system (RAG).	Scheme Manager, Pensions Board Chair and Pensions Administration Team	Completed by March 2023	Completed
N2	11/11	Supporting narrative to KPs	All Key Performance Indicators (provided with RAG rating) to be accompanied by appropriately detailed written narrative (which may be provided alongside a verbal update). This narrative to be provided to both the Scheme Manager and the Pension Board	Pensions Administration Team	Completed by June 2023	Complete – delivered to July PB . Further improvements to be made for future reports.
O	11/11	Documentation of Data validation procedures	Implementation of ORACLE upgrade is intended to allow Scheme Members to update their own contact details. All members to be contacted by post to inform them of new system, with further investigation of failed deliveries. Update to be given on time frames for the new system / implementation to PB in December by Pension Team.	Pensions Administration Team	Update in December 2022, Trial of ORACLE started in February 2023 Oracle Trial now working, next	Delayed – Trial with initial group of pensioners failed -issue with ORACLE/NAMOS for resolution.

			Update now expected in September with rollout of Altair/ Oracle functionality as relevant.		steps being determined.	
P	11/11	Pension Process Automation	Pensions Team to provide a report to the Scheme Manager on automation and systems improvements achieved by implementation of ALTAIR and ORACLE systems system once in place.	Pensions administration team	Completed by June 2023	Update expected by November 2023 – partial completion of automation so far
Q1	11/11	Administrative Task Timescales	Pensions Team to provide a report to the Scheme Manager setting out the expected task timescales (e.g., responses to queries), which will also be shared with Pension Board.	Pensions administration team	Completed by March 2023	Completed
Q2	11/11	Firefighter Pensions SAB Pensions Administration Strategy	Pensions Board to utilise FPS Administration, Management, and Governance Strategy template to create single documentation of roles and services standards. Document to be agreed by Scheme Manager and published on the WMFRA CMIS site.	Scheme Manager, Pension Board, Pension Team, Portfolio Team	Completed by March 2023 Completed by July 2023 To be agreed September 2023	Information from FPSAB to be included on new webpage on WMFS.net
Actions arising from previous Pension Board meetings						
1	08/12	Altair timescales	Update to be given on time frames for the Altair new system / implementation and elements around data once available.	Pensions Manager	Completed by March 2023	Update to July PB expected
2	08/12	Members opt-out	A report is to be submitted to Audit and Risk Committee that included information circulated to employees to encourage them to remain in the scheme and what actions could be taken to keep them well informed before they decided to opt-out of their pension scheme.	Deputy Clerk / Pensions Manager	Completed by March 2023	Ongoing

4	08/12	Actively updating data records	Pensions Manager to go back to all relevant individuals to ask them to update their records, with assistance from Julie Felton, to actively promote them to update their records.	Pensions Manager/ Admin Manager	Completed by March 2023	Ongoing
8	29/03	Oracle ownership	Pensions Manager and PSS to speak with the relevant officer responsible for the ownership of the Oracle system.	Pensions Manager/PSS	Completed by July 2023	Ongoing - PB updated via email.
9	29/03	Risk Register – Removal of Risk	Remove risk 1 – Operational disaster	Admin Manager	Completed by July 2023	Ongoing – agreed at July PB.
11	29/03	External Communications	Senior Communications Manager to provide potential time scales for a dedicated Pensions section on wmfs.net site, including the development of relevant FAQ's, with the assistance of the Pension Board. To be added to the next Pension Board agenda.	Senior Communications Manager/ Deputy Clerk	Complete by July 2023	Complete
12	29/03	Business Continuity Plan	Deferred to the next Pension Board for approval/discussion.	Democratic Services Officer	Complete by July 2023	Complete
14	29/03	PB Terms of Reference	PB Terms of Reference to be circulated to PB for comments with the following amendments: - 6 monthly rotations for Chairing the Board - Wording amended on the membership (retired/active Members)	Deputy Clerk	Completed by June 2023	Complete
16	04/07	Risk Register	Following items be removed from RR: 1. Risk 7 (covered under Risk 3) Following items remain the same: 1. Risk 2 – Member data incomplete or inaccurate 2. Risk 4 – Computer system failure at pay date 3. Risk 5 – Failure to process BACS 4. Risk 11 – Application of Remedy	Admin Manager / Pension Manager / Employee Representative AH	Complete by Sept. 2023	Guidance circulated to PB Members.

			<p>5. Risk 14 – Costs accrued due to failure to apply scheme/tax rules correctly or in a timely manner</p> <p>Following items to be changed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Risk 6 – reduce risk 2. Risk 9 – Failure to produce annual benefit statement – text to be updated. Risk level to remain the same. 3. Risks referencing Mike Griffiths to be updated. 4. Risk 17 – to be reworded for clarity. 5. Risk 19 – to be reduced to likelihood 2. 6. Risk 20 – text to be updated. <p>That the Pensions Manager circulates the audit reports conducted by internal auditors, as per Risk 3.</p> <p>That Risk 8 be reviewed once the findings of the pension review have taken plan.</p> <p>AH to circulate Contingent decision guidance to DSO to circulate.</p>			
17	04/07	Business Cont. Plan	That Risk 1 (RR) Operational Disaster/Pension records be included in the PB Business Cont. Plan.	Deputy Clerk	Complete by August 2023	Completed
18	04/07	Appointment of Employee Representative	That AH to remain on PB following his retirement on 6 August until a replacement is made/hand over completed. Deputy Clerk to action appointment process and develop an expression of interest, with assistance from AH.		Complete by September 2023	Communication to go out September, nomination approved by SM Oct 2023.
19	04/07	External communications	That the Pensions Manager circulate email addresses for his team to be included on the PB page.	Pensions Manager	Complete by August 2023.	

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20	04/07	Opt-Outs	That the Pensions Manager look into what data can be obtained for opt-outs and provide an update to the Board.	Pensions Manager	Complete by September 2023	Delayed til November Board Meeting
21	04/07	Reporting Breaches Procedure	That the Deputy Clerk provides suggested changes to the procedure for the PB consideration.	Deputy Clerk	Complete by September 2023	Paper to September PB
22	04/07	PB Annual Report	That the PB Annual Report be included in the SM update to the FRA in October 2023.	Scheme Manager	Complete by October 2023	
23	04/07	Work Programme	That the work programme be updated to reflect the SM change over.			
24	04/07	Topical, Legal and Regulatory issues	That the DSO dialogue with Matt Smith to ensure publication of FPS Bulletins on MESH.	DSO	Complete by July 2023	DSO added Matt Smith to FPS Bulletin distribution and agreed approach with him.
25	04/07	Topical, Legal and Regulatory issues	That the Pensions Manager provide data on the number of contingent members following the publication of legislation in October 2023	Pensions Manager	Completed by December 2023	

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**23 OCTOBER 2023**

Item 7

1. CONTRACT AWARDS SUMMARY FOR PERIOD TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2023

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

RECOMMENDED

THAT the Authority note the attached Appendix which summarises the contracts in excess of £250,000 that have been awarded since January 2023.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides a six-month summary of all contracts that have been awarded since the last report submitted in February 2023.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 As part of the Authority's Constitution, it is required that a retrospective, twice yearly summary report of tender contract awards in excess of £250,000 be submitted to the Fire Authority for information purposes.

3.2 In accordance with the above requirement, a summary of those contracts awarded is attached as Appendix 1.

4. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The procurement processes that were followed for the procurement exercises detailed in the Appendices to this report were conducted in accordance with the Authority's Procurement Standing Orders and the Public Contract Regulations 2015.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

These are contained in the attached Appendices.

7. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Authority Meeting 21 September 2015

Policy 1/8 – Procurement Procedures

The contact name for this report is Sofia Mahmood, Head of Finance and Procurement – Sofia.mahmood@wmfs.net

WAYNE BROWN
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

APPENDIX 1

Contract Title	Winning Supplier	Approval Date	Contract Period (Including Extension Options)	Annual Contract value or Total Value for one off Purchase	Total Contract Value (including extension periods)	Budget PA	Basis of award e.g. Lowest Price or MEAT*	Date and Minute Number of Planned Tender Report	Any Other Relevant Information
Cleaning Consumables	Bunzl Ltd	28 March 2023	4 years	£108,000	£430,000	£108,000	PRICE ONLY	14 February 2022	
Wide Area Network	Softcat plc	22 February 2023	3 years with an option to extend for another 2 years	One off cost of £80,000 plus £84,000 per annum	£500,000	£500,000	PRICE ONLY	12 December 2022	
Fuel Cards	Allstar Business Solutions	23 February 2023	3 years	£120,000	£360,000	£120,000	PRICE ONLY	13 February 2023	
Supply and Fit of Tyres	Lodge Tyres Ltd	23 May 2023	2 years plus an option to extend for a further 2 years	£65,000	£260,000	£65,000	MEAT	13 February 2023	
Replacement Self Container Breathing Apparatus Sets (SCABA)	MSA Britian Ltd	15 June 2023	5 years plus an option to extend for a further 10 years	one off cost of £1.7m plus annual cost of £48k	£2,400,000	£1,800,000 plus annual maintenance costs	MEAT	13 February 2023	

Reactive Repairs Framework	Lot 1- Building Works 1. Three Pines Building Ltd 2. Arrow Services (Midlands) Ltd 3. KDE Ltd	28 July 2023	2 years with an option to extend for a further 2 years	£40,000	£750,000	Part of a £700,000 budget for repairs	MEAT	13 February 2023	
	Lot 2 –Electrical Works 1. Enterprise Electrical Services Limited 2. Midwest Mechanical and Electrical Services Ltd 3. RS Electrical & Property Maintenance Ltd			£77,500					
	Lot 3 – Plumbing Works 1. Midwest Mechanical and Electrical Services Ltd 2. Arrow Services (Midlands) Ltd 3. KDE Ltd			£60,000					
	Lot 4 – Roofing Works 1. Arrow Services (Midlands) Ltd 2. R & R Contract Renovation and Refurbishment			£10,000					

* Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT)

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY Item 8

23 OCTOBER 2023

1. **PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT (3PT)**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 THAT the contents of the report be noted.

2. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 2.1 This report provides a summary of the progression of the delivery of Portfolio Management towards delivering 'Our Plan'. The updates provided are based on the continual assessment of investment and business benefits of projects being delivered through the three Programmes of Community Risk Reduction, Enabling Services and People.

3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 To inform Members of the approach taken under Portfolio Management and the resulting outcomes of the workstreams within current Programmes and Projects, which support the Service to deliver continuous improvement and transformation.
- 3.2 This report will lead into the subsequent Fire Authority reports that support the delivery of the Strategy in one or more of the Programmes.

4. **DELIVERABLES**

- 4.1 The Programme Executives (Brigade Managers) are accountable to the Portfolio Executive (Chief Fire Officer (CFO)) through their programme objectives to deliver the Strategy of the WMFS. The Portfolio is led by the CFO to enable the delivery of the Authority's Strategic priorities, aligned to Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) objectives.

- 4.2 The Portfolio is ultimately accountable for the Programmes and will provide assurance that the aims and objectives are being achieved. The Programmes are accountable for Projects.
- 4.3 The recent Programme achievements are detailed below and supported through the Programme deliverables.

5. **COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN (CRMP) - HIGHLIGHTS**

5.1 Wider roll-out of our Risk Based Crewing (RBC) Model

RBC went live on 4th July 2023 at the Service's three "multi-pump" stations, Coventry, Highgate, and Walsall. The feedback via our Joint Working Party (JWP) has so far has been positive, with increased fleet availability (vehicles on the run), fewer standbys (where firefighters are based at a station other than their usual home station) and improved staff morale.

It was further expanded to include our seven lates stations (not including Oldbury and Tettenhall) on 4th September 2023, initially running until 31st December 2023. This will be evaluated throughout the period through our Organisational Intelligence (OI) function and staff engagement.

5.2 Automatic Fire Alarms (AFAs)

In July 2021, the incident type for mobilising to AFAs changed, and reduced to 3 categories to support the management of risk and efficiency in proportionate level of response to these types of incidents. The 3 categories are non-sleeping, sleeping – managed and sleeping – non managed.

By September 2022, the level of response to AFAs at hospitals became proportionate and where possible this wouldn't be a PRL unless there were additional reason/s. By sending a proportionate response this would leave resources available to attend incidents of higher risk and be more readily available to deliver community risk reduction (CRR) activities across Protection and Prevention.

Based on the positive reduction of numbers of PRLs attending AFA's from 27.4% to 8.6% the next step for the project is looking at if the numbers can be reduced any further. A report has been commissioned to review the attendance of resources at Care Homes, which also have 24/7 management, with a view of taking a similar approach to the mobilisations to hospitals.

5.3 **BLENDED FLEET**

Brigade Response Vehicles (BRV) replacement

The Service needs to replace a significant number of our BRV's in the next 12 months, as existing vehicles reach their end of service life. A specification for new vehicles has been produced and suppliers have been invited to provide feedback.

6. **COMMUNITY REDUCTION RISK PROGRAMME (CRR)- HIGHLIGHTS**

6.1 **Prevention**

6.1.1 **Fire Investigation and Prevention Section (FIPS)**

Prevention have improved the systems and processes used to manage Complex Needs (CN) cases, which support those in our communities who are at most risk and the highest levels of vulnerability to fire. This has had a positive impact on both the number of people waiting for a Complex Need Officer (CNO) to be assigned and the length of time it takes from referral to appointment.

The month of August placed a significant strain on the FIPS team with 19 full investigations and 7 fire investigation dog team deployments, including supporting the Crooked House incident in Staffordshire. During this time the team maintained 100% investigation and support cover ensuring they were always available to be mobilised.

6.2 **Protection**

6.2.1 **Building Safety Regulator (BSR)**

WMFS are leading the regional team, working with the NFCC and the Health and Safety Executive to ensure services across our region, (including our own) meet the upcoming “Go Live” date of 1st October 2023 for new legislation.

We were delighted to have hosted a National BSR workshop in our FSHQ on 31st August 2023.

6.2.2 Several Fire Safety Advisors (FSA’s) and Fire Safety Inspectors (FSI’s) have recently passed fire safety qualifications at level 3 and level 4, increasing our ability to protect buildings and businesses across the West Midlands communities.

6.3 Response

6.3.1 Breathing Apparatus (BA) Procurement

In collaboration with four other Fire Services (Cleveland, Hereford & Worcester, Staffordshire and Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Services) BA equipment was put through many rigorous scenarios over the course of a week at the Fire Service College and evaluated using members of WMFS as part of the wider Team.

MSA Safety was awarded the contract to supply the new BA sets and associated equipment for the next ten years. Work is underway to prepare our staff to use the new equipment when rolled out next year.

6.3.2 Drone Capability

In early May 2023, the drone capability celebrated two years of successfully aiding crews at incidents around the West Midlands and beyond.

WMFS has recently trialled and purchased a new larger drone to further enhance our drone capabilities. It can fly in inclement weather, allowing it to be airborne in almost any weather unlike our smaller drones allowing it to be mobilised to more incidents.

6.4 Fire Control

National Operational Guidance (NOG) is the foundation for developing operational policies, procedures, and training to support firefighters to deal with incidents effectively and safely. It is 'industry good practice' for all Fire and Rescue Services to draw on. The NFCC have now applied the same guidance for Fire Control (FC). In total, over the next 18 months there will be circa 20 pieces of guidance for FC that will require developing into product packs for the Service to deliver. Work on this exciting project has begun with 1 piece having now been fully implemented into the Service, Survival Guidance was released in July 2023 and went live in September 2023.

6.5 Operations

Crew Manager Iain Hughes was reported missing as he swam the English Channel for charity. Very sadly, despite efforts involving the Coastguard, French warship and Belgian helicopters, Iain's body was recovered a few weeks later. He had been training for the solo swim for two years and had hoped to raise £21,000 for three charities: The Midlands Air Ambulance, British Heart Foundation and Firefighters' Charity. Since the news that he was missing broke, donations soared to more than £80,000. Inspired by Iain, and his passion to raise money for charity, in order to support him as best we could, colleagues from the West Midlands Fire Service hosted car washes across the region and have been able to raise more than £20,000, which has been added to Iain's fundraiser. His funeral was held on 1st September 2023.

During the period of July and August, over 20 of our stations held open days to welcome our communities into our fire stations as well as attend local community events. These events provide a unique opportunity to engage with the community and are used as a way of sharing safety advice with them.

Working in partnership with the Daniel Baird Foundation and local partners, we have been distributing and promoting the use of bleed kits, which provide emergency care for incidents such as knife crime or other medical emergencies where an individual is losing significant amounts of blood. This work has been promoted by Ladywood Fire Station who has been the main driver behind getting these kits placed in secure units outside six fire stations to date. The aim is to have them placed outside all fire stations in the West Midlands. This initiative is also

supporting the service demonstrate our commitment to the Serious Violence Bill and our statutory responsibility on fire and rescue services to support the introduction of mitigation measures to make our communities are safer.

7. **ENABLING SERVICES PROGRAMME (ES) – HIGHLIGHTS**

7.1 HQ Inclusion and Collaboration

Following completion of the first phase of the project where all current HQ staff are now working on the same floor, work is undergoing to move the classroom-based learning elements of the Trainee Firefighter Development Programme (TFDP) to the ground floor of HQ, with a desired outcome of a more enhanced connection for our trainees from their first day. This should be completed for the next recruit intake in January 2024.

7.2 Corporate Communications

Corporate Communications has supported the Portfolio team with the 12-week CRMP Consultation (now closed) in achieving diverse and reflective responses from our communities, partners, and staff.

The launch of our 'We Are' campaign (designed to identify and promote who we are as a Service and what we stand for, whilst also championing our brand through real lives reflecting the Service's approach to 'People, Professionalism and Pride') went live in the middle of September. The refresh of our WMFS branding also went live at the same time.

Planning is now underway for a busy end of year event season which includes, amongst others, the Emergency Services Show (ESS), our flagship Rewards & Recognition (R&R) event held at the International Conference Centre and the annual Christmas Carol Concert.

7.3 Finance and Procurement

The draft Statement of Accounts 2022/23 have been published and the external audit is scheduled to be completed by December 2023.

Monthly budget monitoring reports have now been updated to highlight any key risks and issues. This approach will continue to be reviewed following further user feedback.

Procurement policy compliance training has been scheduled to be provided to Middle Managers in November 2023 and it is anticipated that the Procurement Act 2023 shall come into force on 1st October 2024, which may be implemented in successive stages.

7.4 Digital & Data

Service Level Agreements (SLAs) for business-as-usual (BAU) ICT support remain on-track and continue to be in line with the targets set. Ongoing upgrades to connectivity and server hardware continue as part of our normal practices to enable digitally enabled working practices at our stations and other sites.

The software used on our frontline Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) installed on each frontline fire engine has been upgraded, bringing improved cyber security and more reliable information for our crews. We have concluded our early trial of Incident Command Software in Coventry and Solihull and are working towards a plan to roll this out for an additional trial across Birmingham and for enhancements to our Incident Command Unit capabilities.

7.5 Sustainability

A Sustainability Strategy has been created in collaboration with the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) to align our sustainability policies. The draft has been produced and will be further refined through our community feedback through our CRMP engagement.

Our Organisational Development (OD) approaches to increase learning and awareness within the Service have been created which include development courses for staff, an organisational roadmap to a 'gold level', considering sustainable organisation and potential options for delivery of this. Bespoke training will also be provided to the

procurement team to begin to take an environmental and ethical value-based approach to purchasing goods and services.

The Innovation & Sustainability team will have their own stand at ESS this year; this is to demonstrate the areas we are working and focusing on. They will include firefighting robots and composters.

In collaboration with our data analyst team, work has begun on analysing air quality impact from fires.

The Clean Hub/Clean Firefighter concept has been mapped out for first time, which seeks to address health and safety issues faced by firefighters regarding contaminants they can potentially be exposed to.

WMFS will be hosting the annual in person conference for the Emergency Services Environment and Sustainability Group (EESG) in our FSHQ Hub during September. Representatives from Fire, Police and Ambulance across the UK will be attending to listen to guest speakers, talk about their sustainability journey and take part in networking.

7.6 Oracle

A post Implementation evaluation process has begun with Oracle to help identify further areas where we can maximise our existing investment by realising further benefits.

The Single Point of Contact model is progressing well to provide additional support to all staff as end users of the system. This approach is helping to address concerns received from staff, representative bodies and highlighted through What's Happening Visits (WHV's) and Fire Authority members.

SET have taken a decision to focus further on staff feedback and slow the rate of pace of development of Oracle to just those elements that deliver against key business priorities. This will also allow a greater time for further embedding and understanding of the system.

8. **PEOPLE PROGRAMME – HIGHLIGHTS**

8.1 Distributed Training Model (DTM) Review

The DTM review has commenced, the communications have been shared with the workforce and the timeline for completion is January 2024. A range of stakeholders will be engaged with as part of the review to ensure the widest range of views can be considered. As part of the Training Development Scrutiny Review, Fire Authority Members have engaged with a range of groups from across the Service. The feedback collated during the session will support the DTM review; observations from staff who engaged in the session was that it was valuable.

8.2 Trainee Firefighter Development Programme (TFDP) revised programme

Following an evidenced based review of the TFDP, the course structure has developed from an 8-week programme into a 12-week programme; the revised programme commenced in August. The course now comprises of additional role critical elements across prevention, protection and response. Extensive feedback is being gathered by the OI team to capture the user experience to enable the course to be reviewed and were appropriate developed.

The Trainee Firefighters, where appropriate, are based in HQ and as part of the Enabling Services Transformation Project, the planned relocation of TFDP and Command Development Centre (CDC) will continue to create an inclusive environment.

8.3 Health and Wellbeing Framework Launch

In August 2023 we launched the revised Health and Wellbeing framework and we are now in the final stages of developing a Mental Health Policy. The Service takes the wellbeing of all staff extremely seriously and is continually reviewing and developing the services it offers through Occupational Health (OH). This is done through feedback and engagement with staff.

8.4 Station Commander and Crew Commander Development

Throughout September, October, November and December 2023, a programme has been developed to support Firefighters who are considering progressing into the Crew Manager role. There is a specific focus on understanding the barriers from those in under-represented groups.

9. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 9.1 In preparing this report an initial Equality Impact Assessment is not required and has not been carried out because the matters contained in this report will not lead to a policy change.
- 9.2 Areas of policy changes that are identified in Project(s) are subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.

10. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 The course of action recommended in this report does not raise issues which should be drawn to the attention of the Authority's Monitoring Officer.

11. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

12. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 12.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Portfolio Management - Fire Authority Report June 2022

[10706222 FRA Portfolio Management \(3PT\).docx](#)

Portfolio Management – Fire Authority Report Oct 2022

[12009221 FRA Portfolio Management \(3PT\) - Oct 22.docx](#)

[12301233 FRA Portfolio Management \(3PT\) - Feb 23.docx](#)

[1076238 FRA Portfolio Management \(3PT\) - June 23 \(1\).docx](#)

The contact name for this report is Marc Hudson, Head of Portfolio, contact number 07973 810139

Wayne Brown
Chief Fire Officer

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Item 9

23rd OCTOBER 2023**1. CRMP CONSULTATION EVALUATION REPORT 03/07/23 – 11/09/23**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1. That Fire Authority members note the content of this report, detailing the evaluation of the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) consultation held between 3rd July 2023 – 11th September 2023 as part of the preparation of our three-year rolling strategy, Our Plan 2024-2027 and Community Risk Management Plan document.

2. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 2.1. This report is submitted to present Fire Authority members with the evaluation summary, setting out the high-level results from the public consultation themes. The update covers the consultation period from 03/07/23 – 11/09/23. Full results can be viewed via [Appendix 1](#) and the [Consultation Power Bl.](#)

Total number of responses:

Total Responses	
Public	4786
Partners	139
Staff	726
TOTAL	5651

2.2. General:

- Public and partner trust is higher than overall staff trust.
- The majority of respondents that have used our Prevention, Protection and Response services have rated them as excellent or good.

- The most common theme for not using our services include not knowing what is available followed by not knowing how to access services.

2.3. Prevention:

- Safe and Well visits are the most common Prevention service.
- When asked how we could make them safer, the public have suggested community engagement, climate/environmental advice, electric/battery safety and water safety.

2.4. Protection:

- Of those who stated they live in a tall building:
 - The majority (61%) have not heard of the new Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022.
 - Of those who have heard of the new regulations, the majority think the new regulations have made them safer (85%).
- When asked how we could keep high-rise communities safer, the most common suggestions made by residents include community engagement, advice leaflets, new legislation and sprinkler systems.

2.5. Response:

- The majority of respondents agree with our assessment of emerging risk (81%).
- Public respondents have suggested emerging risks we should be considering include Electric Vehicles and charging, climate and environmental concerns, anti-social behaviour/criminal activity, li-ion battery and storage, building & Infrastructure issues, road access issues, cost of living.
- The public feel least prepared for energy shortages, fuel shortages, mobile network disruption and power outages and slightly more prepared for extreme weather (hot and cold) and food shortages.
- Staff feel most prepared for extreme weather (hot and cold) and least prepared for energy shortages.

- Overall, partners feel the most prepared for disruptive events and staff feel the least prepared.

2.6. People:

- When asked about attracting people from underrepresented groups, there was a relatively even split amongst the options listed. Of those who provided further feedback, a large proportion (17%) suggested WMFS should employ the right person, rather than ‘meeting targets’.
- The majority of the public do not think there are barriers preventing people joining the service.
- Of those who think there are barriers, the most common answers across each group are detailed in the table below.

	Most common barriers selected
Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception of the role of a firefighter • Never thought about joining the fire service • Disabilities or health concerns • Exposure to harm or trauma
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception of the role of a firefighter • Lack of information about the role • Shift work • Disabilities or health concerns/exposure to harm and trauma
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salary and benefits • Perception of the role of a firefighter • Cultural/religious barriers • Shift work

2.7. Sustainability:

- Of the 10 options listed, the public, partners and staff have all chosen the same top five future uses of a community fire station (although in slightly different orders). The table below shows where the top five options were placed by each group.

	Public	Partner	Staff
Access to life-saving equipment	1 st	1 st	1 st
A base for multiple emergency services	2 nd	2 nd	5 th
Safety information and education	3 rd	5 th	3 rd
Emergency relief/rest centre	4 th	3 rd	4 th
Safe havens	5 th	4 th	2 nd

- When asked how we should prioritise a number of sustainability factors, the most common factors ranked first include - honesty, integrity and ethical behaviour as well as how we prepare for the future scale and frequency of climate-related emergencies.

The below table shows the average position per group for each factor.

	Public	Partner	Staff
Honesty integrity and ethical behaviour	2	2	2
How to prepare for future scale and frequency of climate-related emergencies	1	3	3
Promote well-being for our communities and staff	3	1	1
Help communities make more sustainable decisions	4	4	4
Achieve net zero sooner rather than later	5	5	5

2.8. Demographics

Comparison with previous consultation

Source of responses	2020 Consultation	2023 Consultation
WM Now	88%	45%
Staff engagement	5% (533)	9.3% (449)
Total	10,663	5,651
Asian	6%	6.4%
Black	2%	2.7%
White	91%	82%

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. Under the National Fire and Rescue Framework, West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority (WMFRA) has committed to consult on our CRMP every three years, or where there is a material change to it. The service is required by the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework to ensure our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) “reflects effective consultation throughout its development and at all review stages with the community, its workforce and representative bodies and partners”. WMFRA are therefore carrying out meaningful consultation with our communities, staff, partners and businesses across the West Midlands region.
- 3.2. We continue to horizon scan to identify new and emerging risks that may have an impact on the risk landscape of our communities and the services we provide. Our risk analysis has identified the following themes which have been incorporated into the public consultation:
- Business Continuity or organisational resilience – an increase in disruptive events such as protests, international disputes, social disruption, supply chain issues, loss of utilities, climate change, cyber-attacks.
 - Emerging Technologies – the drive for sustainability to negate climate change is creating emerging technologies such as Lithium-Ion Batteries, hydrogen, Large Energy Storage

Systems and new building construction methodologies in the built environment.

- Cost of Living – vulnerability is going to continue to rise with the impact of the cost of living, leading to increased community risk and frequency and severity of incidents. Exasperating underlying social inequalities that we know increase our communities' risk to fire and other emergencies.
- Sustainability and Net Zero - WMFS recognises that not only do our activities impact on the environment but changes in the environment may impact on our operational response. As role models within our communities and to meet external targets, we see sustainability becoming an overarching theme across all of our activities.

4. CONSULTATION APPROACH

- 4.1. The consultation has provided an opportunity for the public, staff and partners to determine whether our approach is supported and provide feedback in relation to how we may improve or prioritise services. Consultation will help to create a better understanding of the needs of local communities and to help create a CRMP that is more closely aligned to these needs.
- 4.2. Based on the CRMP analysis of risk, consultation focussed on the below five themes:
 - Prevention
 - Protection
 - Response
 - People
 - Sustainability
- 4.3. The consultation ran for 10 weeks from 03/07/23 – 11/09/23. The outcomes of this consultation will have a direct impact on the development of Our Plan and therefore consideration has been given to the corporate planning timelines in developing and presenting 'Our Plan 2024-2027' to the Fire Authority.

- 4.4. The CRMP consultation aimed to engage a broad range of demographics in line with the diverse communities we serve which will include partners and businesses. This involved utilising the digital platform of WMNow adopted for the 2020 consultation, further enhanced by face-to-face community and partner interaction. Our approach also targeted three distinct groups; the public, our partners and our staff. Questions were be tailored to each to allow more meaningful responses.
- 4.5. We aimed to gather the greatest range of information possible from the consultation which can be used to inform our existing approaches and our future priorities.

5. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

In preparing this report a full Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken.

6. **DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

In preparing this report a full Data Protection Impact Assessment has been undertaken.

7. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The consultation proposed in this paper meets the Authority's requirements under the National Fire and Rescue Framework for England 2012.

8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial implications to the approval of recommendations in this report.

9. **SUSTAINABILITY (ENVIRONMENTAL) IMPLICATIONS**

In preparing this report a full Sustainability Impact Assessment has been undertaken

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- [State of Fire and Rescue: The Annual Assessment of Fire and Rescue Services in England 2019](#)
- [The NFCC, National Employers \(England\) and LGA 'Fit for the Future' report 2020](#)
- [Community Risk Management Planning Fire Standard](#)
- [HMICFRS Inspection Report](#)
- [Independent Culture Review | London Fire Brigade](#)
- [Views and culture in fire and rescue services](#)

The contact for this report is Hannah Spencer, CRMP Co-Ordinator – Hannah.Spencer@wmfs.net

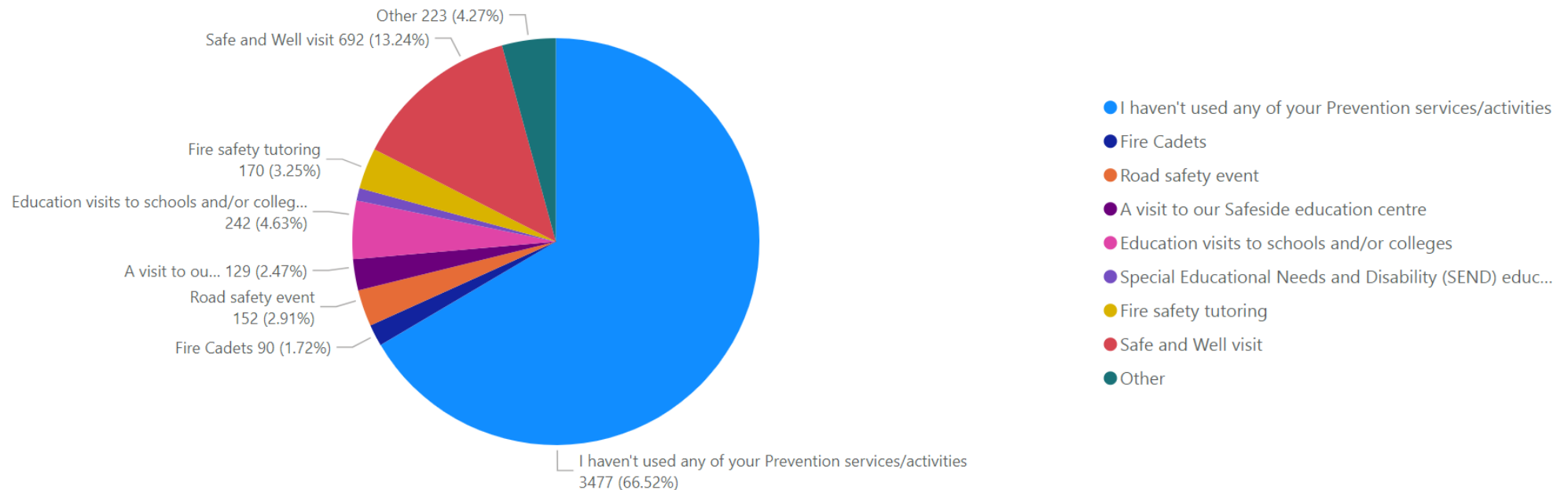
APPENDIX 1: FULL RESULTS

PREVENTION - PUBLIC

Have you used or experienced any of our prevention services/activities?

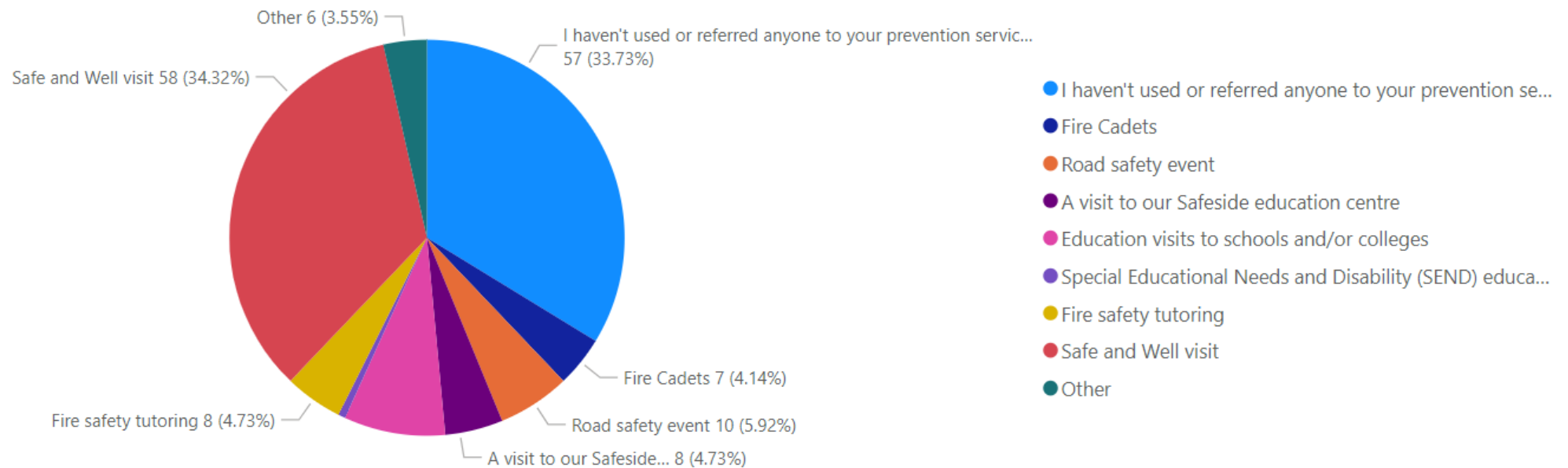
The majority of respondents have not used our Prevention services (66.5%).

Of those who have used our Prevention services, the most common services used are Safe and Well (13.2%) and education visits to schools/colleges (4.6%). 4% have selected 'Other' Prevention services - over half of these responses of the include activities that would fall under a Safe and Well visit. Other services listed were in relation to community engagement or incidents.



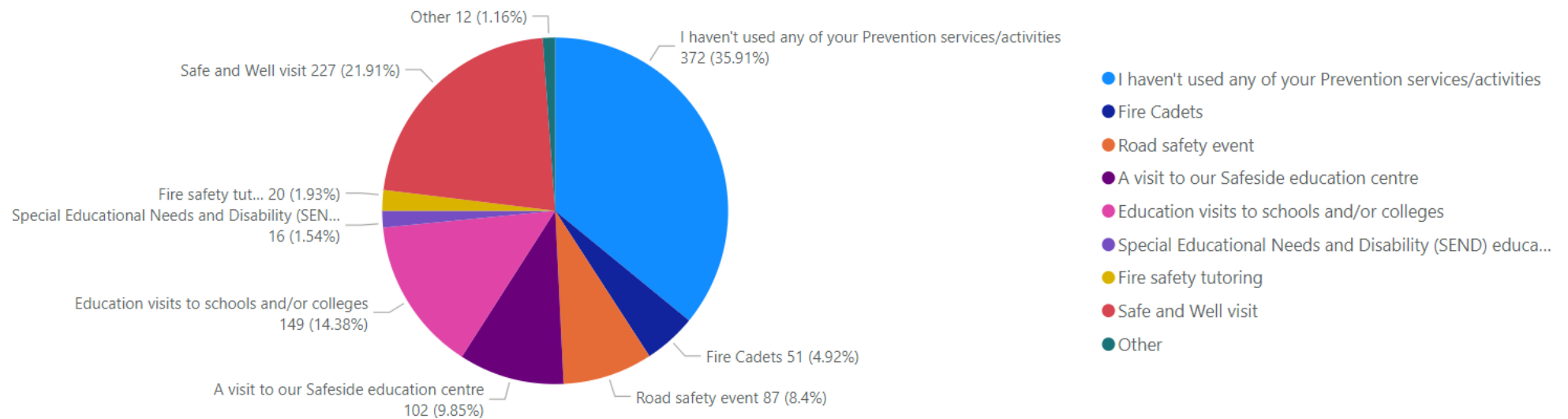
PREVENTION - PARTNERS

Partners were asked if they have experienced anyone or referred anyone to our Prevention services/activities. The chart below shows the results.



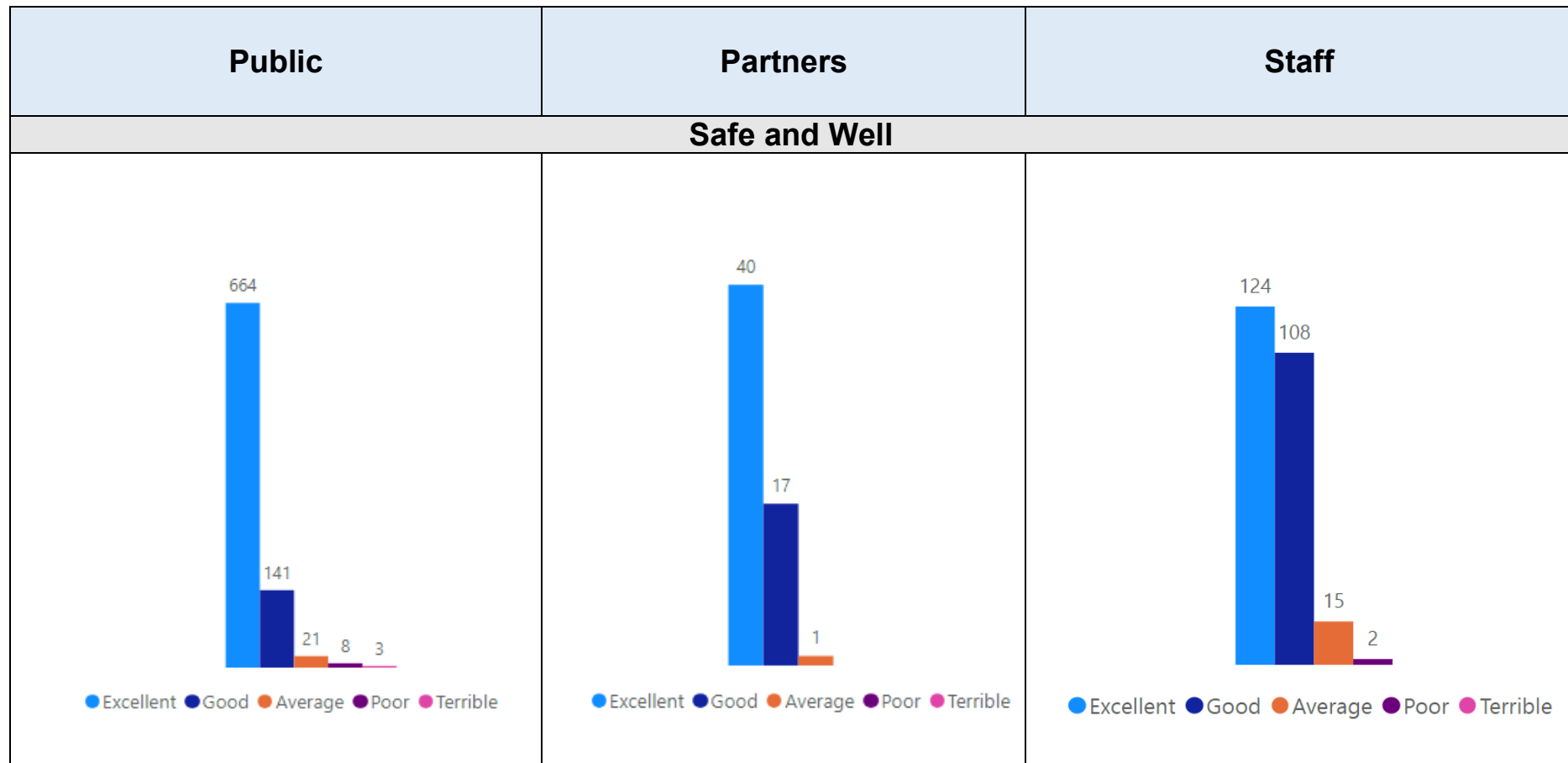
PREVENTION - STAFF

Staff were asked if they or their family had experienced any of our Prevention services or activities. The pie chart below demonstrates the results.

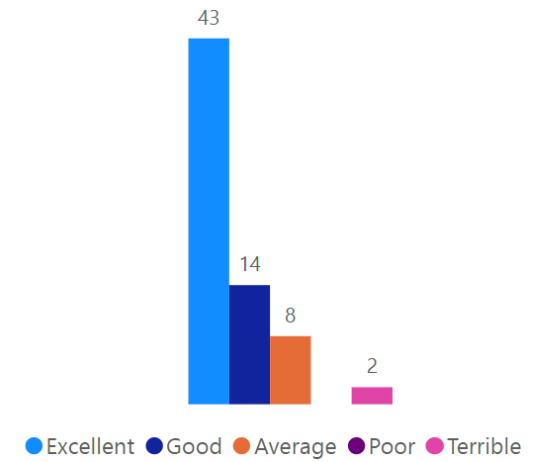
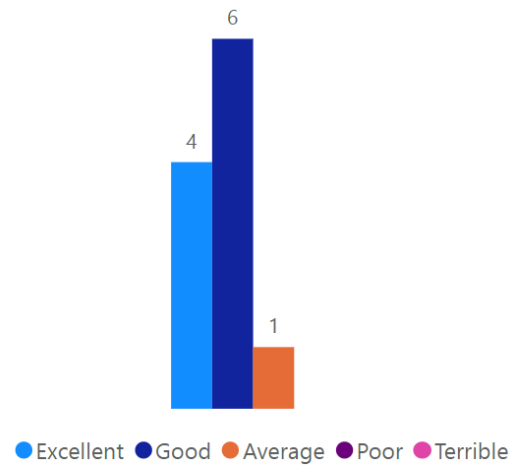
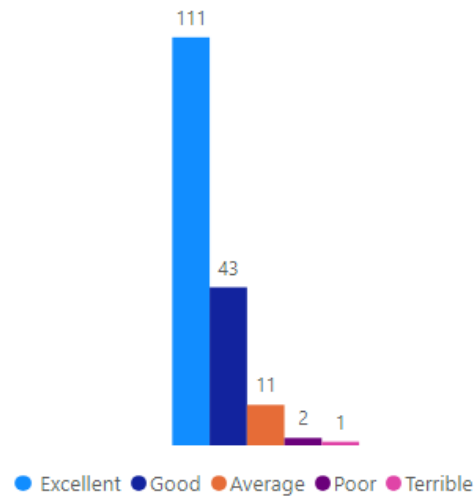


Rating of Prevention Services

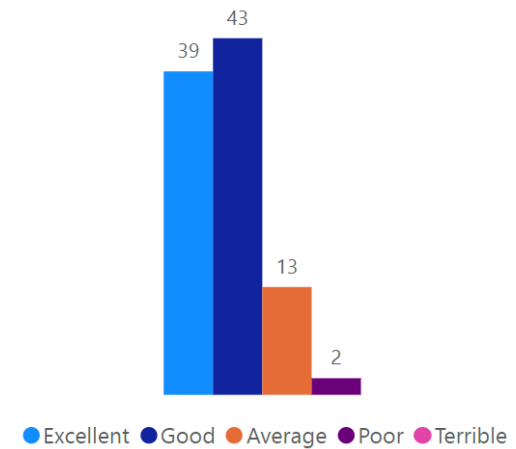
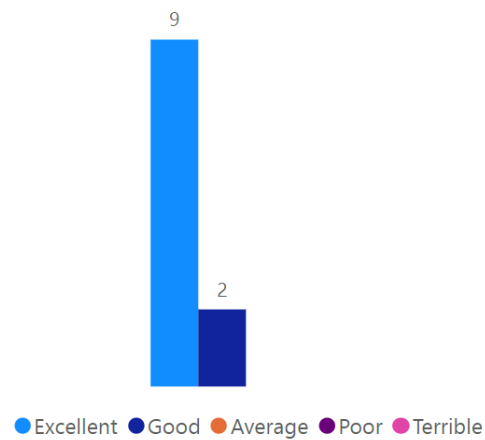
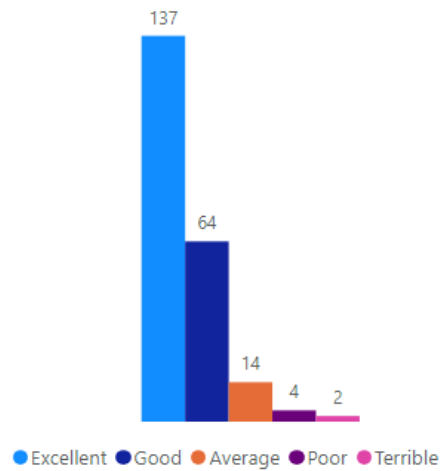
The majority of respondents that have used our Prevention services have rated them as excellent or good.



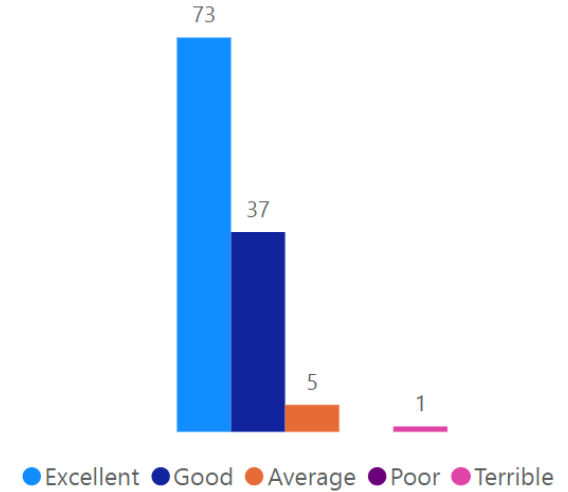
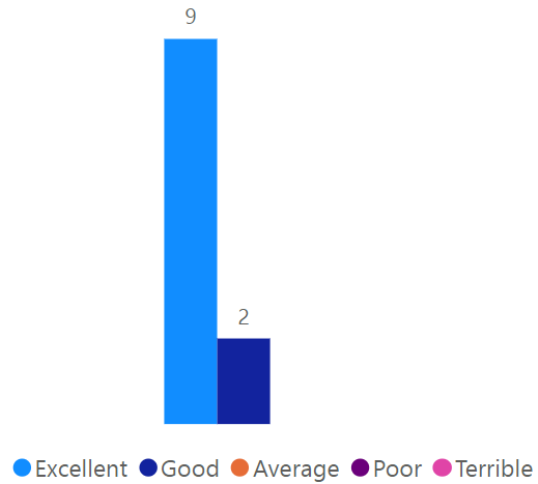
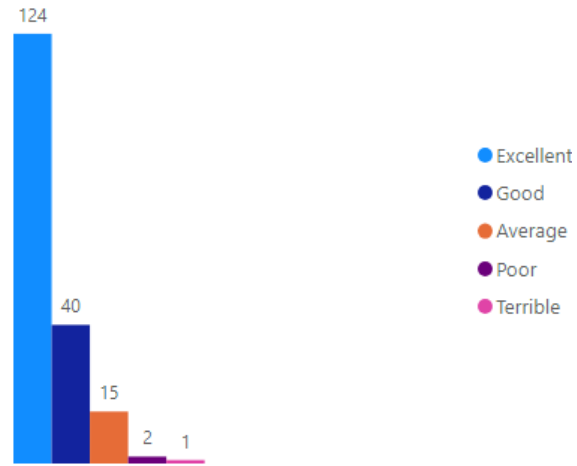
Fire Cadets



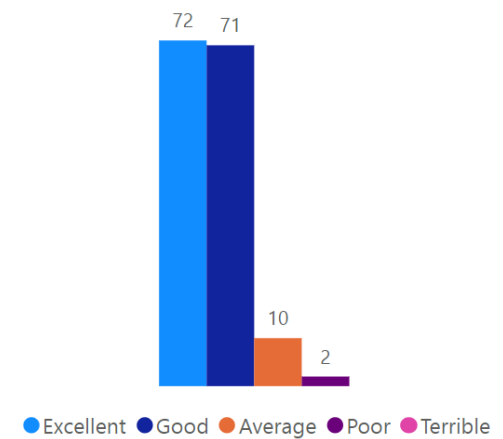
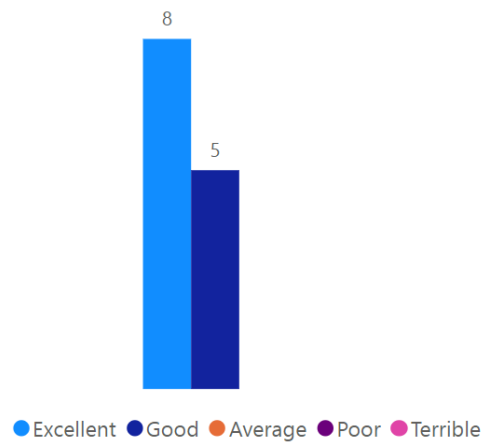
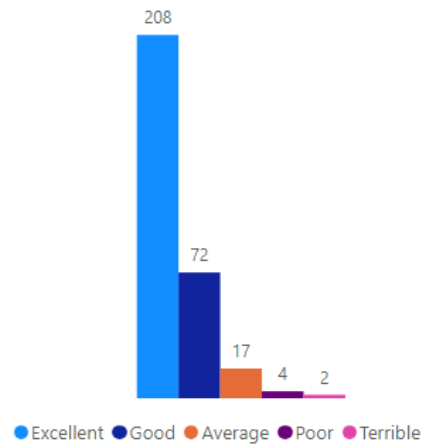
Road Safety Events



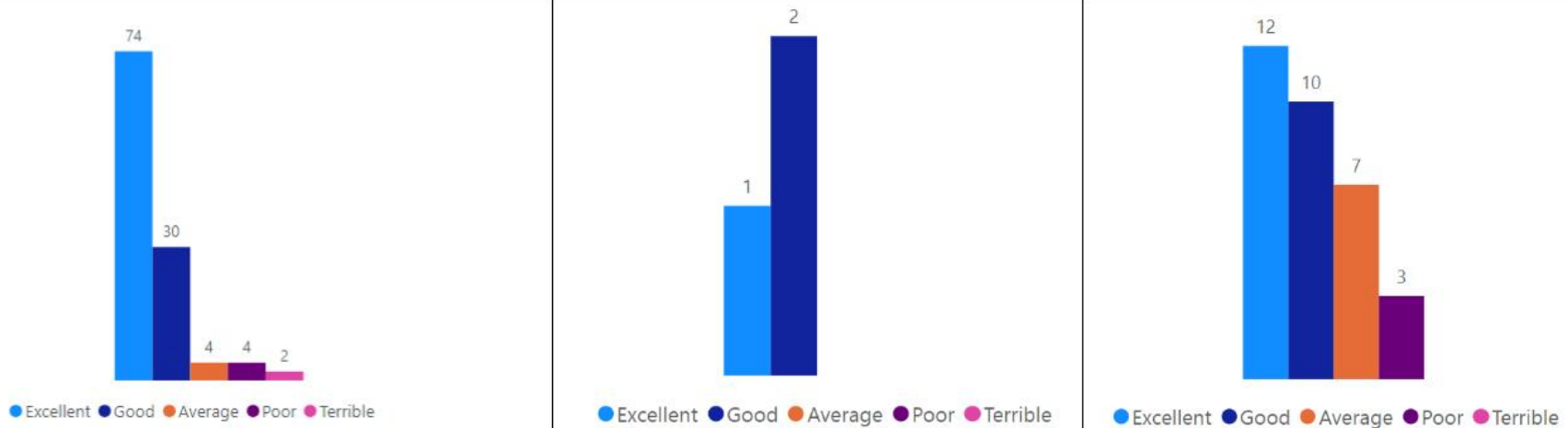
Vist to Safeside Education Centre



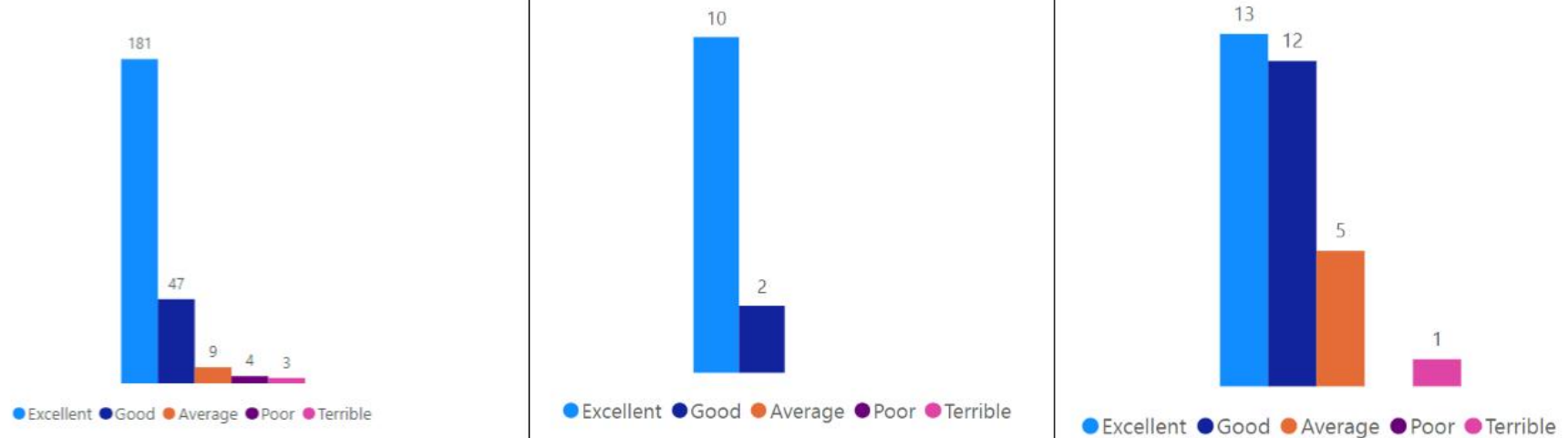
Education visits to schools and colleges



Special Educations Needs and Disabilty (SEND) Education



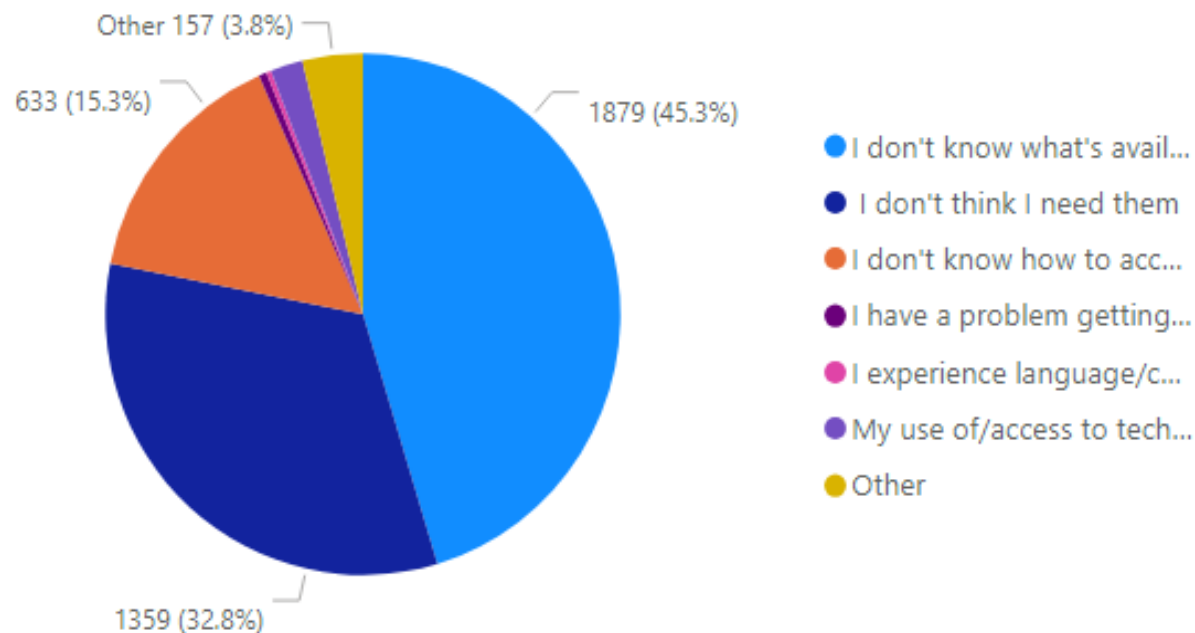
Fire Safety Tutoring



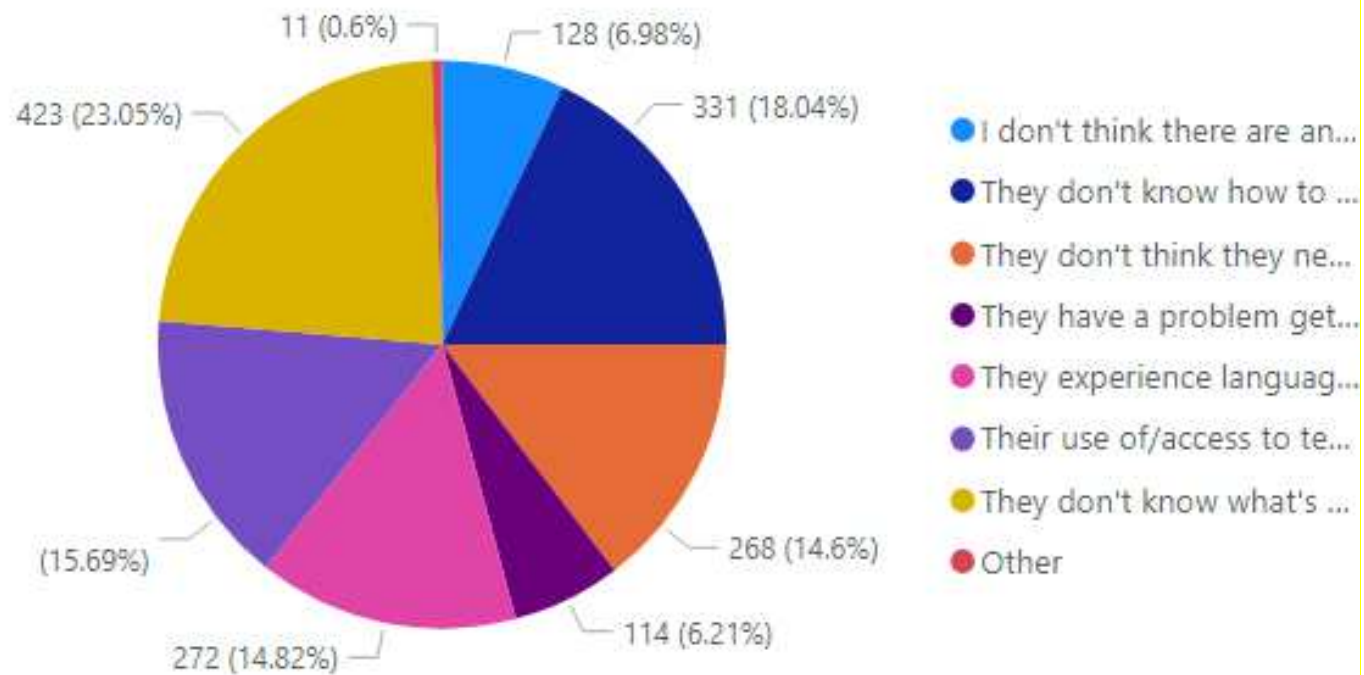
Why people do not access Prevention Services

The majority of public respondents stated they have not used our Prevention services because they do not know what's available (45%) or they do not think they need them (33%). A smaller number have stated they do not know how to access services (15%), or their use of technology is limited (2%).

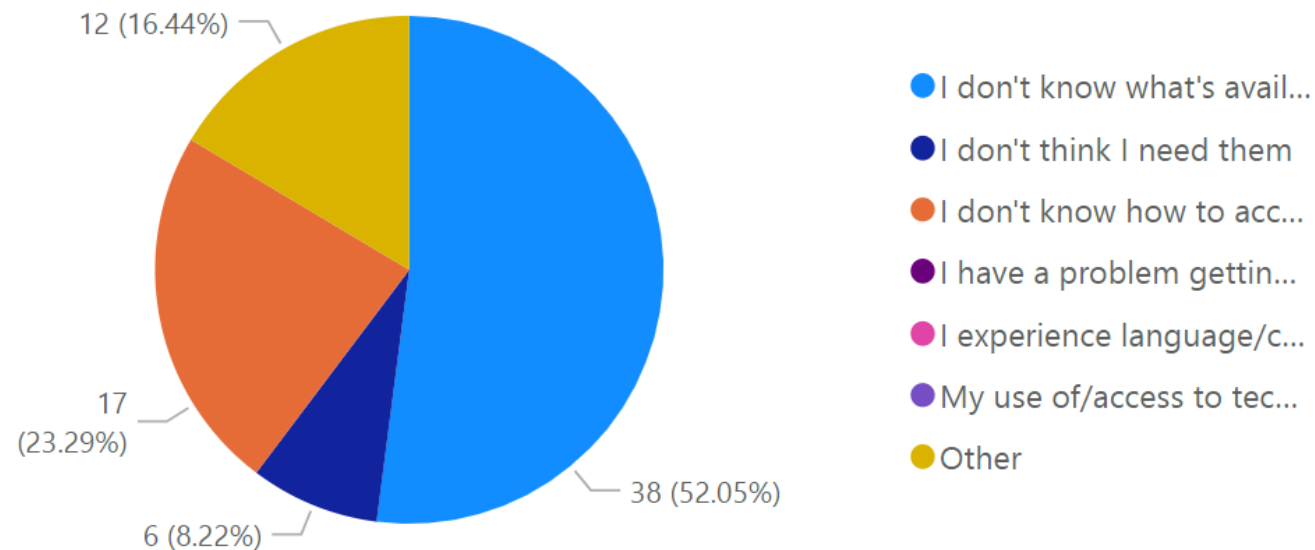
A number of respondents (3.8%) have selected 'Other'. The majority of the services used align to the multiple-choice options however the respondents have selected 'Other' and provided an explanation rather than select the relevant option. The main reasons given were again that they do not think they need Prevention services or are not aware of services. Other alternative reasons listed include not having time to access services or poor health.



Staff have also suggested not knowing what services are available or not knowing how to access them is the largest barrier to accessing Prevention services and activities.

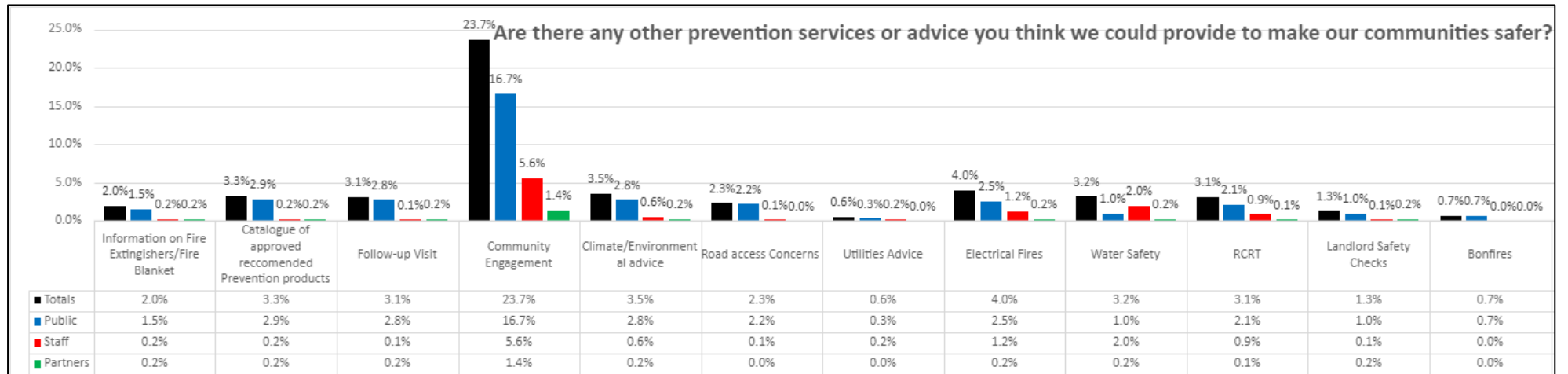


This theme continues for Partners, as they have stated the biggest barrier to accessing Prevention services is not knowing what's available as well as not knowing how to access services.



Are there any other Prevention Services we could provide?

The majority of public respondents (85%), 70% of partners and 84% of staff do not think there are any other services we could provide to make communities safer. When asked how we could make them safer, the public have suggested community engagement, climate/environmental advice, electric/battery safety, water safety and road casualty reduction activities.



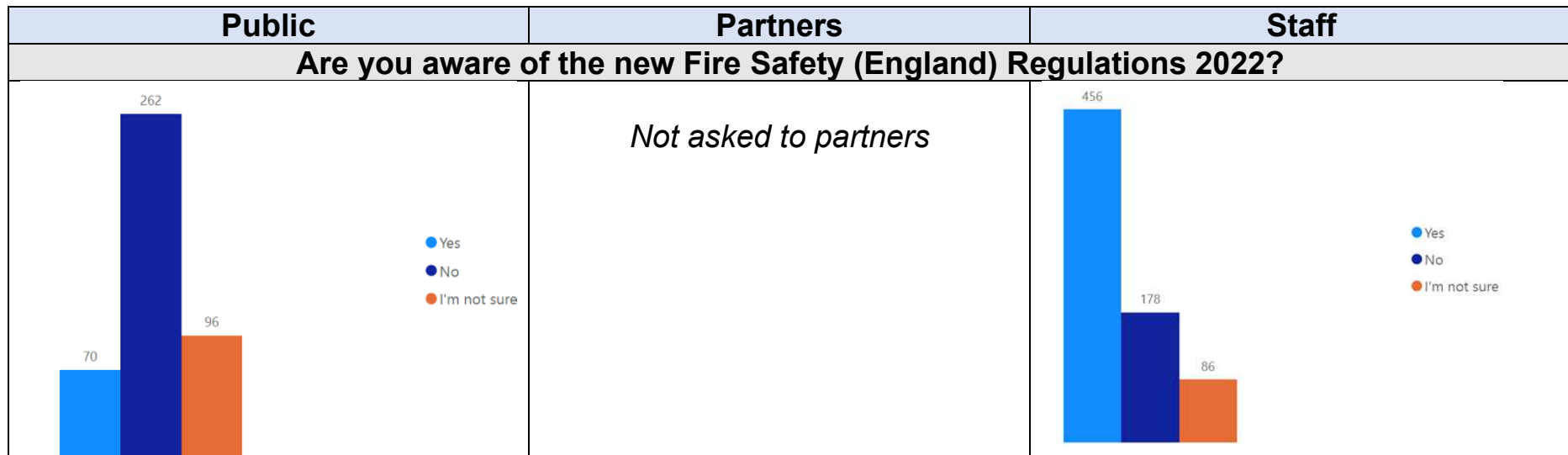
PROTECTION - PUBLIC

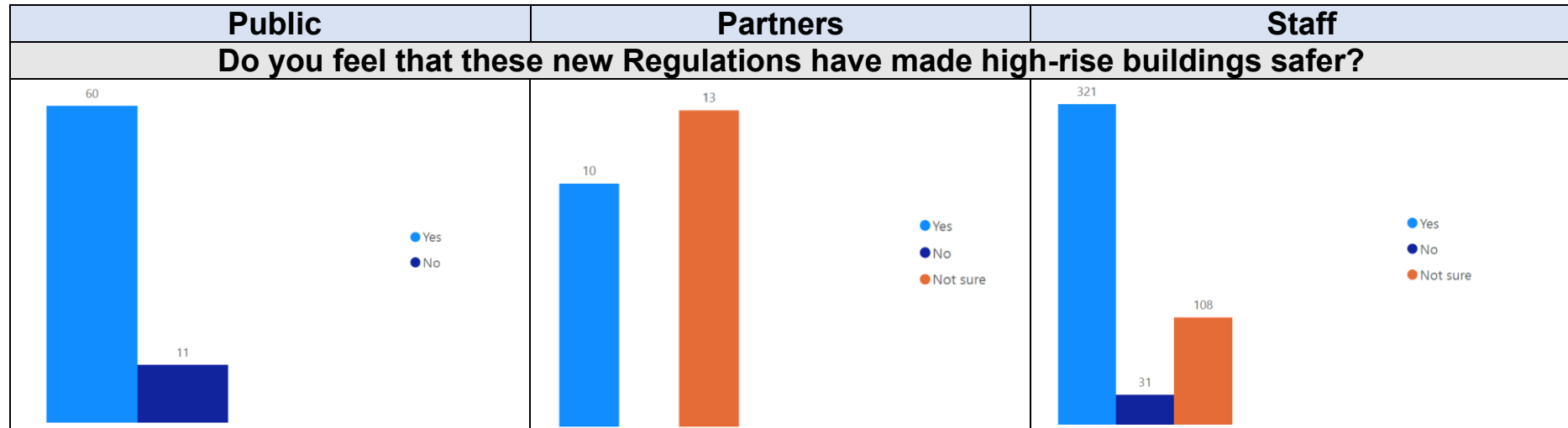
For members of the public living in tall buildings - Are you aware of the new Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022?

Of the responses, 117 people have stated they live in a tall building. The majority (61.2%) of residents living in tall buildings have not heard of the new Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022. Around 22% are not sure if they have heard of the regulations, and 16% have stated they have heard of them.

Do you feel that these new regulations have made high-rise buildings safer?

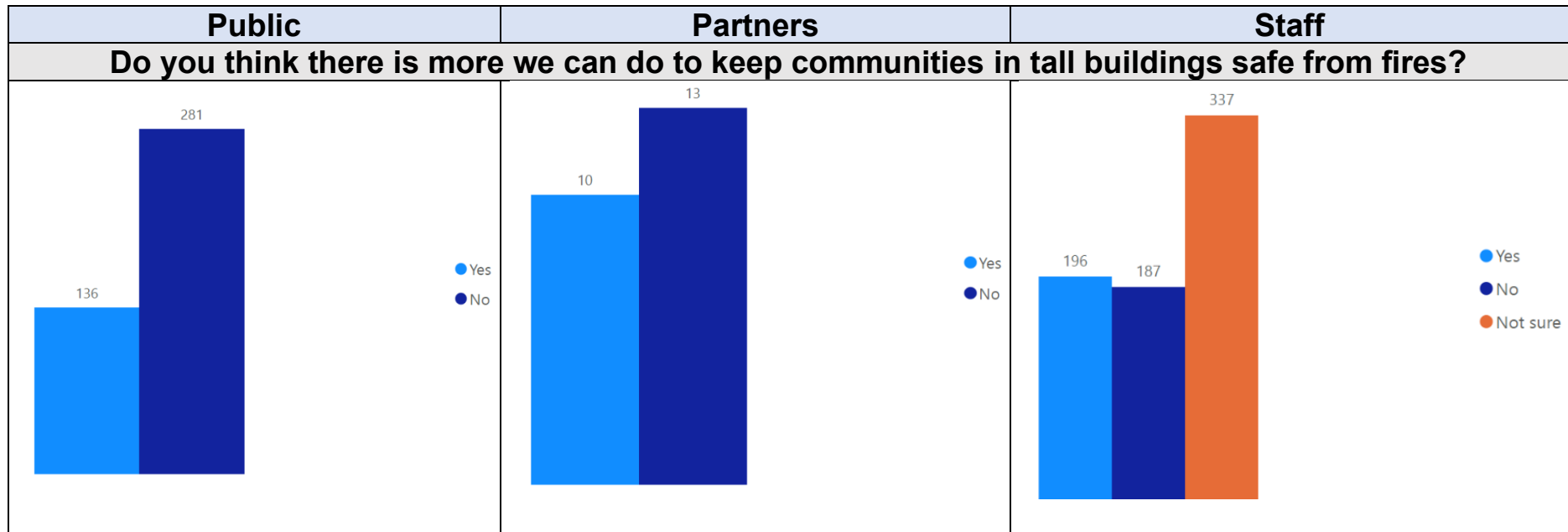
Of the members of the public living in tall buildings who have heard of the new regulations, the majority think the new regulations have made them safer (85%), however 15% of people stating they do not think the new Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 have made them safer.





Do you think there is more we can do to keep communities in high-rise buildings safe from fire?

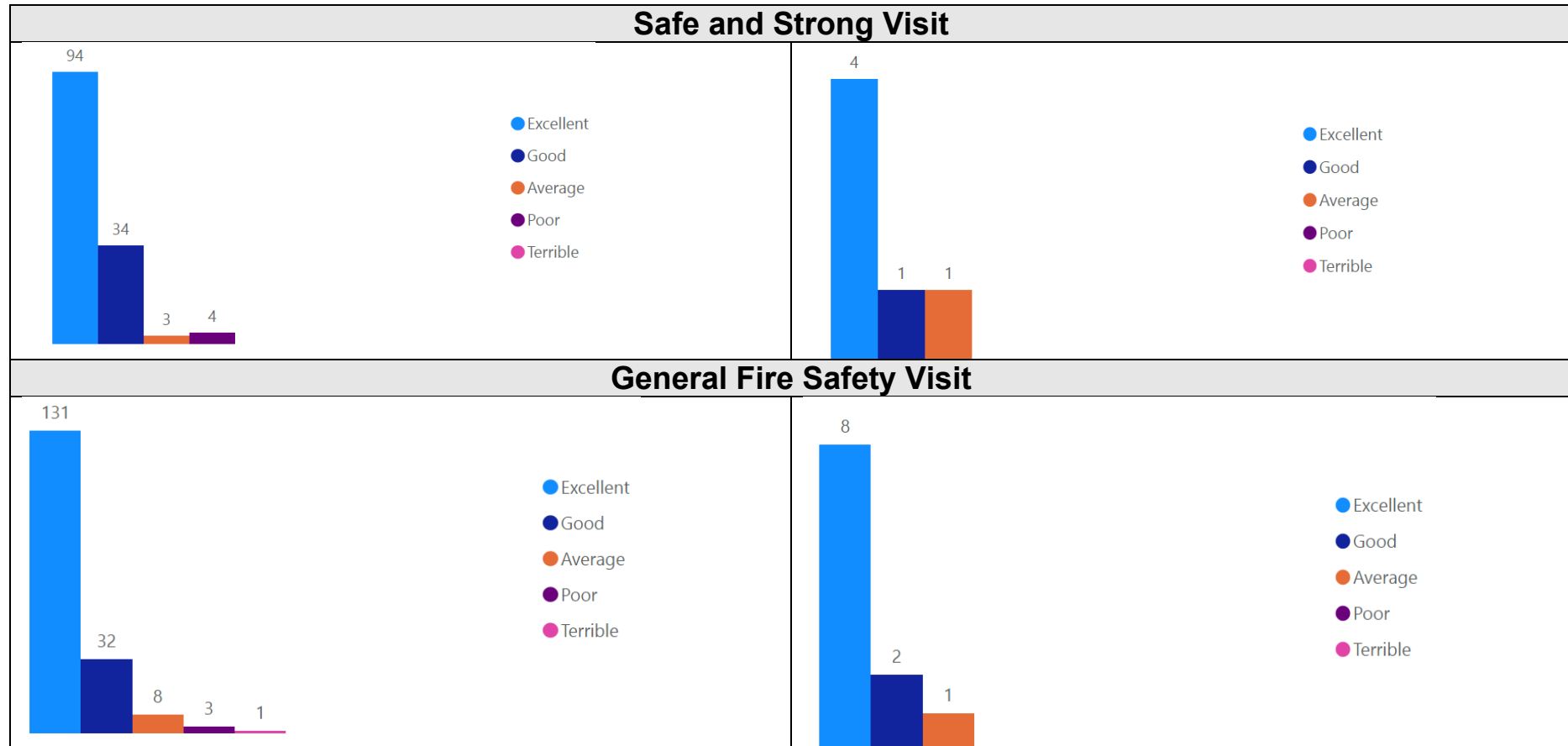
Of those living in tall buildings, around 33% have suggested there is more we can do to keep high rise communities safe. Around 67% do not think there is more than can be done. When asked how we could keep high-rise communities safer, the most common suggestions made by residents include: community engagement, advice leaflets, new legislation and sprinkler systems.

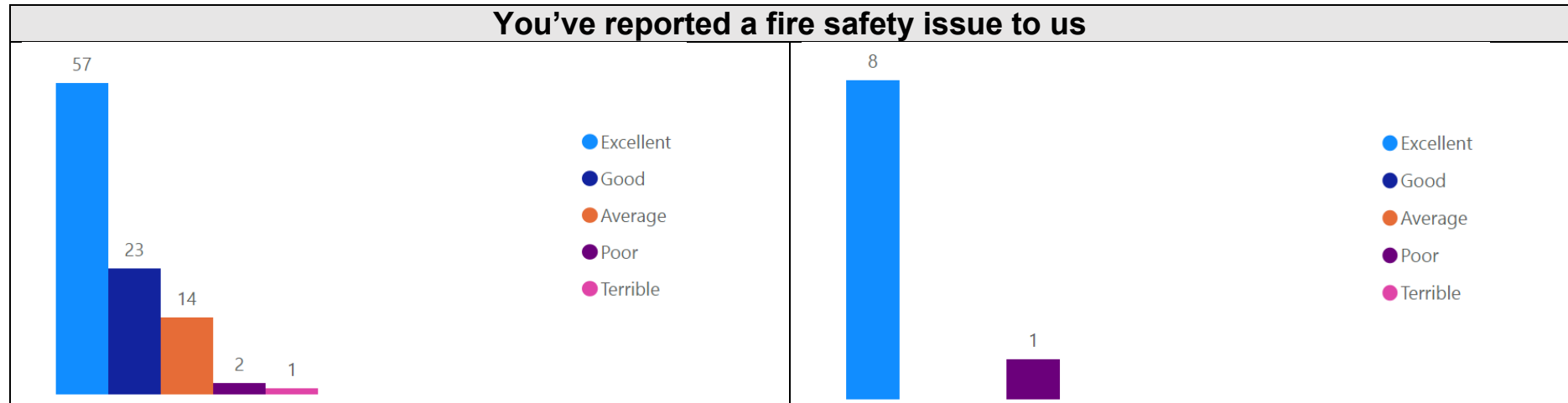


Rating of Fire Safety Services

285 members of the public and 21 partners stated that they had used our Protection services. Of those that have used our Protection services, most ratings are either excellent or good.



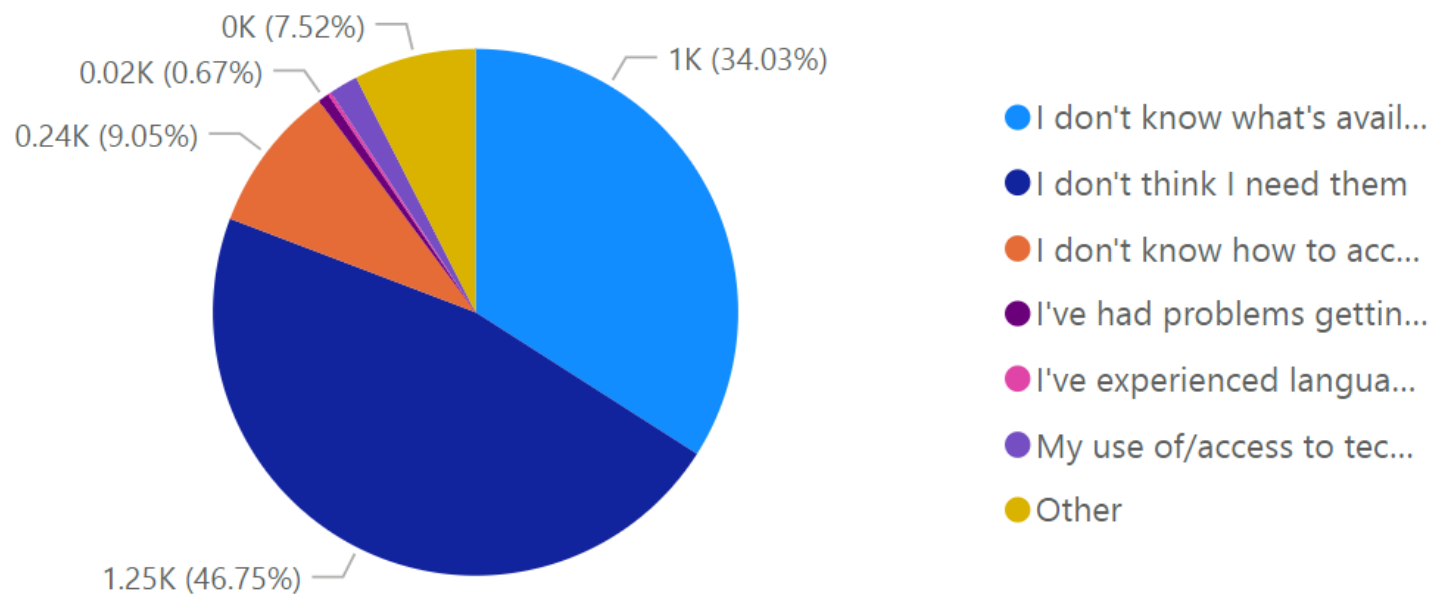




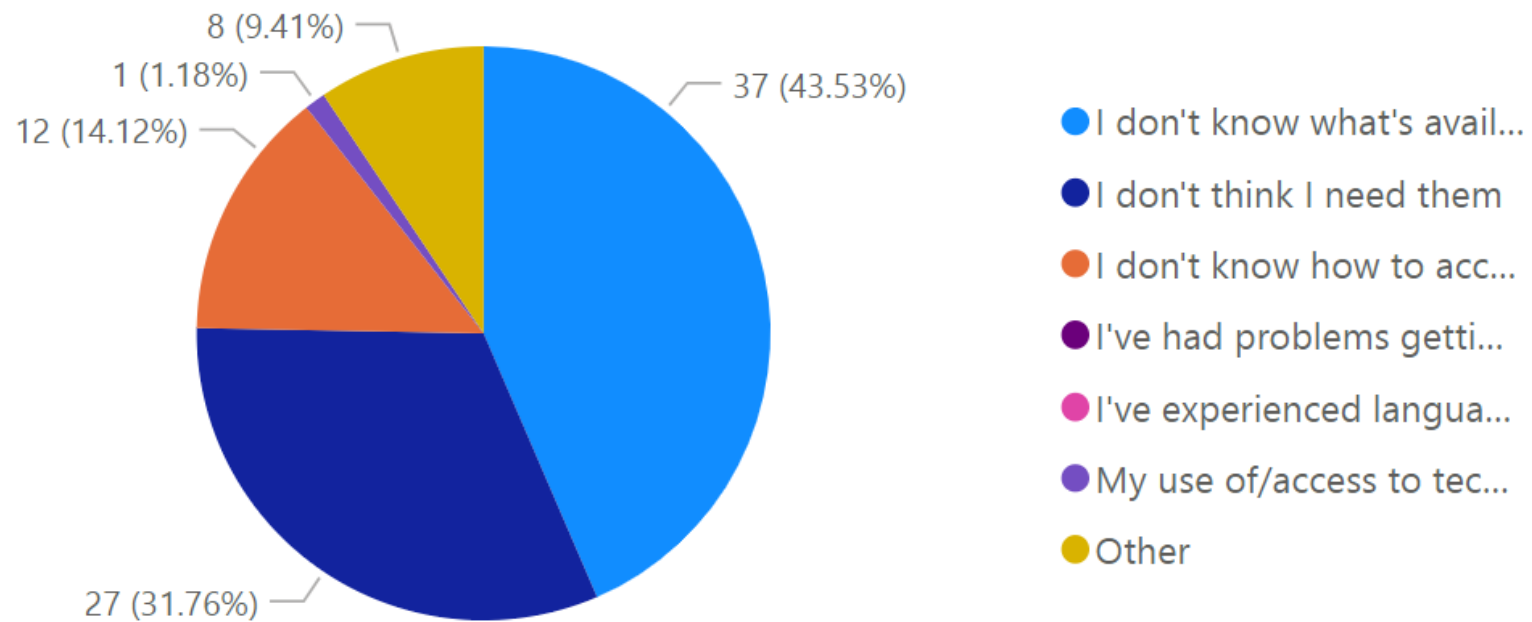
If you haven't used our Protection services, why is that?

The majority of those who have not used our Protection services do not feel they are required or do not know what is available.

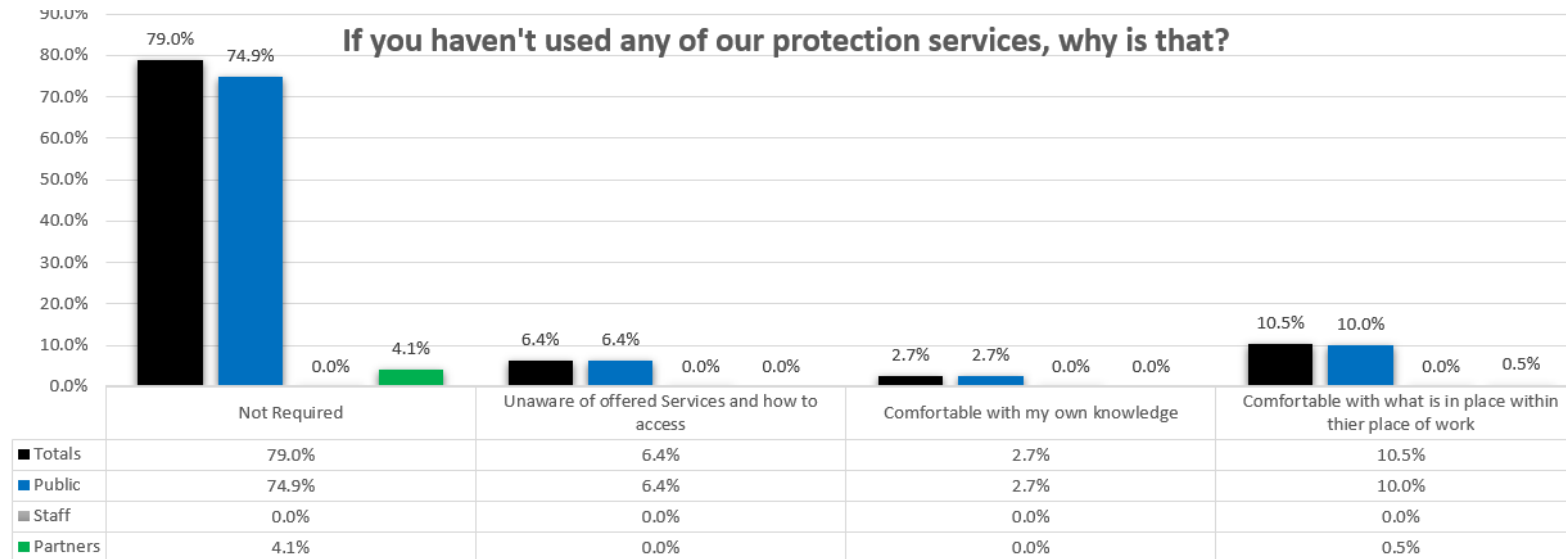
Reasons for not using our Protection services – Public:



Reasons for not using our Protection services – Partners:



The below shows a summary of other responses when asked why they have not used our Protection services.



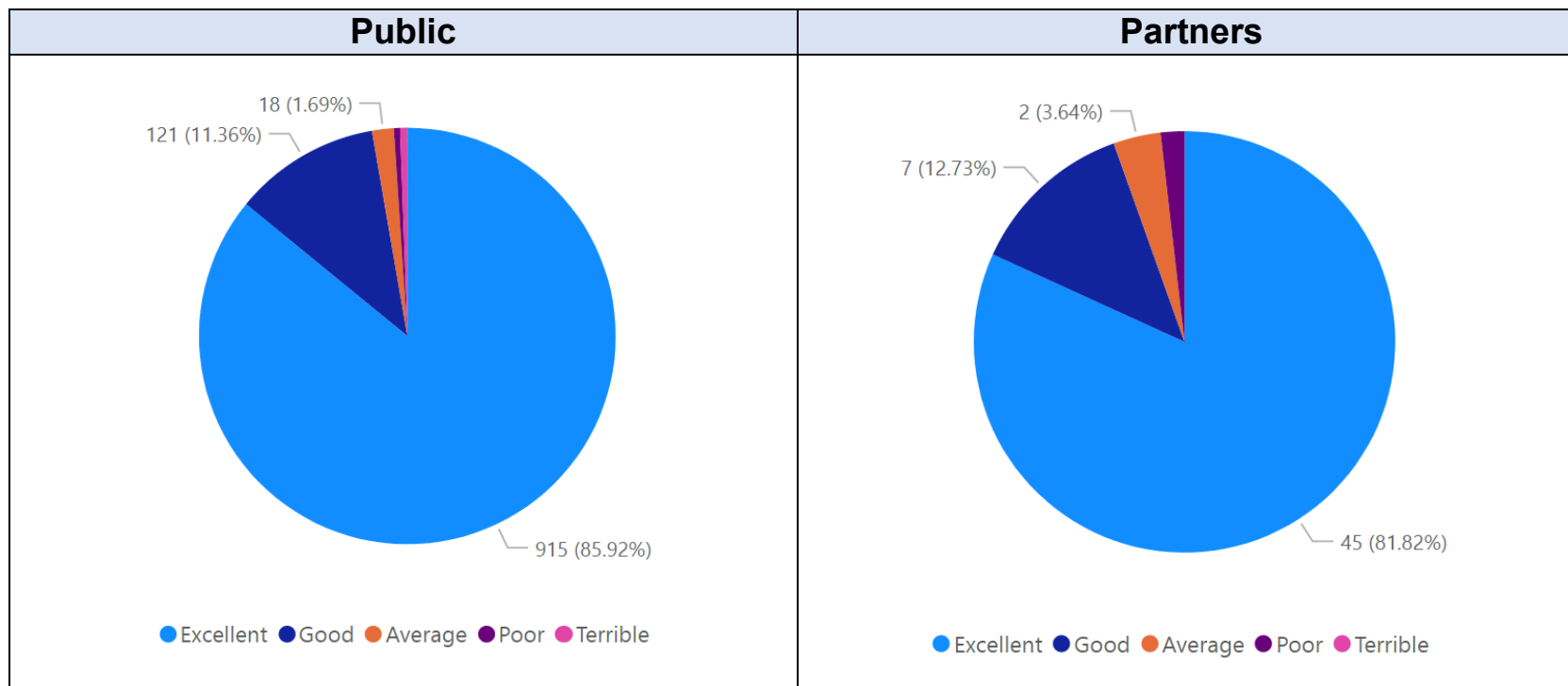
RESPONSE - PUBLIC

Has West Midlands Fire Service ever helped you in an emergency?

Of all the respondents, 22% have indicated they have used our Response services. The remaining 78% have not used Response services.

Rating of Response services

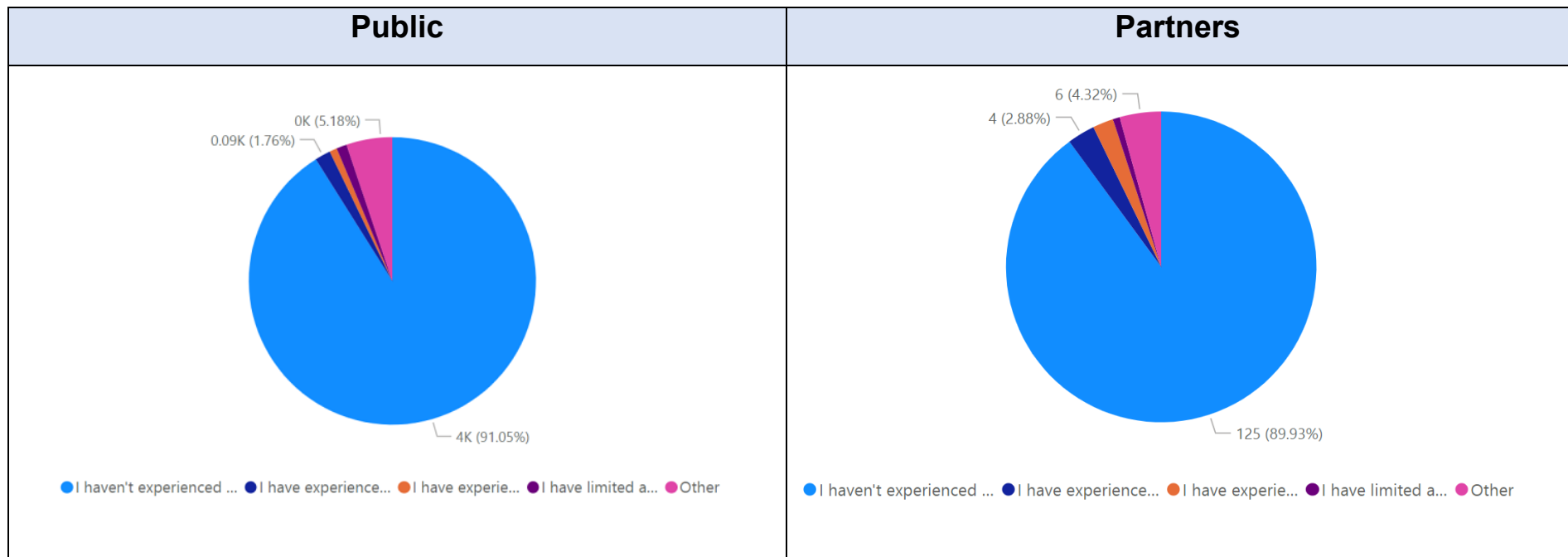
Of those that have used our Response services, the most common rating is excellent or good.



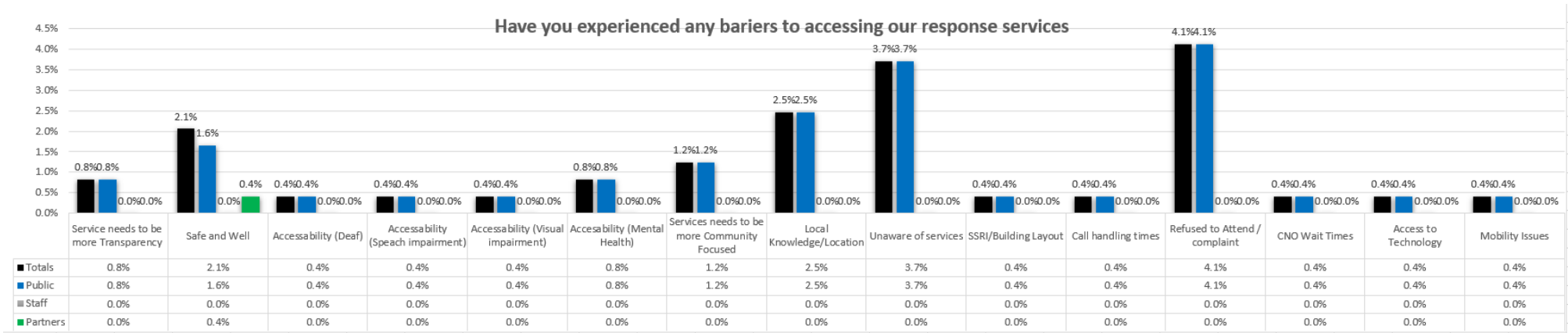
Have you experienced any barriers to accessing our Response services?

The majority of public respondents (91%) have not experienced any barriers when accessing our Response services.

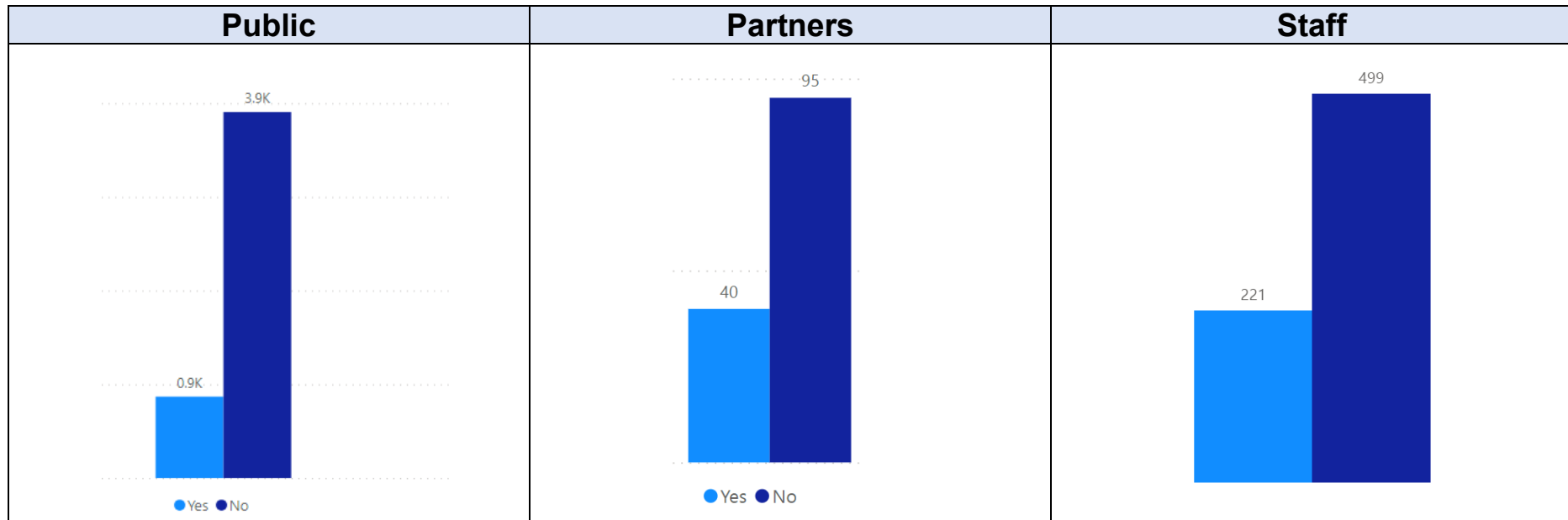
A smaller number have identified problems with getting information (1.8%), limited access to technology (1.1%) or language/communication barriers (0.9%) as barriers to accessing our services.



The below chart details other reasons the public, partners and staff have listed as barriers to accessing Response services.



Do you feel there are any other new and/or emerging risks that we should be considering?



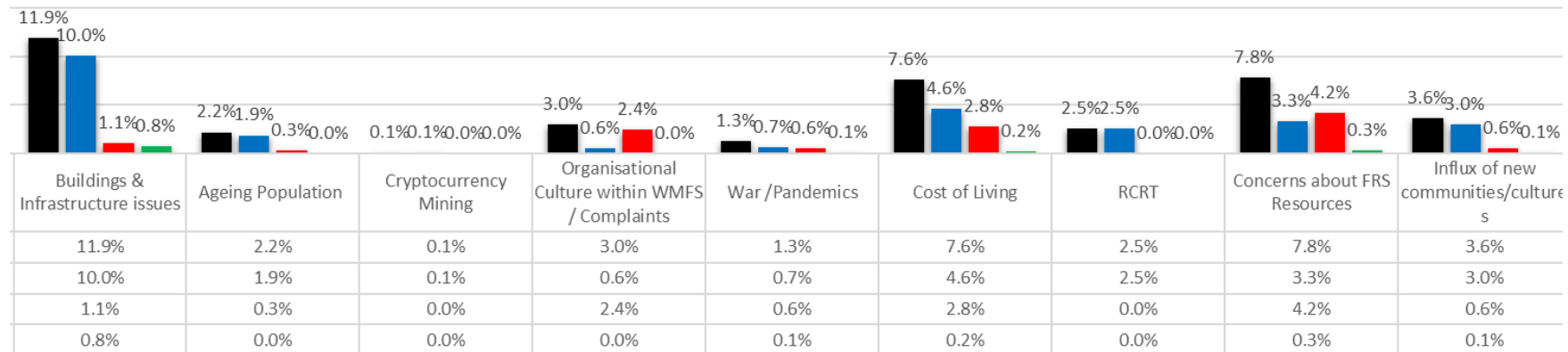
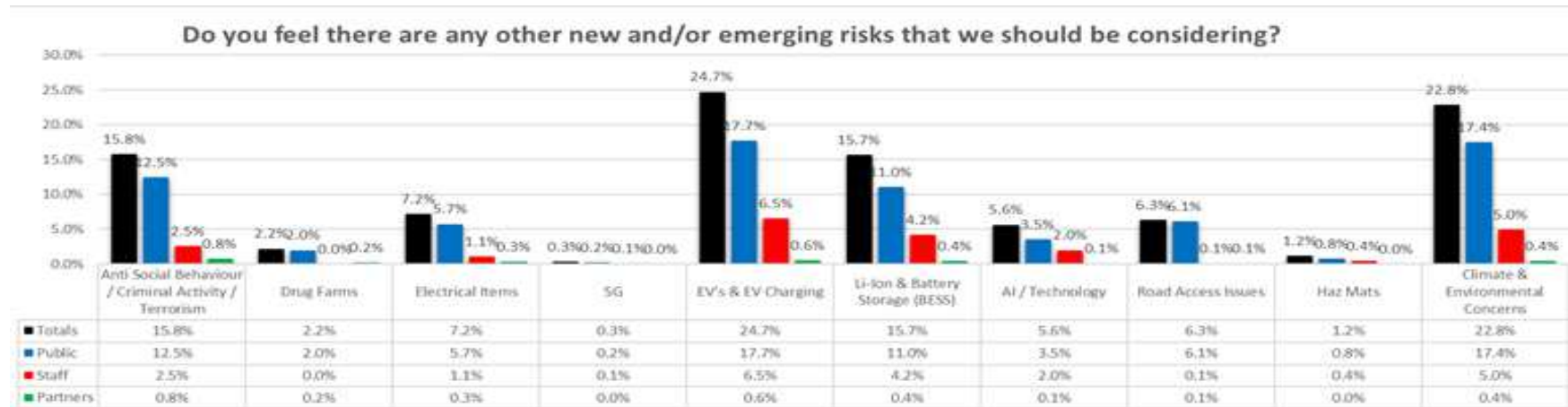
The majority of respondents (82%) do not think there are any other risks we should be considering, A smaller percentage (18%) do feel there are additional risks we should consider.

Risks the public feel we should consider include:

- Electric Vehicles and charging (18%)
- Climate and environmental concerns (17%)
- Anti-social behaviour/criminal activity (12%)
- Li-ion battery and storage (11%)
- Building & Infrastructure issues (10%)

- Road access issues (6%)
- Cost of living (5%)

Other risks highlighted in smaller numbers included drug farms, electrical items, AI technology, ageing population, influx of new communities, solar panels, alternative fuel and medical concerns.

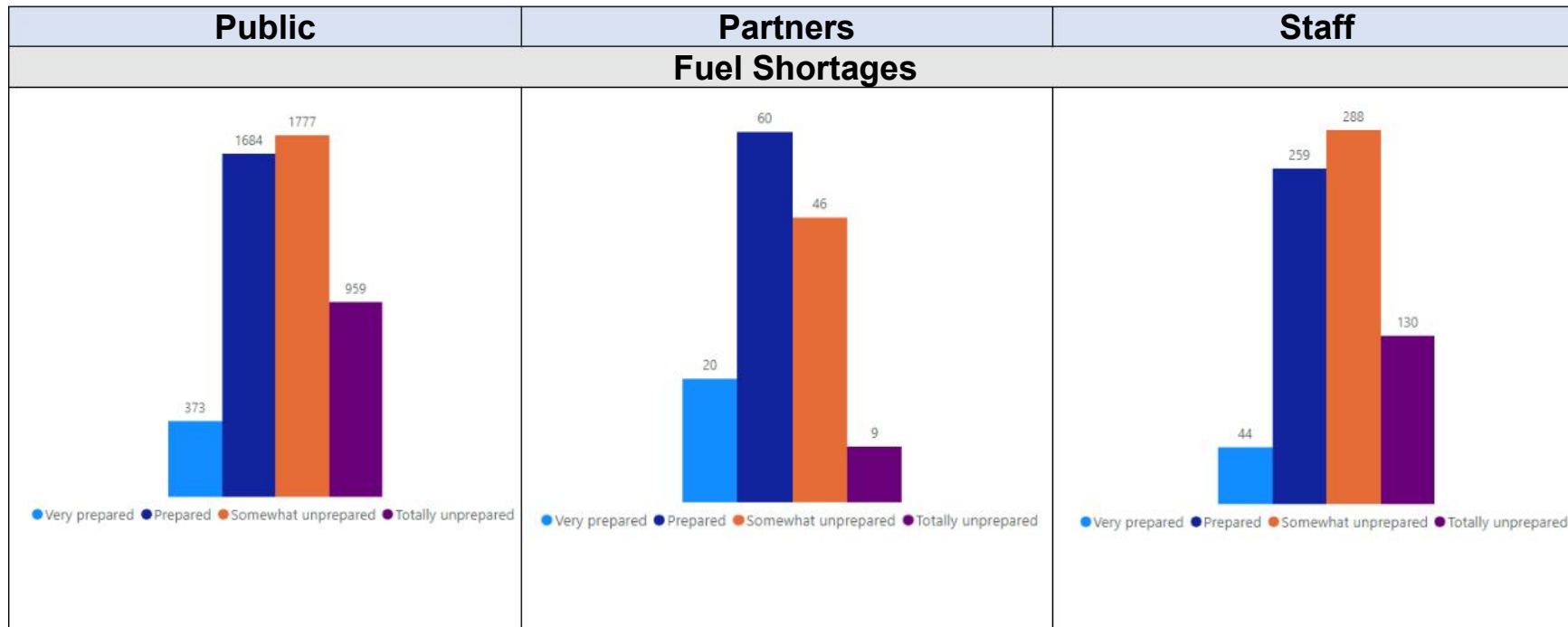


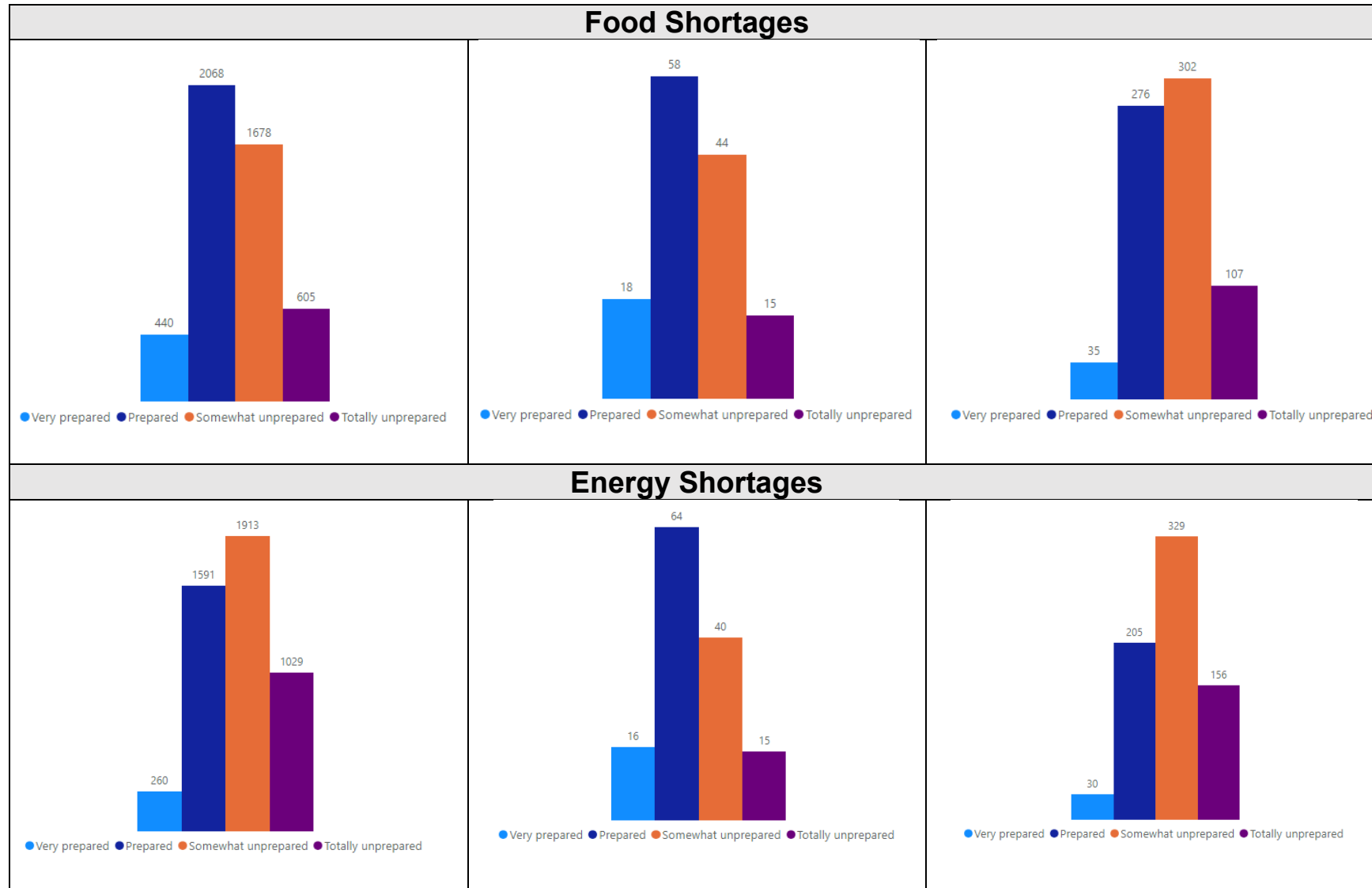
How prepared do you feel you are to cope with the following?

Public respondents feel more unprepared for energy shortages, fuel shortages, mobile network disruption and power outages. Respondents feel slightly more prepared for extreme weather (hot and cold) and food shortages.

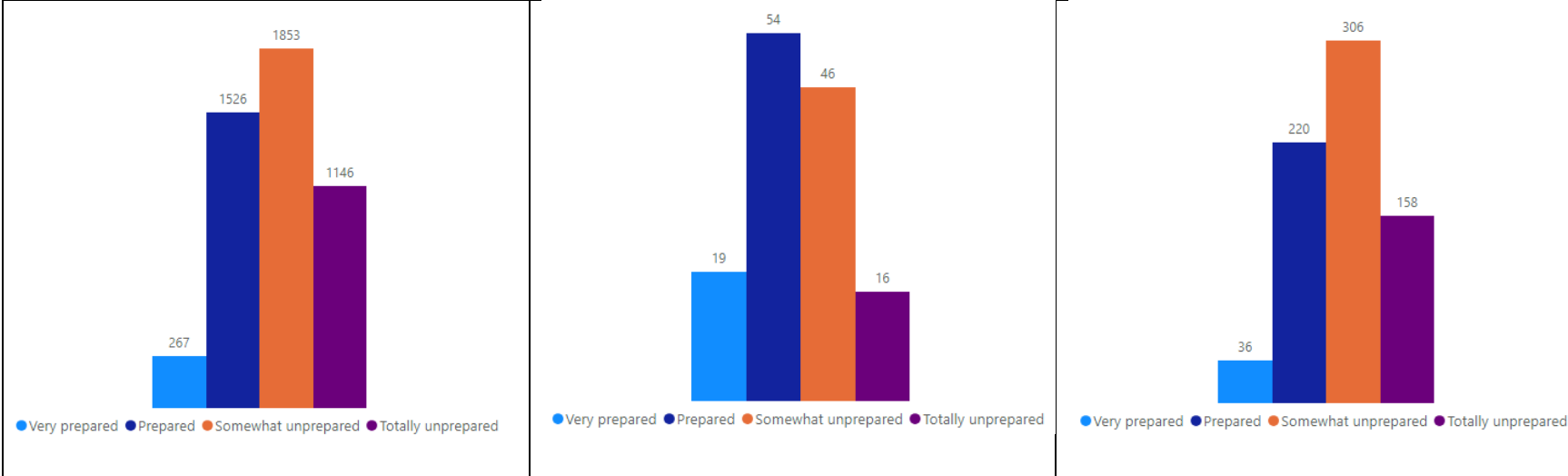
Partners feel least prepared for energy shortages, fuel shortages, mobile network disruption and power outages and slightly more prepared for extreme weather (hot and cold) and food shortages.

Staff feel most prepared for extreme weather (hot and cold) and least prepared for energy shortages. Overall, partners feel the most prepared for disruptive events and staff feel the least prepared.

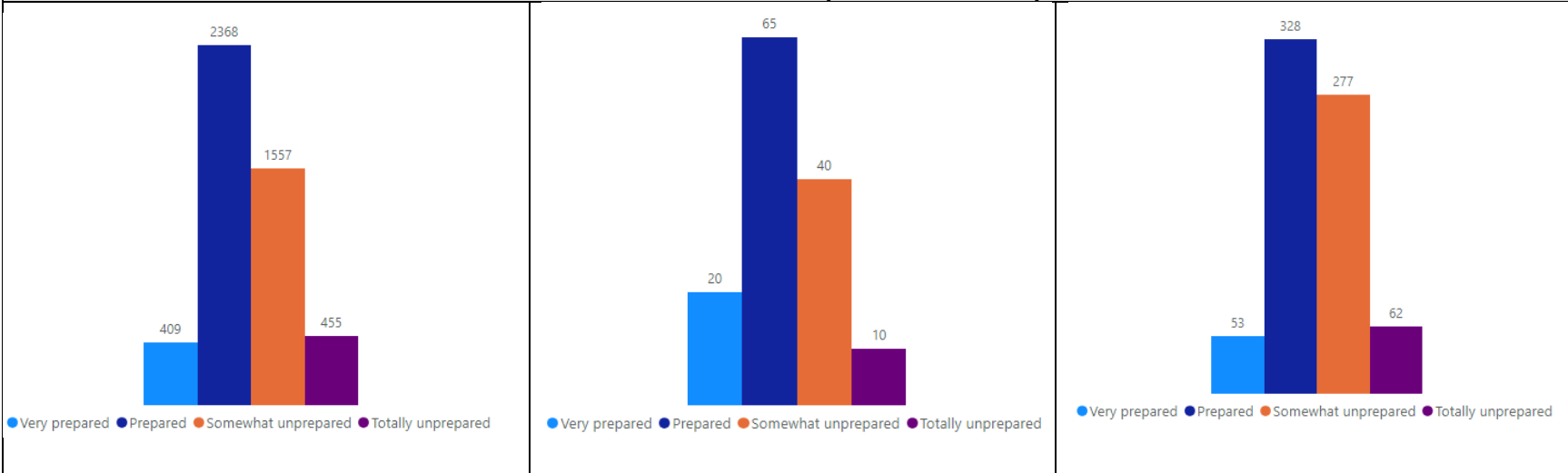


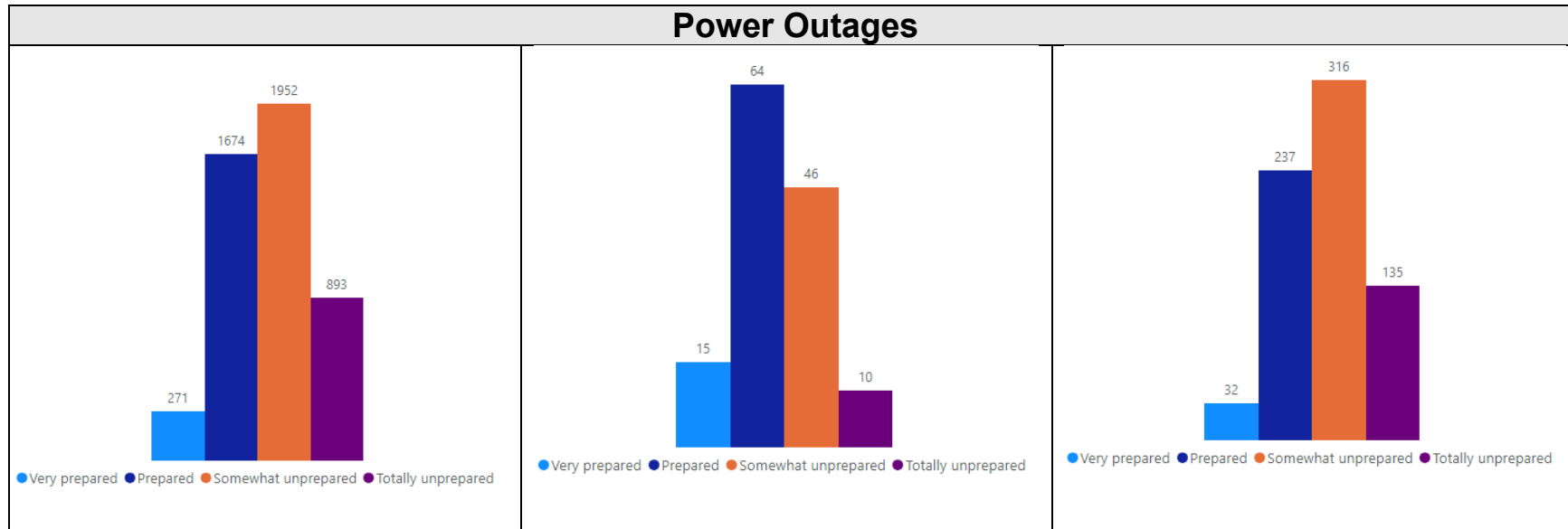


Mobile Network or Phone Disruption



Extreme weather (hot and cold)





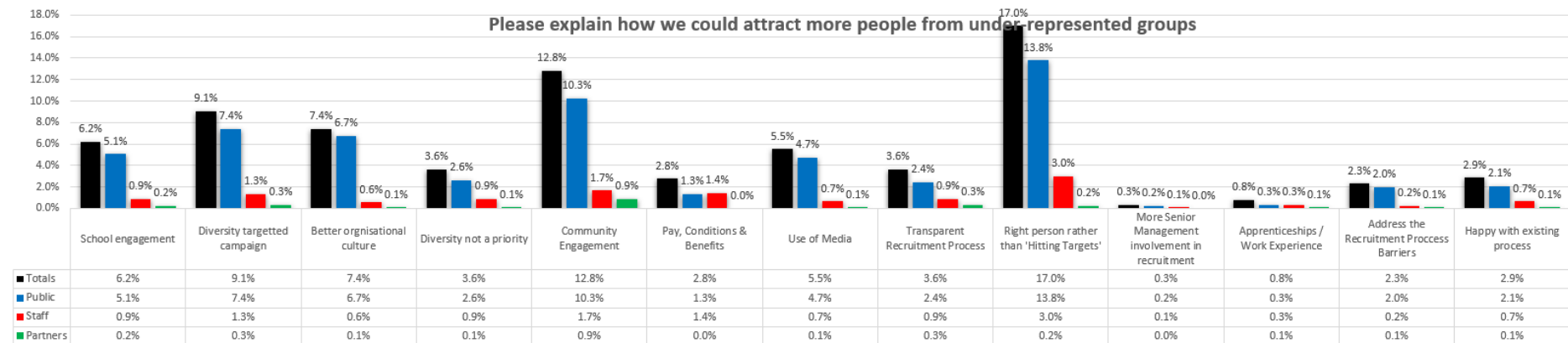
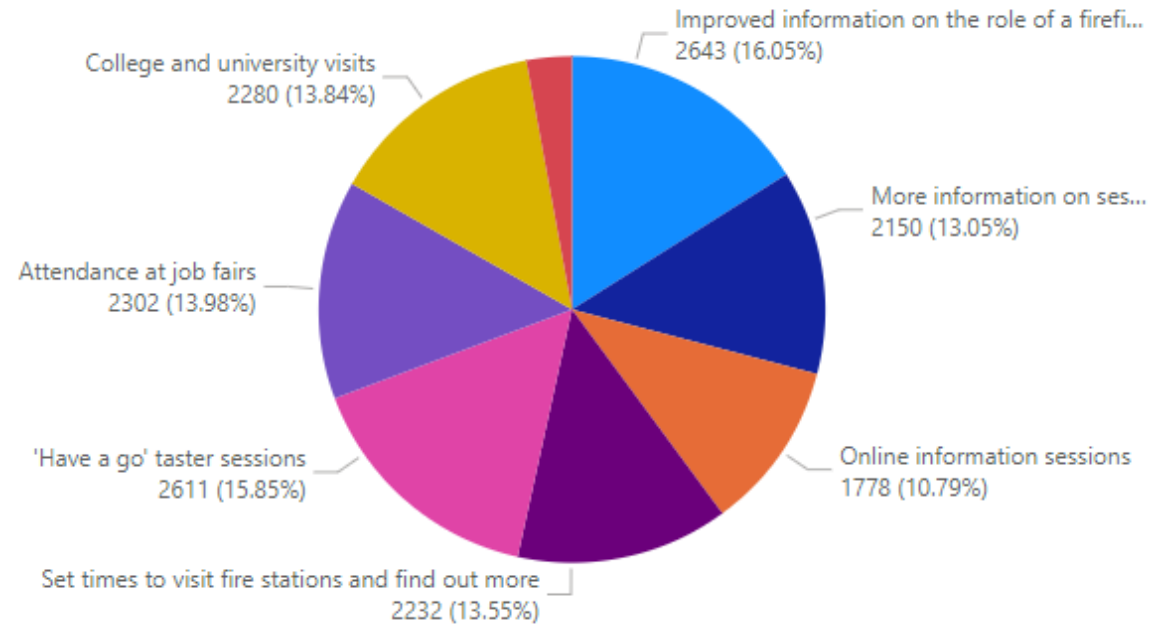
PEOPLE - PUBLIC

How do you feel we could attract more people from groups that are currently under-represented in our workforce to join us - for example, minority communities, women, LGBT+, people with disabilities?

Of all the options listed, there was a relatively even split amongst respondents. The following are listed in order of popularity:

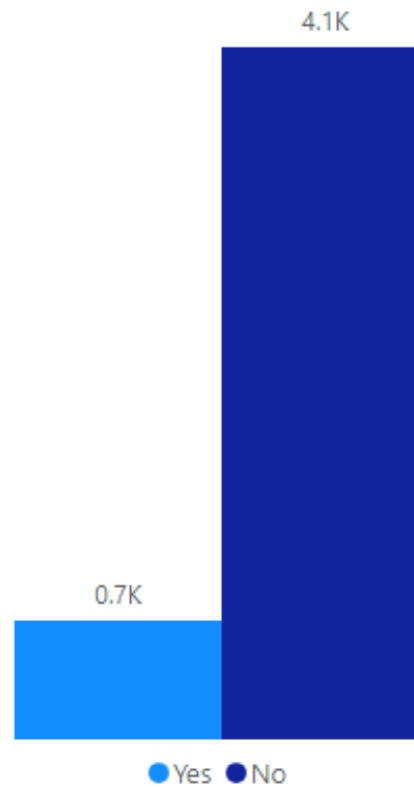
- 16% 'Have a go' taster sessions
- 16% Improved information on the role of a firefighter
- 14% Attendance at job fairs
- 14% College and university visits
- 13.5% Set times to visit fire stations to find out more
- 13% More information on sessions delivered in the community
- 11% Online information sessions
- 3% Other

Of the 'Other' suggestions, the largest percentage of the feedback from the public suggested WMFS should employ the right person, rather than hiring to 'hit targets' (17%). Other suggestions included community engagement (13%), diversity targeted campaigns (9%) and a better organisational culture (11%). The chart below details all other suggestions from the public, partners and staff.

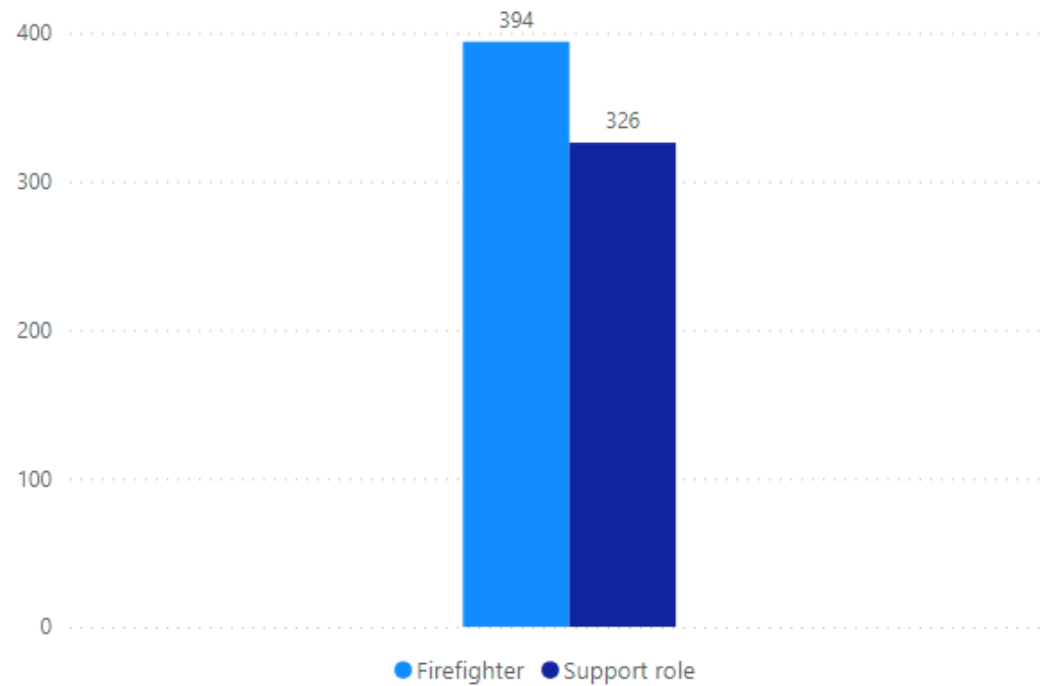


Would you consider, or have you considered, working for the West Midlands Fire Service?

The majority of public respondents (85.3%) answered 'no' to whether they had ever considered working for WMFS. 14.6% respondents replied 'yes'.

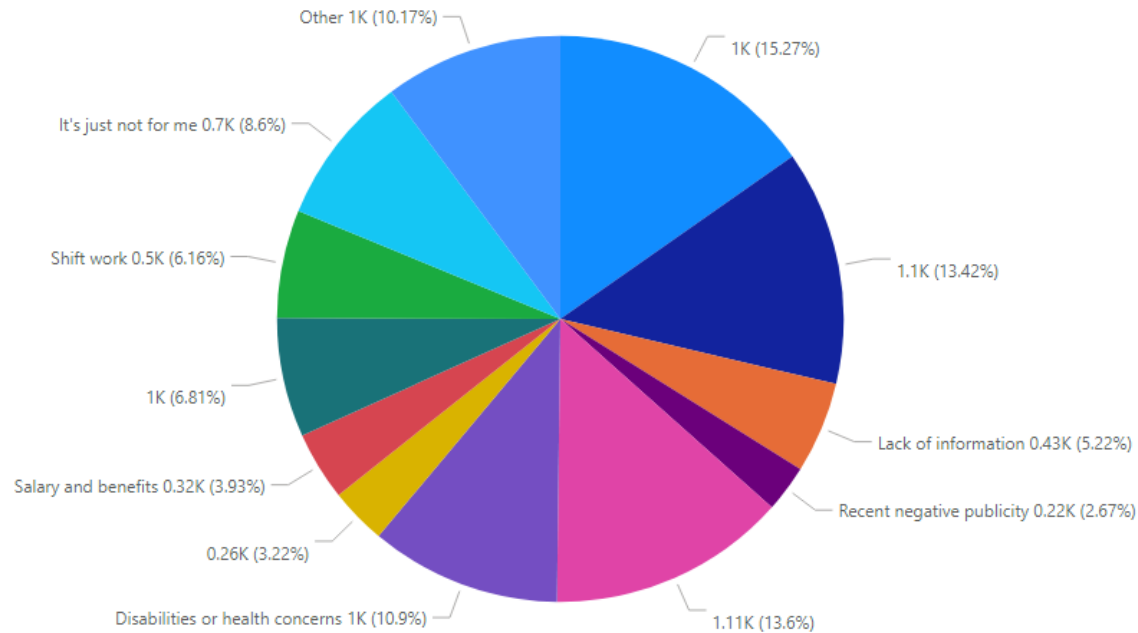


Out of the 14.6% who have ever considered working for West Midlands Fire Service, 57% were interested in the role of firefighter, 47% were interested in support roles.



What do you feel are the perceived barriers for you or other people wanting to join West Midlands Fire Service, either as a firefighter or in a support role?

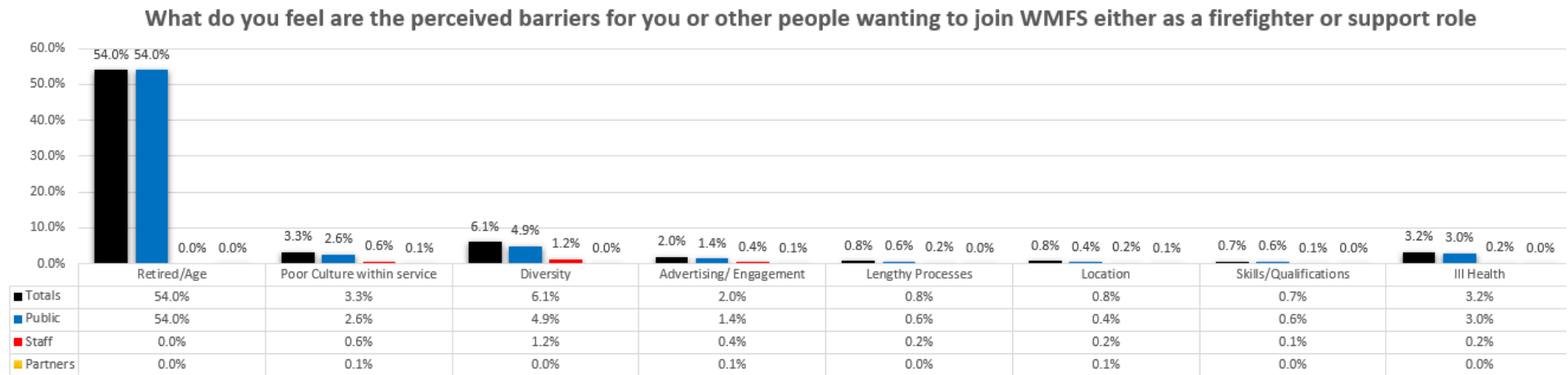
The majority of respondents do not think there are any barriers to join the fire service. 13.6% of respondents think that the main barrier is the perception of the role of a firefighter, with the next largest percentage saying or that they have never thought about it (13.42%).



Of those who think there are barriers to joining the fire service, the below table details the most commonly selected options for each group. The perception of the role of a firefighter is a common barrier listed for all groups.

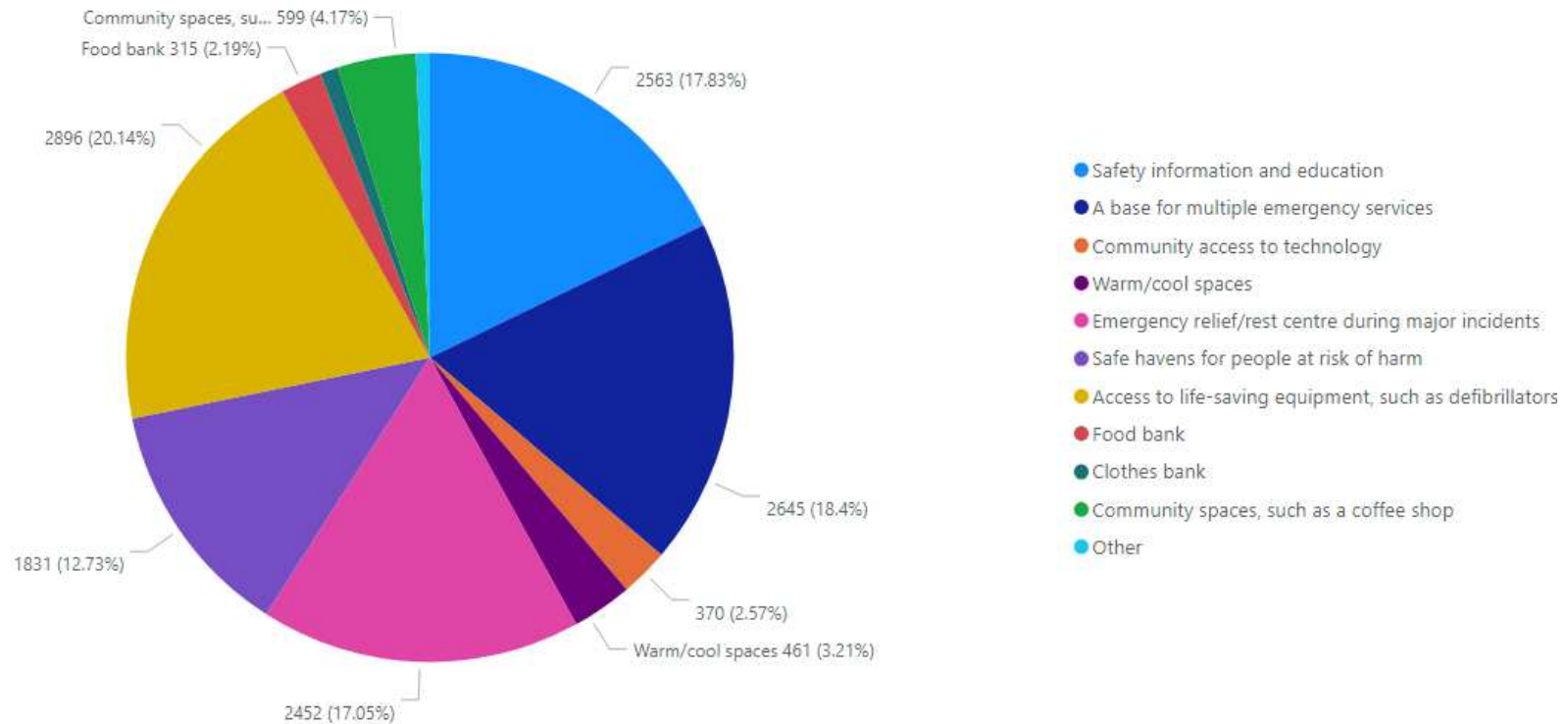
	Most common barriers selected
Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception of the role of a firefighter • Never thought about joining the fire service • Disabilities or health concerns • Exposure to harm or trauma
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception of the role of a firefighter • Lack of information about the role • Shift work • Disabilities or health concerns/exposure to harm and trauma
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salary and benefits • Perception of the role of a firefighter • Cultural/religious barriers • Shift work

Of those who selected 'other' the main barriers listed were age, diversity, poor culture within the service and ill health. The chart below provides an overview of all 'other' responses from the public, partners and staff.



SUSTAINABILITY - PUBLIC

Our stations are community fire stations, and we continually review their vital role. Please choose three things you would like to see our stations provide in the future?



Of the 10 options listed, the public, partners and staff have all chosen the same top five future uses of a community fire station (although in slightly different orders). The table below shows where the top five options were placed by each group.

The most popular options include:

- Access to life-saving equipment
- A base for multiple emergency services
- Safety information and education
- Emergency relief/rest centre during major incidents
- Safe havens for people at risk of harm

	Public	Partner	Staff
Access to life-saving equipment	1 st	1 st	1 st
A base for multiple emergency services	2 nd	2 nd	5 th
Safety information and education	3 rd	5 th	3 rd
Emergency relief/rest centre	4 th	3 rd	4 th
Safe havens	5 th	4 th	2 nd

How should we prioritise?

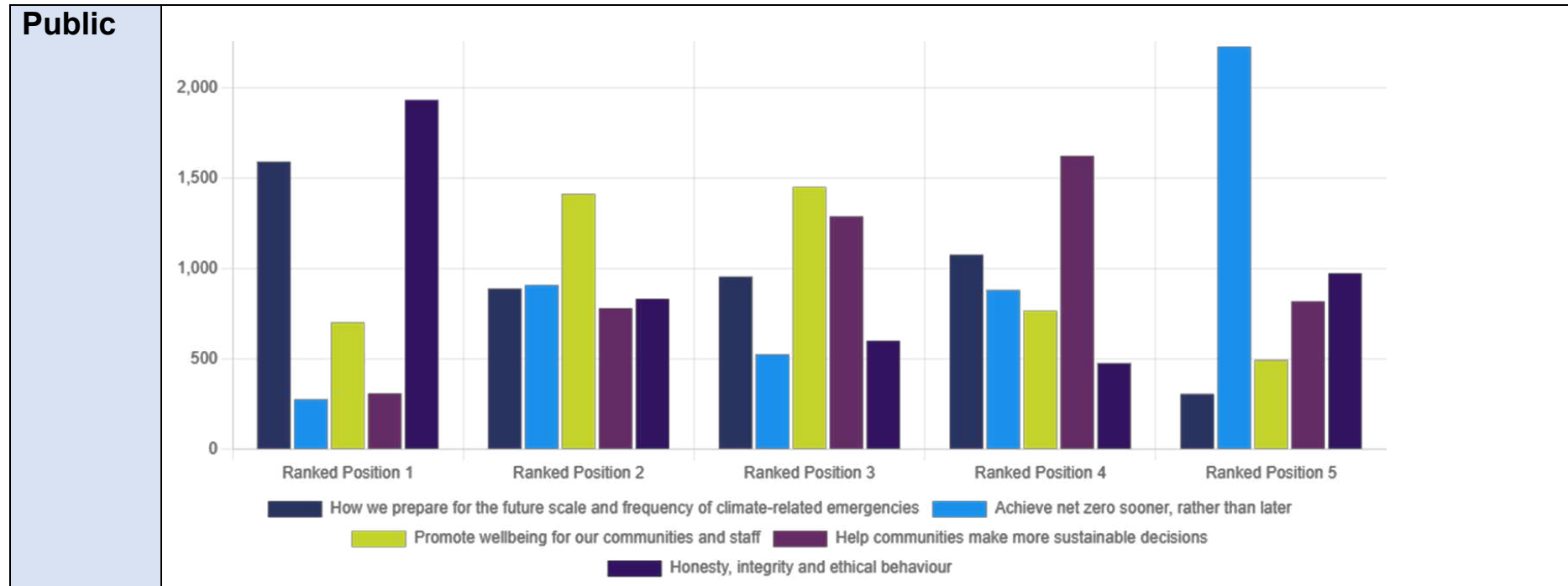
When asked how to prioritise five items in relation to sustainability:

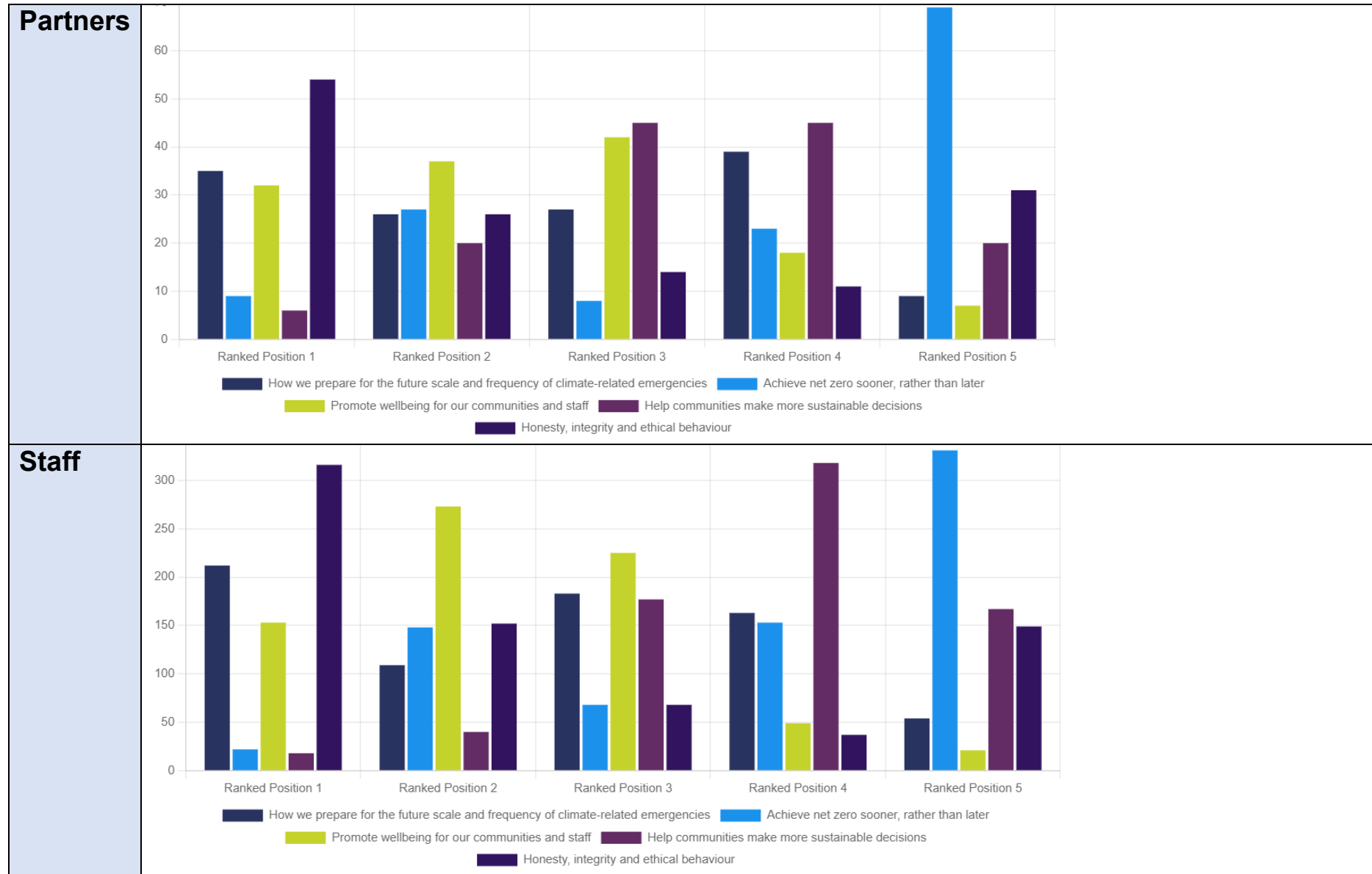
1. How we prepare for the future scale and frequency of climate-related emergencies
2. Honesty, integrity and ethical behaviour.
3. Promote wellbeing for our communities and staff
4. Help communities make more sustainable decisions
5. Achieve net zero, sooner rather than later

The below table shows the most common ranking for each factor:

Item	Most common ranking	Number of responses
How we prepare for the future scale and frequency of climate- related emergencies	2nd	1919
Honesty, integrity and ethical behaviour.	1st	1577
Promote wellbeing for our communities and staff	3rd	687
Help communities make more sustainable decisions	4th	307
Achieve net zero sooner, rather than later	5th	275

Full results for each group can be viewed in the table below.





When looking at the average position of each factor, the ranking changes slightly. The below table shows the average position per factor for each group:

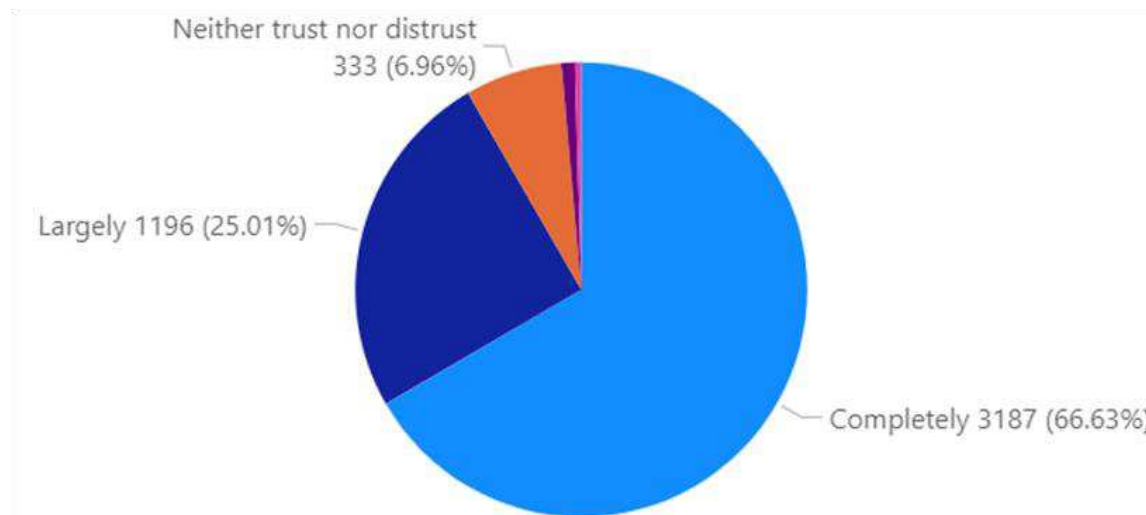
	Public	Partner	Staff
Honesty integrity and ethical behaviour	2	2	2
How to prepare for future scale and frequency of climate-related emergencies	1	3	3
Promote well-being for our communities and staff	3	1	1
Help communities make more sustainable decisions	4	4	4
Achieve net zero sooner rather than later	5	5	5

TRUST

How much do you trust West Midlands Fire Service?

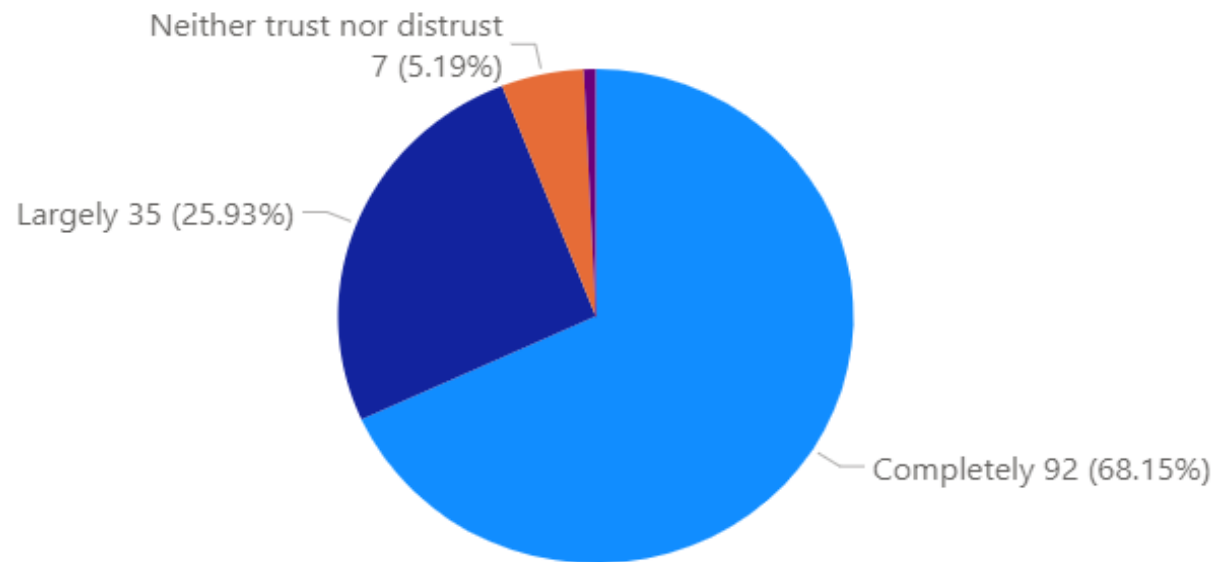
The majority of Public respondents trust WMFS either completely (67% - 3187 respondents) or largely (25% – 1196 respondents). A smaller percentage (7% - 333 respondents) have stated they neither trust nor distrust the service, with the smallest percentages (1%) either partially trusting (45 respondents) or not trusting WMFS at all (22 respondents).

Public



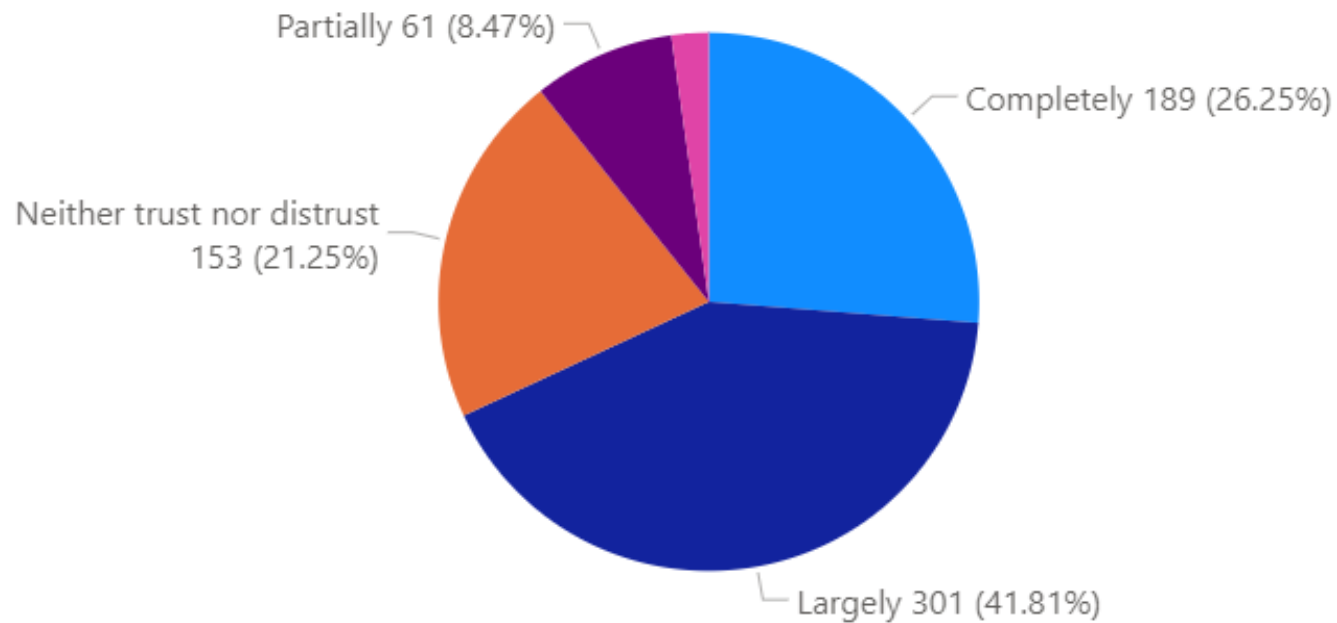
The below table details how much the public, partners and staff trust West Midlands Fire Service. Trust is highest with partners and the public and slightly less for staff.

Partners



Staff responses show that they trust the service less than the public and partners, with 26% completely trusting the service, 42% largely trusting the service, 21% neither trust nor distrust the service and around 11% either partially trusting the service or not at all.

Staff



PARTNERS

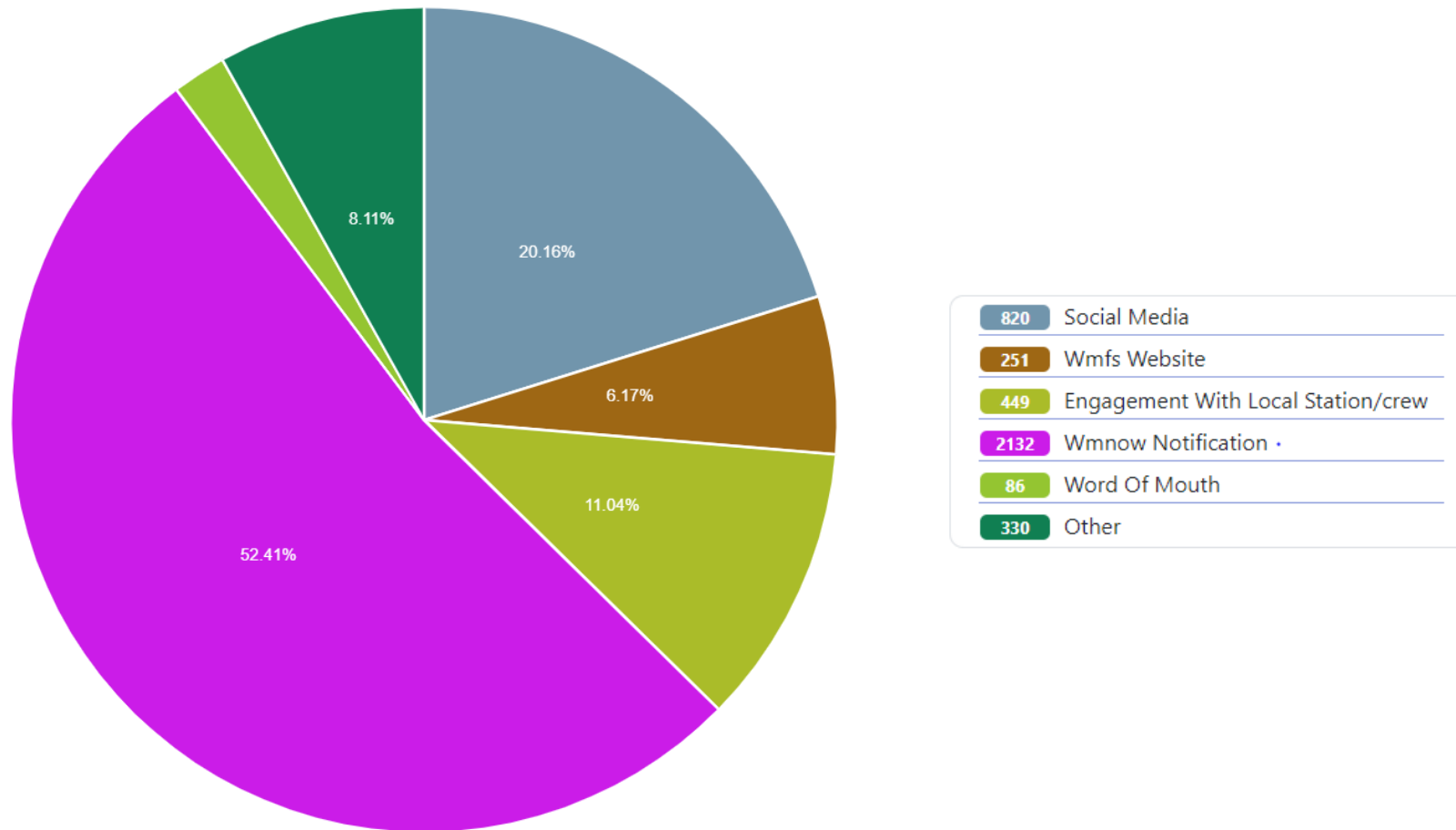
Partners who have responded so far are listed below. Further engagement has taken place to encourage wider partner agency responses.

- West Midlands Police
- West Midlands Ambulance Service
- West Midlands Combined Authority
- Local Authorities, including responses from
 - Sandwell MBC
 - City of Wolverhampton Council
 - Birmingham City Council
 - Dudley MBC
 - Coventry City Council
 - Walsall Council
 - Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
- Fire Sector
 - Warwickshire FRS
 - National Association of retired Firefighters
- NHS
 - Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
 - Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
 - A number of individual NHS respondents
- Transport for West Midlands
- Residential care home providers
- Voluntary/Charity organisations
 - A.C.C.I. (African Caribbean Community Initiative)

- The Air Ambulance Service
 - Birmingham Christmas Shelter
 - Neighbourhood Watch
 - NHS Volunteer
 - British Red Cross volunteer
 - The James Charities, Nechells
 - Warwickshire Search and Rescue
 - Other individual volunteers
- Education establishments
 - Halesowen College
 - Newman University
 - Heart of England School
 - The Khalsa Academy Wolverhampton
 - Nova Training
- Religious Establishments
 - Christ Church Blakenall and St Chad's Beechdale churches
 - Shree Birmingham Pragati Mandal (Shree Krishna Temple)
- Other
 - Community, Courts and Probation
 - National Association of Retired Firefighters

How did you hear about Consultation?

The majority of people have heard about the consultation from WM Now emails. The table below details the number of responses as a result of engagement with stations.



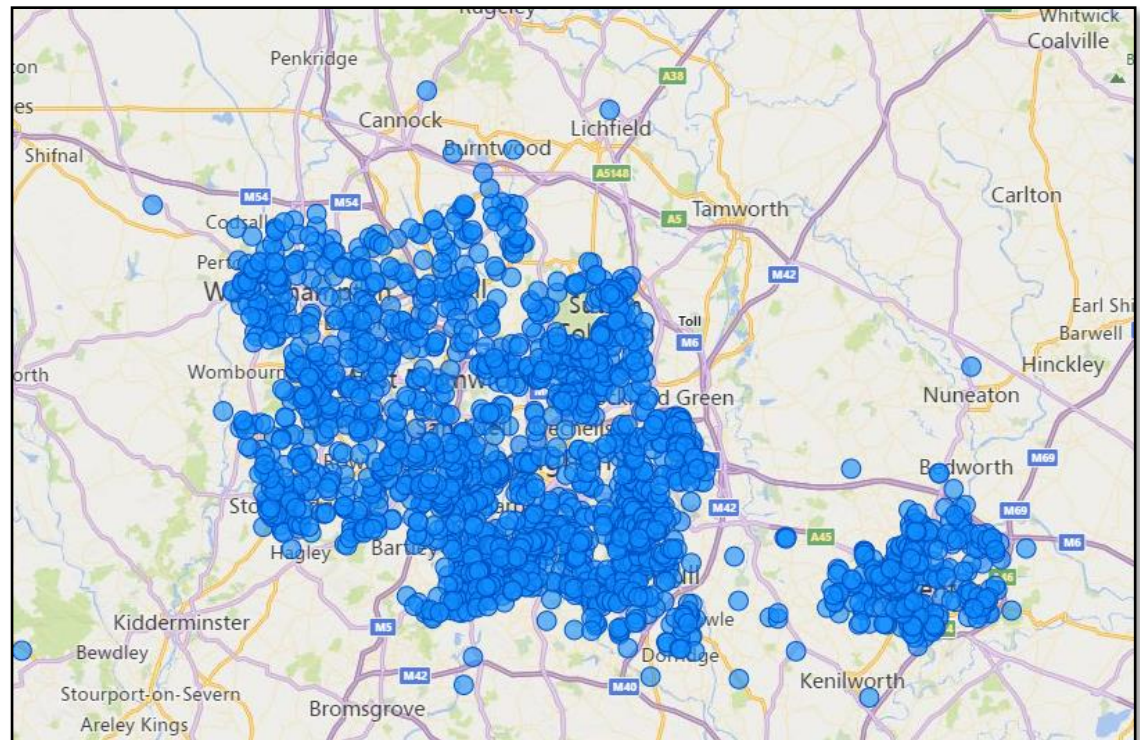
Station engagement table, detailing the number of responses each station supported.

Station	Number of Responses as a result of engagement
D3 HADEN CROSS	55
B1 SOLIHULL	34
A2 ASTON	33
E7 BILSTON	29
D2 BRIERLEY HILL	28
A6 WARD END	25
B3 COVENTRY	25
B4 CANLEY	25
B2 SHELDON	21
B6 BINLEY	20
E2 BLOXWICH	18
C6 NORTHFIELD	16
PORTFOLIO	15
C7 LADYWOOD	13
B5 FOLESHILL	12
E8 TETTENHALL	12
A3 SUTTON COLDFIELD	10
C9 HAY MILLS	10
E1 WALSALL	10
E3 WILENHALL	9
D9 DUDLEY	7
D8 WEST BROMWICH	6
E4 ALDRIDGE	6

C1 HIGHGATE	3
D1 OLDBURY	3
D5 STOURBRIDGE	3
C2 WOODGATE	2
C5 KINGS NORTON	2
A7 HANDSWORTH	1
C4 BOURNBROOK	1
E5 WOLVERHAMPTON	1
FIRE CONTROL	1

Location of Respondents

This map shows we had responses from across the West Midlands area.



ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Consultation has been made as accessible as possible to respondents by utilising all platforms available to us, including face to face engagement with the public.

Further information in relation to the approach or engagement can be found in the [Community Risk Management Plan – Consultation Fire Authority Paper](#).

All supporting resources have been captured within our dedicated [Consultation Mesh pages](#).

Based on the consultation halfway point evaluation, consideration was given to the underrepresented groups where we noted the largest disparity between actual and target figures. Station engagement was also monitored, with best practice shared amongst staff and SPOCs.

Targeted social media advertising was put in place, as well as encouraging staff and crews to be mindful of canvassing a wide demographic. Specific events or visits were also be arranged based on continual monitoring of the targets.

Further [Consultation targets](#) have been developed to support greater engagement with the consultation.

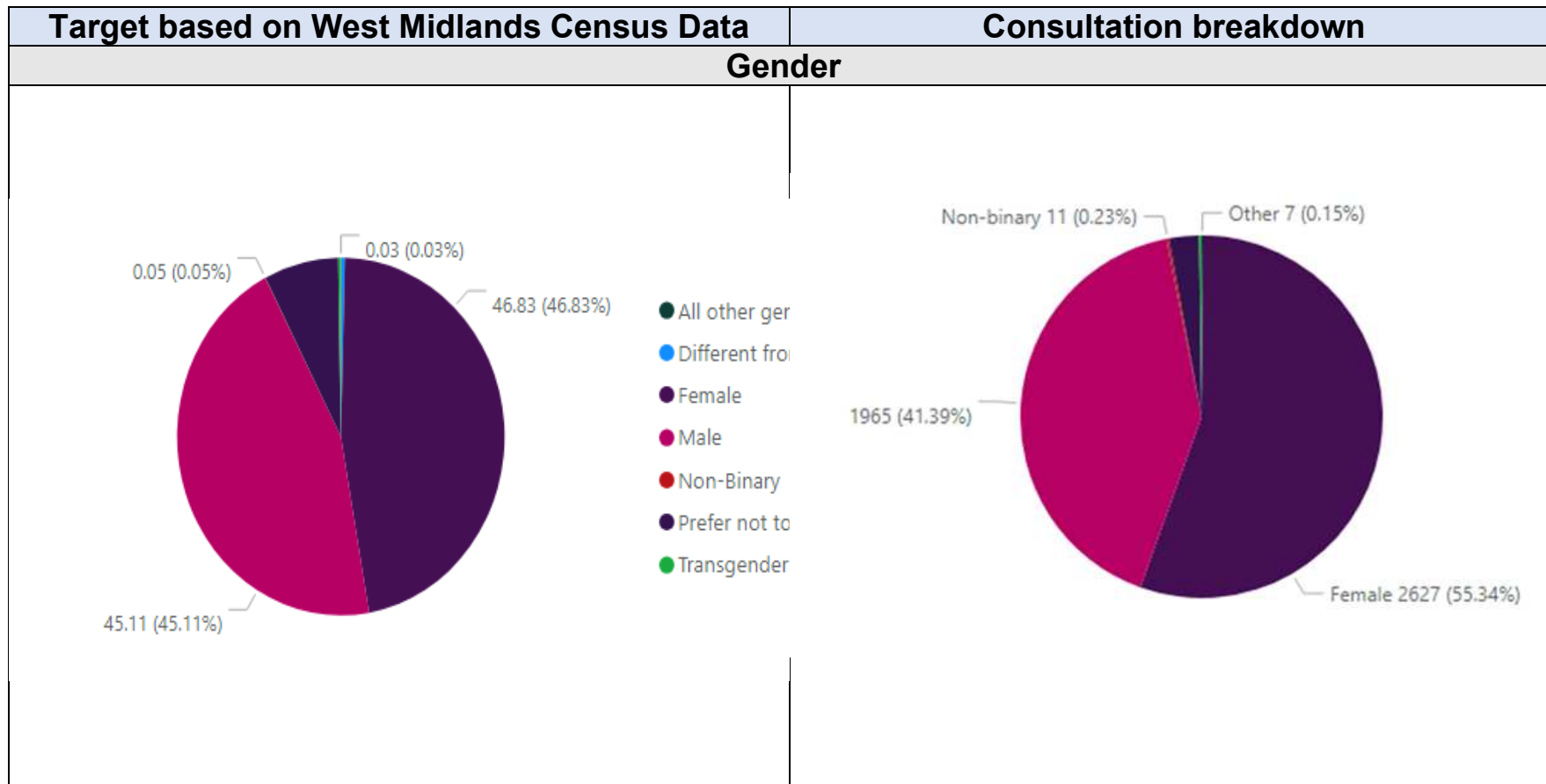
To enable as much of a representative response as is possible from our diverse communities, partners and businesses it is hoped that a wide range of views and opinions will be collected. An example of the different engagement proposals are detailed below, which will help us achieve both qualitative and quantitative results:

- Wmfs.net based (multi language – google translate)
- WM Now - digital community messaging system
- Social media campaigns
- Targeted businesses
- Safe and Well visits/Safe and Strong
- Partners

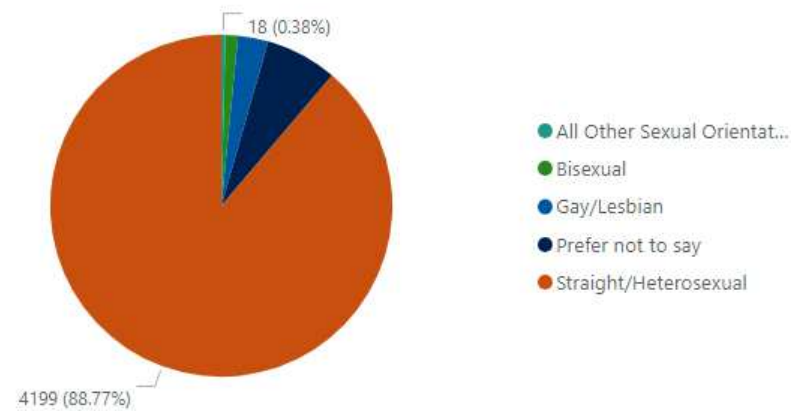
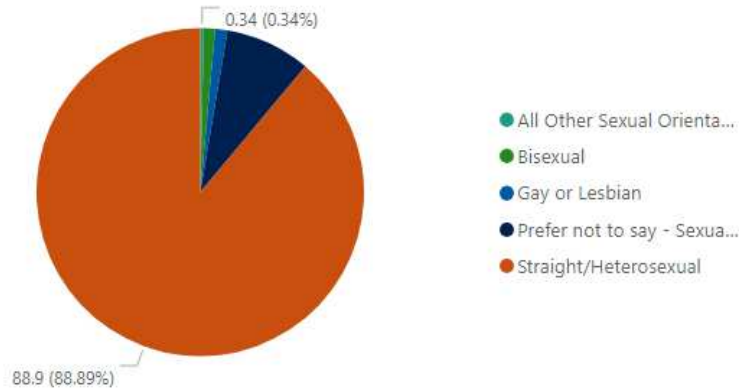
- Community members and volunteers
- WMFS staff/network groups
- FA members
- Station Open Days
- Direct community engagement – all staff
- Community events

DEMOGRAPHIC EVALUATION

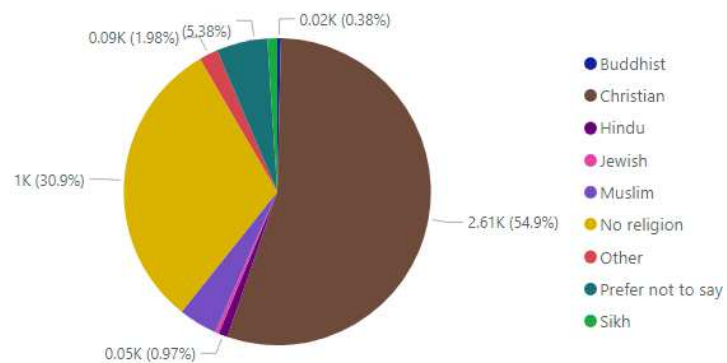
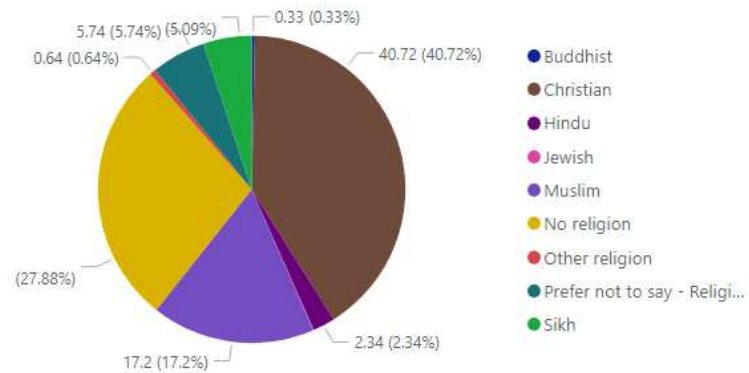
Census data was used to identify consultation targets with an aspiration to achieve a representative sample of the population of the West Midlands.

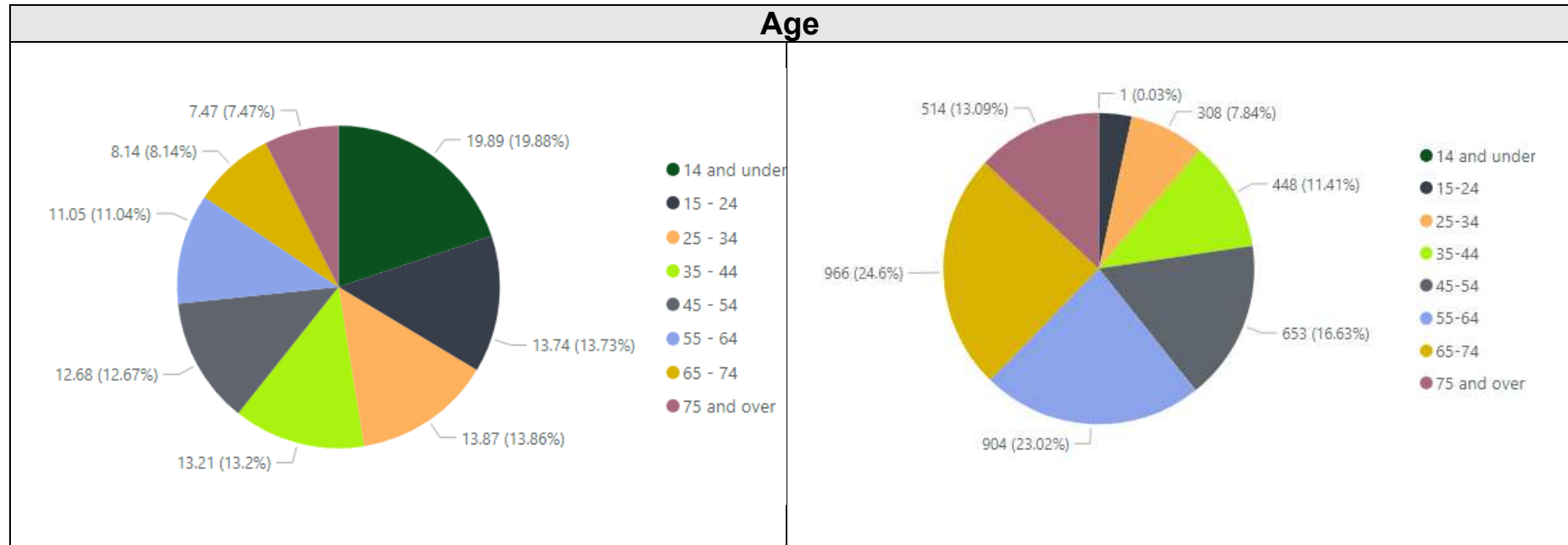


Sexuality

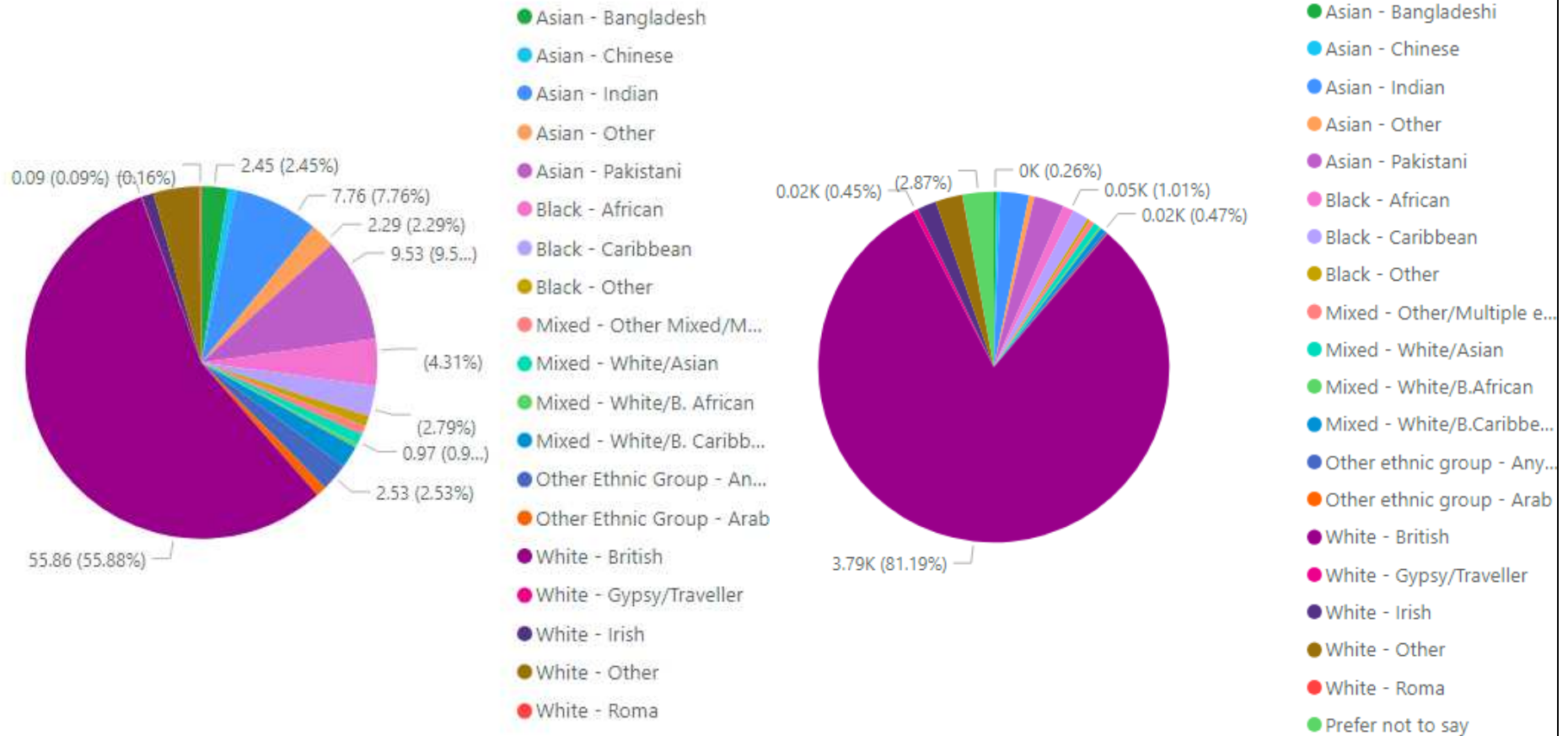


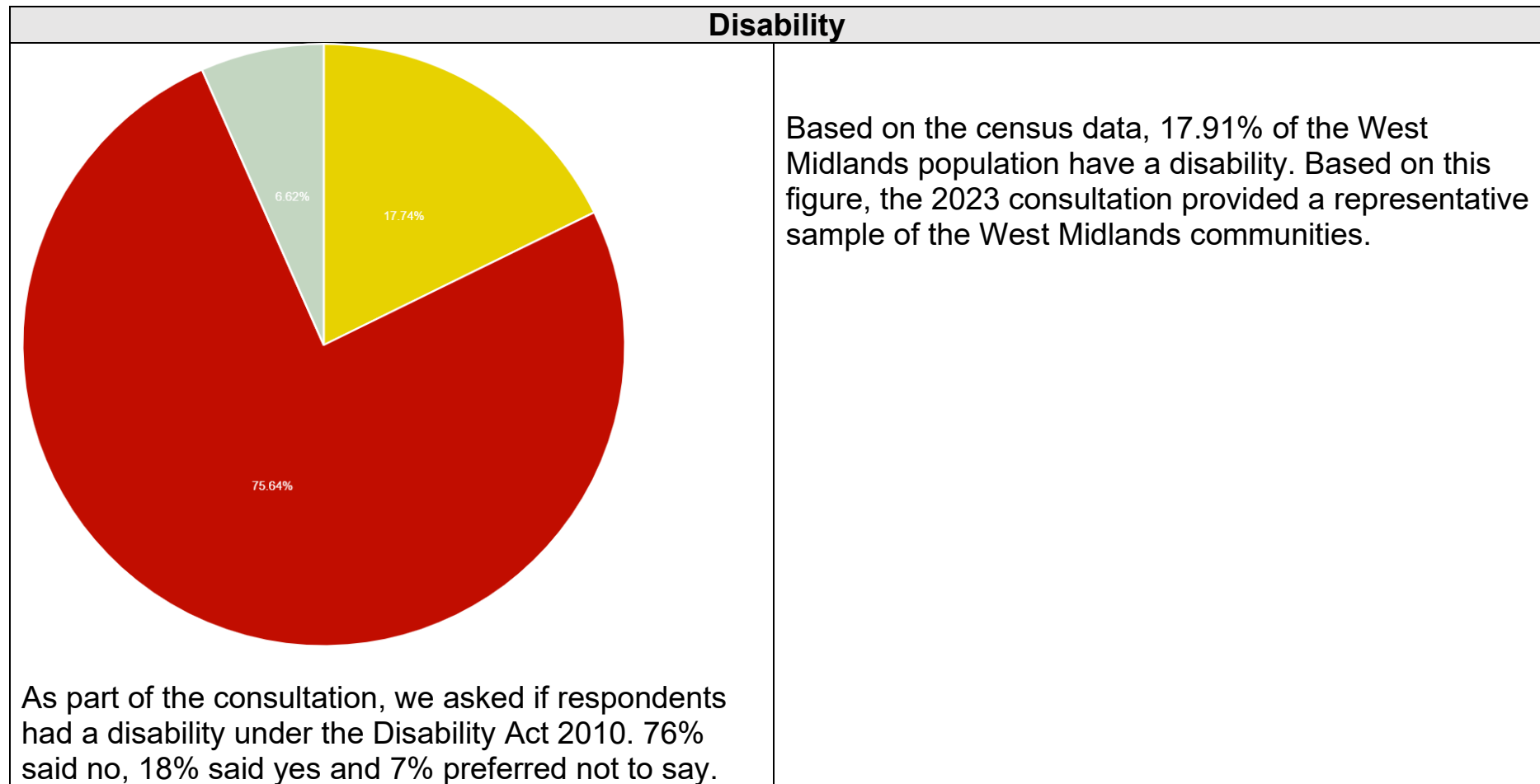
Religion





Ethnicity





WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Item 10

23RD OCTOBER 2023**1. BUDGET MONITORING P05 – AUGUST 2023**

Report of the Section 151 Officer

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1. THAT Authority note the forecast position for revenue and capital as at August 2023.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide the latest revenue and capital forecast monitoring position for 2023/24.

3. BACKGROUND**3.1. Revenue Expenditure**

- 3.1.1 The 2023/24 annual revenue budget for West Midlands Fire Service is £119.1m. The Council Tax Requirement is £53.9m.

- 3.1.2 Appendix A compares the profiled revenue budget to the end of August 2023 to the actual spend. This shows an overspend of £70k, equivalent to 0.2% of the YTD (year-to-date) budget. It also compares the annual budget to the forecast year-end spend. This shows a forecast overspend of £130k, equivalent to 0.1% of the annual budget.

- 3.1.3 The forecast adverse variance is mainly due to overspends in operational pay budgets which are partly offset by vacancies elsewhere in the service.

- 3.1.4 Achievement of the £1.9m savings target will continue to be monitored, including the impact of the implementation of risk-based crewing.

3.2. **Capital Expenditure**

- 3.2.1 The approved 3-year capital programme budget 2023/24 to 2025/26 is £20m, with £9.1m profiled into 2023/24.
- 3.2.2 Appendix B compares the profiled capital budget to the end of August 2023 to the actual spend. This shows an underspend of £2.4m, equivalent to 75% of the YTD budget. It also compares the annual budget to the forecast year-end spend. This shows a forecast underspend of £3.0, equivalent to 31% of the annual budget.
- 3.2.3 The forecast favourable variance is mainly due to the deferral of the purchase of BRV's (brigade response vehicles) pending the outcome of the trial vehicles as part of the Vehicle Replacement Programme.

4. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

In preparing this report an initial Equality Impact Assessment is not required and has not been carried out.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The recommendations or content in this report do not raise issues which should be drawn to the attention of the Authority's Monitoring Officer.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

These are contained in the body of the report and the attached appendices.

7. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

N/A

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Budget and Precept 2023-2024 and Budget Forecast 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 – Fire Authority 13 February 2023.

- Appendix A: Revenue Budget Monitoring P05 2023/24
- Appendix B: Capital Monitoring 2023/24

The contact for this report is Sofia Mahmood, Head of Finance and Procurement (S151).

APPENDIX A: Revenue Budget Monitoring P05 2023/24

	Budget 2023/24	Profiled Budget	Actuals + Commitmen ts	Variance to Profiled Budget	Year-End Forecast	Forecast Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
DEVOLVED BUDGETS						
Corporate Management	1,260	532	494	- 38	1,260	-
Corporate Charges	-	-	1	1	-	-
Portfolio & Organisational Intelligence	2,498	961	903	- 58	2,448	- 50
Operations	3,135	1,001	1,027	26	3,135	-
Facilities Management	2,341	954	968	14	2,341	-
Prevention	2,573	1,008	856	- 152	2,323	- 250
Protection & Fire Safety	5,306	2,193	2,153	- 40	5,306	-
Response, Fire Control & Policy & Emergency Planning	5,708	2,337	2,309	- 28	5,658	- 50
Resourcing	1,577	657	688	31	1,577	-
Digital & Data	7,535	3,852	3,878	26	7,665	130
Communications & Engagement	1,033	333	337	4	1,033	-
People Support	3,009	1,309	1,265	- 44	2,909	- 100
Development & Inclusion	4,986	2,080	2,057	- 23	4,986	-
Health, Safety & Wellbeing	1,061	449	449	-	1,061	-
CORPORATE BUDGETS						
Operation	4,701	3,077	3,059	- 18	4,701	-
Protection	- 99	- 117	- 128	- 11	- 99	-
Response, Fire Control & Policy & Emergency Planning	11	33	34	1	11	-
Resources	14,453	1,648	1,778	130	14,603	150
Digital & Data	131	26	21	- 5	131	-
People Support	56,753	23,489	23,771	282	57,053	300
Development & Inclusion	165	62	49	- 13	165	-
Other Income & Expenditure	972	502	487	- 15	972	-
Appropriation to Reserves						
TOTAL (NET BUDGET REQUIREMENT)	119,109	46,386	46,456	70	119,239	130
Core Funding	- 65,245					
TOTAL (COUNCIL TAX REQUIREMENT)	53,864					

APPENDIX B: Capital Monitoring 2023/24

Scheme	Approved Budget Feb 23	Latest Budget	Actuals to Aug-23	Forecast	Variance
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
LAND & BUILDINGS					
Boiler Replacement Programme	148	209	28	209	-
Roof Replacements	325	505	0	505	-
Windows/Door Replacement	677	677	0	677	-
Rewires	167	200	0	200	-
Drill Tower/Training Facilities	432	488	9	357	- 131
HQ Alterations	44	71	0	71	-
VEHICLES					
Vehicle Replacement Programme	6,678	7,152	760	4,315	- 2,837
ICT & EQUIPMENT					
C&C Upgrade-Vision 4/ESMCP	0	43	2	43	-
Fire Ground Radio Replacement	290	290	0	290	-
MDT Replacement	430	0	0	0	-
GRAND TOTAL	9,191	9,635	799	6,667	- 2,968
FUNDED BY	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Prudential Borrowing	0	0	0	0	-
Capital Grants/Contributions	0	43	799	43	-
Capital Receipts to be Applied	2,749	2,749	0	2,749	-
Direct Revenue Financing/Earmarked Reserves	6,442	6,843	0	3,875	- 2,946
TOTAL	9,191	9,635	799	6,667	- 2,946

