

West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority

Scrutiny Committee

**You are summoned to attend the meeting of Scrutiny Committee to be held on
Monday, 24 February 2020 at 10:30**

at Fire Service HQ, 99 Vauxhall Road, Nechells, Birmingham B7 4HW

for the purpose of transacting the following business:

Agenda – Public Session

- | | | |
|---|--|----------------|
| 1 | To receive apologies for absence (if any) | |
| 2 | Declarations of interests | |
| 3 | Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 04.11.19 | 3 - 16 |
| 4 | Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 11.11.19 | 17 - 30 |
| 5 | Scrutiny Committee Briefing - Overview of Water Related Incidents | 31 - 40 |
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| 7 | Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2019-20 | 61 - 64 |

Distribution:

Nicolas Barlow - Member, David Barrie - Member, Jasbinder Dehar - Member, Manjit Gill - Member, Kerry Jenkins - Vice Chair of the Scrutiny Committee, Sybil Spence - Chair of The Scrutiny Committee, Patricia Young - Member

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This agenda and supporting documents are also available electronically on the West Midlands Fire Service website at www.wmfs.net

Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee

4 November 2019 at 15:00 p.m.
at Fire Service Headquarters, Vauxhall Road, Birmingham
B7 4HW

Present: Councillor Spence (Chair)
Councillors Barrie, Edwards (substitute for Cllr Gill),
Hogarth (substitute for Cllr Barlow), and Jenkins

Apologies: Councillors Barlow, Dehar and Gill
S Middleton

Observer: Nil

43/19 Declarations of Interest in contracts or other matters

There were no declarations of interest.

44/19 Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 26
September 2019

With reference to paragraph four on page two of the minutes (page four of the agenda pack), a Member noted that they had believed that the subject matter of the report could be considered in a public report, with elements available in the public domain. The Member had acknowledged that certain elements of such a report would be redacted.

ACFO Sarah Warnes advised that two reports would be submitted to the Fire Authority at its meeting scheduled to take place on 18 November 2019. One report providing a general overview would be public whilst the second report

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detailing the full financial implications and resilience related information would be private.

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2019 be approved as a correct record, subject to the matter raised by the Member (as above).

45/19 **Scrutiny Committee Working Group – Business Continuity Arrangements – 04.11.19**

Karen Gowreesunker, Clerk to the Authority, provided an overview of the report.

The brief report had been submitted to set the scene for the meeting. The report reaffirmed the scope of the review which was to consider the two options proposed to provide additional business continuity arrangements for the Service.

Upon the request of the Committee, Officers had gathered further information and clarification from the Home Office in terms of expectations and the level of assurance required. This information would form the focus of the Scrutiny Committee Working Group Session, allowing Members to review the information provided.

46/19 **Scrutiny Committee Working Group Session**

The Committee had formulated questions for the Home Office as an outcome of the Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 21 October 2019. The questions had been submitted to the Home Office who had provided answers to each of the questions. The questions and the responses from Home Office are available in full within appendix 1 of these minutes.

The Home Office response was circulated to Members along with an extract of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (section 22 – Intervention by Secretary of State).

Upon the request of the Committee and in agreement with the Chair, Officers left the room for a short period of time to allow Members to digest the information that had been provided.

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ACFO Sarah Warnes provided an overview of the Home Office response and its position.

In relation to question one:

The response provided the background as to how the Home Office had determined the minimum levels of resilience which included a requirement for Fire and Rescue Authorities in high population areas (which included the West Midlands) to achieve 30% resilience levels, and that all authorities ensured a high rise capability. Additionally, the Home Office outlined in the request to the Authority the need to assure the availability of critical National Resilience assets hosted by the Service.

ACFO Sarah Warnes confirmed that in the event of industrial action, pump rescue ladder appliances would be crewed with five staff and Brigade Response Vehicles would be crewed with three. The crewing arrangement ensured that a high-rise capability would be provided.

ACFO Sarah Warnes advised that the Service could not provide the assurance levels expected by the Home Office as evidenced in the Business Continuity paper.

A Member asked DCFO Wayne Brown (due to the Officer's service with London Fire Brigade) if London Fire Brigade had used the facility provided by an external provider.

DCFO Wayne Brown confirmed that London Fire Brigade had used the facility provided by an external provider. From a Fire Authority perspective, the arrangement ensured that the Fire Authority and members of the public were protected. Industrial relations within London were such that it was not possible to rely on volunteers during a period of industrial action. Members of staff had not welcomed the arrangements and it did not sit well with them, however the legal responsibility of the Fire Authority and why the arrangements were implemented was explained to staff. The overriding decision was one of public safety.

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A Member asked what level of support was provided by the external provider.

DCFO Wayne Brown advised that arrangements were based on no members of staff volunteering to be available during a period of industrial action. However, a number of staff did declare their intentions to volunteer during such periods and they were added to the resources provided by the external provider, therefore increasing the number of appliances available. It was noted that members of London Fire Brigade did not crew appliances with members of staff from the external provider.

A Member asked if the arrangements had proved to be reliable.

DCFO Wayne Brown confirmed that the arrangements had proved to be reliable. The contracts featured penalty clauses which ensured resources would be provided as required. Additionally, the external provider undertook training with London Fire Brigade in periods of no industrial action.

In relation to question two:

The Home Office understood that Fire and Rescue Authorities utilised a range of different solutions to delivering Business Continuity Plans. Consideration would be given to any blended solutions applied within West Midlands Fire Service. ACFO Sarah Warnes confirmed that this would be based on the blended fleet of 60 resources.

In relation to question three:

The Home Office noted that the number, disposition and crewing arrangements of firefighting appliances were laid out within Fire and Rescue Authorities Integrated Risk Management Plans. These arrangements provided the baseline business as usual metrics which Business Continuity Plans and the required levels of resilience were assessed against.

ACFO Sarah Warnes confirmed that the Service would be working in line with its Integrated Risk Management Plan and the current Service Delivery Model.

In relation to question four:

The Home Office provided an outline of the compliance process for Business Continuity Plans and the process to be undertaken if, following assessment by officials and the National Fire Chief's Council, such plans were found to be below the required levels of resilience.

Following the overview of the response from the Home Office, the following points were raised:

A Member noted they were not sure if the Committee had made themselves clear during the course of the review regarding the impact of the proposals upon existing volunteers. Historically, the Service had been able to deliver a service using volunteers and other members of staff in slightly different roles. This arrangement had been last tested on the ground during the pension dispute. The impact either of the two options would have on existing volunteers was not known and not clear. In the event of either option resulting in a negative impact upon volunteers, it was possible that there would be a reduction in the number of volunteers and potentially, more reliance on an external provider.

The Member also noted that whenever the Service had experienced industrial action it had been a result of a national dispute. The last period of industrial action had occurred during 2015 in relation to the pension dispute, one which remained live in many ways. The Service tested its resilience levels during that time, and the resulting evidence was communicated to the Home Office. The figures provided indicated the levels of resilience were lower at the start and higher toward the end of the industrial action; there was nothing exceptional regarding this.

The Service did not have the fleet availability it once had because it simply could not afford to staff all appliances.

Figures presented to Members at the Policy Planning Forum

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held that morning had indicated that fleet availability had already reduced. It was noted that fleet availability was a moving feast during periods of industrial action and periods when there was no industrial action.

Volunteers were utilised during the period of industrial action in 2015 and very few flash points had occurred. The public and members of staff understood how the Service provided business continuity. It was believed that this evidence should satisfy the Home Office, which it had done when the Authority previously wrote to the Home Office and Fire Minister, who accepted the figures and assurances provided by the Service.

The Member also noted that when there was a potential for industrial action through the trade dispute in 2018, the Service had carried out a survey to determine the number of staff who would be willing to volunteer. The percentage of staff who indicated that they would be willing to volunteer did not surprise the Member since the dispute was a local dispute, and not a national dispute. It was a very personal issue which saw firefighters concerned that their jobs were changing.

The Member noted that options one and two could have a detrimental impact upon industrial relations and the Member expressed their concern regarding the potential impact upon volunteers. The Member stated that they did not believe either option should be recommended to the Authority and believed there was no reason why the 30% resilience level could not be provided during an industrial dispute.

The Member advised that the Authority should be recommended to write to the Government to express its concerns, that the Authority was doing its best to plan for the provision of business continuity during a period of industrial action, and call for the Government to take all available steps to avoid industrial action and settle the industrial dispute with the Representative Bodies.

ACFO Sarah Warnes reaffirmed the reasons for the proposal of the two options, including the revising of the National

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Security Risk Assessment, and that the Service was here to ensure the safety of the public. The evidence base clearly identifies that the current assessment shows that the 30% assurance level cannot be achieved. Additionally, the Authority had a statutory responsibility under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to provide business continuity arrangements.

ACFO Sarah Warnes advised that Officers had provided a strong evidence base regarding the levels of resilience, which was included within the Business Continuity report, and Members to support the proposed options to provide additional business continuity arrangements for the Service as per the recommendation of the Chief Fire Officer. The focus should be on protecting the public and the communities we serve. If the Service knows it can provide the assurances required via option one or two, it is strongly advised that the Authority undertakes one of the options.

Members were also advised that when considering option one or two, normal volunteers could still volunteer, for example, an external provider would provide resources to make up any deficiencies. It would not be satisfactory if we knew we could provide additional resources to increase public safety but chose not to do so.

It was also noted that the Home Office had stated this was a local matter for Fire and Rescue Authorities to consider, not a national matter.

A Member advised that they felt that moving the issue back to the Government was not satisfactory. Members were on the Authority to represent the people of the West Midlands and to protect them. The Member believed that the Service's management team were in place to manage. It was noted that it was a situation that hopefully would never happen, but the proposals were an insurance policy in case such a situation did occur.

The Member noted that it was vitally important that the Authority carried out its responsibilities, especially if it could not ensure the levels of assurance required.

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Another member seconded the views of the Member as outlined above.

DCFO Wayne Brown asked Members to consider that the Chief Fire Officer had previously been able to provide the level of assurances to the Authority. However, the national picture had changed, and circumstances locally had changed accordingly. As a result, the Chief Fire Officer had provided the advice based on the evidence available.

Upon the request of the Committee and in agreement with the Chair, Officers left the room for a short period of time to allow Members to consider the information provided throughout the meeting and to date, as part of their deliberations in making a recommendation to the Fire Authority. All Officers left the meeting for this period until requested by Members to return.

The Committee took a vote on the options:

- Option one – a contingent workforce.

Outcome:

For: None (nil)

Option one would not be recommended to the Authority.

- Option two – an external provider.

Outcome:

For: Two Members (2)

Against: Three Members (3)

Option two as recommended by the Chief Fire Officer would not be recommended to the Authority.

Following the outcome of the vote, the Chair advised the Committee that some members of the committee had formed a recommendation to be put forward for consideration.

A Member advised the Committee of the proposed recommendation:

‘We recommend the Fire Authority does not accept option one, or option two in the report ‘Business Continuity Arrangements. We recommend that the Fire Authority continues to utilise existing arrangements for business continuity during industrial action through the use of volunteers drawn from existing staff numbers’.

The proposed recommendation was put to a vote:

Outcome:

For: Three Members (3)

Against: Cllr Barrie and Cllr Hogarth (2)

Note: the Councillors indicated above, requested that their names be recorded against their votes.

The recommendation would be recommended to the Authority.

The recommendation made by the Chief Fire Officer was not supported by the Committee.

The report on Business Continuity Arrangements would be submitted to the Authority on 18 November 2019.

Resolved -

That the Committee reviewed the two options proposed to provide additional business continuity arrangements.

That the Committee would not recommend option one ‘a contingent workforce’.

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That the Committee would not recommend option two 'an external provider'.

That the Committee put forward a third recommendation (recorded in full above).

That the Committee would recommend the third recommendation to the Authority.

The meeting finished at 16:20pm.

<p>Contact Officer: Stephen Timmington Strategic Hub West Midlands Fire Service 0121 380 6680</p>

Appendix 1

The Home Office response to questions put forward by the Scrutiny Committee Working Group:

Q1 What is the rationale for arriving at 30% resilience required?

The minimum levels of resilience required for Industrial Action Business Continuity Planning (BCP) were introduced by the Fire Minister in January 2018.

These requirements were put in place following a review of all Fire Authority (FRA) BCPs in England, undertaken by Home Office officials and the FRS National Resilience Assurance Team in 2017, which revealed wide disparate levels of resilience and several causes of concern within FRAs whose arrangements were at the lower end resilience levels.

Subsequently, the Fire Minister required Chairs of FRAs in high population areas (which includes the West Midlands) to achieve 30% resilience levels – and given the tragic events of the Grenfell Tower fire, that all authorities ensure the capability to fight high rise fires.

Furthermore, with regard to the critical National Resilience assets hosted by West Midlands – for which the Home Office provides significant funding – the FRA was asked to assure the availability of a Marauding Terrorist Firearms Attack, a Mass Decontamination Unit, a Detection Identification and Monitoring unit capability and the availability of a full Urban Search & Rescue capability.

The Minister wrote to the Chair of West Midland FRA in February 2018 explaining as set out in his letter dated 26 January 2018 to Roy Wilsher, Chair of the National Fire Chief's Council, that his ask of FRAs to reach these levels, along with high rise firefighting capabilities and critical national resilience assets, is proportionate to risk, operational activity and aligned to areas with higher populations. The methodology and modelling applied compares the number of fire appliances available during industrial action with the number available during business as usual, and the number of

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appliances that can respond to localities for a range of response times.

Q2. Is the rationale applied to all of our blended fleet?

FRAs utilise a range of different solutions to delivery their IA BCPs to comply with the required levels of resilience. These arrangements include the utilisation of Wholetime firefighters, senior and FDS officers, On-call firefighters, support staff, auxiliary firefighters, resilience contracts and private sector contracts and in many cases using a blended approach.

Consideration would be given to any blended solutions applied within West Midlands FRS.

The required levels of resilience and rationale would apply to your blended fleet of firefighting appliances.

Q3. How do you take into account differences in service delivery models where some services ride with a crew of four?

The number, disposition and crewing arrangements of firefighting appliances are laid out within FRSs' Integrated Risk Management Plans.

These arrangements provide the baseline business as usual metrics which IA BCPs and the required levels of resilience are assessed against.

The disposition, configuration and size of crews for firefighting appliances for IA BCP purposes are determined by the FRA.

Q4. What is the process for non-compliance?

Home Office are the responsible lead government department for Fire Authority Business Continuity planning.

In September 2017 Home Office and the National Fire Chiefs Council signed off an agreed Memorandum of Understanding and Concept of Operations for IA BCP arrangements. These arrangements require an annual review of all FRA IA BCPs,

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undertaken by officials and the NFCC which are assessed against the required levels of resilience.

The 2019 assessment of FRA BCPs will test whether they reach the required levels of resilience. Any IA BCPs below the required levels of resilience will be brought to the attention of the Fire Minister and the first stage of intervention would consist of a ministerial letter to the Chair of the FRA followed with a visit by officials and the NFCC to carry out an in depth review of arrangements. A full report would be prepared and forwarded to the FRA containing findings and recommendations that would enable the authority to achieve the resilience requirements. These arrangements have been put into place to assist FRAs compliance with their Statutory duties set out in the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

The Fire Service Act 2004, section 22 lays out the Secretary of State's Powers of Intervention.

Home Office encourages the FRA to have regard to the Chief Fire Officers IA BCP proposals whereby the required levels of resilience are satisfied, and which serve the FRA in discharging their statutory duties to protect local communities.

Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee

11 November 2019 at 12:00 p.m.
at Fire Service Headquarters, Vauxhall Road, Birmingham
B7 4HW

Present: Councillor Spence (Chair)
Councillors Barlow, Dehar, Gill, Jenkins and Young

Apologies: Councillor Barrie
S Middleton

Observer: Nil

43/19 Declarations of Interest in contracts or other matters

There were no declarations of interest.

44/19 Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 7 October 2019

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2019 be approved as a correct record.

45/19 Fire Control performance Update Q1 & Q2 2019/20

Gary Taylor, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, provided the background to the report and the reason for its submission to the Committee.

The Shared Fire Control Governance Board had been established to provide the appropriate oversight of the function. The change in the governance model at Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service had resulted in the

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decision to disestablish the Board. It had been agreed that a six-monthly update would be provided to the Authority, via the Scrutiny Committee, to ensure that appropriate oversight was maintained.

It was noted that the update would be provided on a six-monthly basis initially and then on an annual basis from 2020/21 onwards.

Simon Barry, Strategic Enabler for Command Delivery, Fire Control and Workforce Planning, provided an overview of the report.

Staffordshire and West Midlands Fire Control had received 37,175 emergency calls between 1 April and 30 September 2019. 26,496 calls had been received for the West Midlands, and 10,679 calls had been received for Staffordshire. This equated to a split of 71% to 29%. The split in the number of calls mirrored the financial arrangements of the Fire Control function which were 70% West Midlands Fire Service, and 30% Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service. It was noted that the level of calls received compared to the number of calls mobilised to had remained consistent reflecting the continuing approach to call challenge.

A key performance measure for Fire Control was the length of time from answering a 999 call to mobilising resources to the incident for category one (life and property) incidents. The target was 80 seconds. Performance for the six-month period was an average call handling time of 78 seconds.

It was noted that Fire Control had used to be quite restricted due to mobilising to incidents based on pre-determined levels of attendance. However, this could lead to too much or too little resources being sent to an incident. Dynamic mobilising helped to reduce this situation occurring by supporting and enabling the skills and experience of Fire Control in increasing or decreasing the resources mobilised, aided by solutions such as 999eye. Fire Control had dynamically amended the initial level of response on 1486 occasions during quarters one and two.

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999eye had been used almost 3000 times year to date. This increased use ensured that Fire Control were gathering and using the data that was available.

Increasing levels of sickness absence had been experienced, mainly linked to long term sickness which accounted for 71% of all sickness. This was particularly felt within Fire Control due to the relatively small number of staff.

In recognition of the higher levels of long-term sickness, and that there was an agreed budget with Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service, an additional three individuals had been recruited as part of the latest recruitment campaign. The additional three individuals would not be putting extra pressures on the budget as it was known that three existing members of staff were due to leave. The recruitment of the individuals allowed Fire Control to build a buffer in place.

Work continued with the Command and Control supplier, Capita, regarding the upgrade of the Vision 3 system to Vision 4. Due to a number of issues identified as part of end user testing, the planned go live in November had been delayed until January 2020. This had followed an agreement that the system would not go live whilst significant issues remained unresolved. Capita were providing a responsive service and working closely with the Service. Implementation was getting closer and the Service was confident that there would be no issues when the system would go live.

The Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP) was a national programme to replace the current emergency services network. It was noted that the programme had been beset by delays and a lack of clarity. The Service remained plugged into this work but it still remained unclear of when it would be implemented or what it would actually comprise. A corporate risk and separate project were in place for this workstream.

In answer to Members' questions, the following points were raised:

- In relation to a question regarding how attendance times were calculated:
 - Attendance times were calculated from the time that Fire Control mobilised a resource. The attendance times did not include call handling times. However, it was important to consider how these contributed to survivability.
 - The attendance times were calculated in accordance with the Dear Chief Officer Letter guidance which recommended that times be calculated from the time that resources were informed. It was acknowledged that there were differing views regarding the guidance and the way of calculating / recording attendance times.
 - All call handling and response times were reported to the Home Office. The Service had taken the conscious decision to break the response times down into the different elements such as call handling, mobilising and responding as this enabled Officers to work on reducing the times accordingly.
 - It was noted that there were elements that impacted upon attendance times that were outside of the Service's control such as call handling by the operator.
-
- In relation to a question regarding sickness absence and stress related illnesses:
 - A sickness absence lasting for 28 days or more was classed as long-term sickness. The cause in some cases was identified as stress. However, this was recorded under a general category of sickness. Work was currently being undertaken regarding this, to explore the subject in more detail, and to ensure that the appropriate mechanisms were in place to support mental health and wellbeing.
 - Following a request by Members, it was agreed that information would be provided at the next meeting of the Committee on the work undertaken to explore the subject of stress related illnesses in more detail, and to ensure the appropriate mechanisms were in place to support mental health and wellbeing.

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- Sickness added additional pressures to Fire Control. A review of staffing within Fire Control had been undertaken three years ago. The review had examined what levels of staffing were required and when. This had resulted in optimum crewing levels (OCL) being introduced, which was a very lean staffing model. The OCL were based on an assumption that a certain number of staff would be on duty. However, sickness levels meant that sometimes the OCL was not met (the OCL was met approximately 80% of the time). This built in additional pressures for Fire Control.
- Officers pro-actively planned to ensure that a shift would not start below OCL. A number of measures had been put in place which included bringing in additional Fire Control staff, utilising members of the day team, putting in place Flexible Duty Officer support, and utilising members of staff from other areas of the Service who had Fire Control experience.
- In relation to a question regarding Fire Control recruitment:
- The latest recruitment campaign had attracted a high level of interest from individuals from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities. However, the level of interest had not resulted in any BME individuals being shortlisted. It was noted that, via Thinkology, the recruitment adverts were very targeted to reach particular communities, and this had generated a lot of expressions of interest. However, expressions of interest were not being converted into applications. It was evident that individuals were deselecting themselves from the application process and there was a need to understand why.
- It was noted that Fire Control was slightly different to the rest of the organisation in that BME and white males were under-represented.
- Following a request by Members, it was agreed that further information would be provided at the next meeting of the Committee on Fire Control recruitment and the approach used by the Service to recruit people from under-represented groups.

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- It was confirmed that the Service was no longer using a recruitment agency to recruit individuals for positions in Fire Control. However, due to the number of staff, some were employed on temporary contracts.

It was agreed that:

- Information on the work undertaken to explore the subject of stress related illnesses in more detail, and to ensure the appropriate mechanisms were in place to support mental health and wellbeing would be provided to Members at the next meeting of the Committee.
- Further information on Fire Control recruitment and the approach used by the Service to recruit people from under-represented groups would be provided to Members at the next meeting of the Committee.

46/19 **Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion, Equality Update**

Jo Simmonds, People Support Manager, People Support Services, provided an overview Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion, Equality (DICE) Update:

In conjunction with the Service's Staff Engagement Groups, the DICE team hosted an Inclusion and Development day for staff in June 2019. The event focussed on raising the profile of the staff engagement groups and included a range of speakers covering a variety of topics such as mental health and wellbeing, positive action and recruitment, a transgender case study, and awareness of organ donation specifically within the African Caribbean community. Further events would be held in the future.

The Buddy Scheme was launched in July 2019 and it featured an emphasis around new entrants. Trained buddies were now in place with a view to increase the number of buddies going forward.

The draft DICE Report 2020-2023 had been developed. The report celebrated the success experienced over the last few years and looked forward, including the DICE Objectives for

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2020-2023 which had been developed in consultation with departments and functions across the Service. The DICE Objectives included reducing the gender pay gap, a refresh of the Service's core values, and the continuation of positive action.

Sections five and six of the report provided a snapshot of the activities carried out by the Service including the work of the Service's specialist deaf team, the prevention team, the complex needs officer team, and the hosting of a Stonewall event.

Section seven provided a profile of the workforce. It was noted that 10% of uniformed staff were female which represented an improvement compared to past performance.

There had been a total of five grievances lodged during the reporting period of January to June 2019. All five were related to working practices. There had been 10 discipline cases. Five cases had been investigated under gross misconduct and five cases had been investigated under misconduct. At the time of the report, four cases had progressed to a hearing, the outcomes of which were final written warnings in all four cases.

No trends in relation to the protected characteristics had been identified regarding the grievances or discipline cases.

It was noted that the Service intended to carry out a benchmarking exercise in the future to compare the grievance and discipline data to that of other Metropolitan Fire and Rescue Services. The outcomes of which would be reported to the Committee via a future DICE Update report.

Since April 2019, the Service had employed 32 new entrant firefighters, of which, 14 (44%) were women and five (16%) were from BME communities. It was noted that there remained work to be done particularly with regard to recruiting individuals from BME communities. As a result, the Service continued to carry out pre-recruitment activities. A BME pre-recruitment programme commenced in August following further targeted advertising by Thinkology.

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Approximately 40 people attended the initial open evening with 20 individuals registering their interest. 12 people committed to the six-week programme which started in September.

The female development sessions were being implemented with the first workshop being held in June 2019. The session was well attended by women from across the Service and topics covered included progression and development, confidence building, coaching and the benefits of volunteering.

In answer to Members' questions, the following points were raised:

- Members of the specialist deaf team were able to use sign language. The team did attend school events etc but generally attended referrals involving people with a hearing impairment / deafness.
- The Stonewall event held in September was for organisations committed to supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) employees and providing a fully inclusive environment using appropriately trained non-LGBT champions.

47/19 An Analysis of Progress of Quarterly Performance against 'Our Plan' – Quarter Two 2019/20

Gary Taylor, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, provided an overview of the report:

PI 1 'The risk-based attendance standard', the median attendance time to high risk (category one incidents) was 4 minutes 38 seconds, a one second improvement compared to quarter one. The Service continued to overperform for category two, three and four incident types, with all three median attendance times well within the respective targets. However, it was important to note that attendance times for category two and three incidents had increased by 12 seconds each, and a small increase had been observed for category four incidents. The Service Delivery Model

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continued to protect the PRLs ensuring their availability to attend category one incidents, and some flexibility remained within the lower risk categories of incident.

PI 2 'The number of accidental dwelling fires', there had been 824 incidents year to date, 4% above target but within the tolerance levels.

PI 3 'Injuries from accidental fires in dwellings', there had been 17 injuries during quarter two, 37 injuries year to date. Performance was 56.5% above target and 35.4% above the three-year average.

It was noted that the number of injuries would normally correlate with the number of incidents. However, an increase in the number of injuries had been observed which did not correlate with the number of incidents. The increase had been observed over two quarters so could not be attributed to a spike in the numbers, nor could the figures be affected by a single incident. Serious Incident Reviews had discovered no significant issues or factors. As a result, performance would continue to be monitored.

PI 4 'The number of deaths from accidental dwelling fires', there had been seven fatalities year to date. No spikes had been observed. Established reasons and trends continued.

PI 5 'The percentage of Safe and Well visits referred by our partners', performance was 31.7% year to date, below the target of 40%. The revision of the strategy and engagement with partners had resulted in a reduction in the number referrals from partners. Members were asked to provide support with regard to this, to help the Service to receive quality referrals.

PI 6 'The number of Safe and Well points achieved by the Brigade', 121,244 points had been achieved year to date, 8596 below the target. It was noted that the Safe and Well visits and points accrued via the Tymly system were not included within the figures. If they were to be added, the total figure would be closer to the target.

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PI 7 'The number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions', no data had been received for quarter two and only provisional data had been provided up to 30 June 2019.

The latest figures indicated a small reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured. However, the figures remained a lot higher than those killed or seriously injured due to fire. A different profile had been observed with an increase in the number of pedestrians killed or seriously injured. The Service would work on raising awareness via social media and other platforms.

The Service continued to work with the West Midlands Combined Authority and road safety teams across the region.

The suite of performance indicators for deliberate fires, PI 8 'The number of deliberate fires in dwellings', PI 9 'The number of deliberate fires in non-domestic premises', PI 10 'The number of deliberate vehicle fires', and PI 11 'The number of deliberate rubbish fires', were all within their respective tolerance levels, with the exception of PI 12 'The number of deliberate fires in derelict buildings', which was 32.2% above target. It was noted that two derelict sites had been targeted a number of times, impacting upon the figures. The Service was working with local teams to secure both premises.

PI 13 'The number of accidental fires in non-domestic premises', there had been 234 incidents year to date which was 11.9% over target but within the tolerance levels.

PI 14 'The number of false alarm calls due to fire alarm equipment in dwellings and non-domestic premises', there had been 3071 incidents year to date which was above the target but within the tolerance levels.

Jo Simmonds, People Support Manager, People Support Services, provided an overview of the People Support Services and Safety, Health and Environment performance indicators:

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PI 17 'The percentage of all staff from BME communities', performance was 11.7%, below the target of 12.5% and below the lower tolerance level. It was noted that a concentrated effort was being taken to improve performance.

PI 18 'The average number of working days / shifts lost due to sickness – all staff', an average of 1.74 working days / shifts per person were lost due to sickness during quarter two, below target and below the lower tolerance level.

An average of 3.8 working days / shifts per person were lost due to sickness year to date, above the target of 3.4 days.

Work was ongoing regarding the delivery of attendance management workshops to staff which would include guidance on the requirements for recording sickness absence and return to work information.

PI 21 'The total number of injuries', 47 injuries were reported during quarter two. 89 injuries had been reported year to date, above the target of 63, and above the upper tolerance level. A full breakdown of the injuries by type was provided in the report. The three main types of injury sustained during quarter two were burns / reddening during hot fire training, manual handling injuries, and slips, trips and falls.

Near hit reporting had decreased by 38% during quarters one and two. Reports of violence had decreased by 32% during the same period.

PI 22 'The total number of RIDDOR injuries', there had been six RIDDOR reports during quarter two, and 11 reports year to date. Performance was above target and above the upper tolerance level. None of the reports had been incident related and none had been followed up by the Health and Safety Executive.

In answer to Members' questions, the following points were raised:

- In relation to a question if there had been any water related fatalities this year:
- It was agreed that information on the number and type of water related incidents and the number of fatalities would be provided at the next meeting of the Committee. Information would also be provided on the Service's approach to water safety and the prevention of such incidents.
- The National Fire Chief's Council (NFCC) had a dedicated water safety and prevention section which had developed a water safety strategy and action plan.
- Nationally, the number of water related incidents had increased. It was noted that more operational discretion was being applied at these types of incidents due to their nature. The NFCC were leading on a project to determine if there should be a national policy regarding sub-surface and water related incidents.
- There was no statutory requirement for staff to go sub-surface if required, for example to affect a rescue. However, staff could find themselves in such a situation and there was a need to look after staff. Other agencies had specialist dive teams but response times could be an issue. Firefighters could be the first responders on scene and find themselves under pressure to do something but not have the training to do so, potentially putting themselves at risk.
- It was noted that recent activity to highlight awareness to communities regarding a spate of deliberate fires involving wheelie bins in the Walsall area had triggered a note into the NFCC which had been circulated nationally as a national issue.
- It was agreed that further information would be provided on the number of injuries, in particular injuries sustained in controlled environments including during training.

It was agreed that:

- information on the number and type of water related incidents and the number of fatalities would be provided at the next meeting of the Committee. Information would also be provided on the Service's approach to water safety and the prevention of such incidents.
- further information would be provided at the next meeting of the Committee on the number of injuries, in particular injuries sustained in controlled environments including during training.

48/19 **Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2019/20**

The Committee noted the Work Programme for 2019/20 and progress to date.

Karen Gowreesunker, Clerk to the Authority, noted that the Committee had undertaken the review of Business Continuity Arrangements and had agreed to undertake a review of Safe and Well. The review of Safe and Well would need to be scheduled before the end of the municipal year (June 2020). It was suggested that a scoping document for the review be submitted to the Committee at its next scheduled meeting in February 2020.

The Committee agreed that a scoping document on the review of Safe and Well was to be submitted at the February 2020 meeting.

The meeting finished at 13:48pm.

<p>Contact Officer: Stephen Timmington Strategic Hub West Midlands Fire Service 0121 380 6680</p>

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WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

24 FEBRUARY 2020

1. **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE BRIEFING – OVERVIEW OF WATER RELATED INCIDENTS**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer.

RECOMMENDED

THAT the Scrutiny Committee note the overview of water related incidents (appendix 1).

2. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report is submitted to Scrutiny Committee to provide Members with an overview of water related incidents and the Service's approach to water safety and the prevention of such incidents.

3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The report 'Analysis of Progress of Quarterly Performance Against The Plan Quarter 2 2019-20' was submitted at the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 11 November 2020. As part of deliberations of the report by Members, water related incidents and the approach by the Service to water safety and related prevention activities was discussed.
- 3.2 As a result of the discussions outlined above, and upon the request by the Scrutiny Committee for further information, this report has been submitted to provide an overview of water related incidents and the Service's approach to water safety and the prevention of such incidents (see Appendix 1).

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**

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications arising from this report

7. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 11 November 2019

The contact name for this report is Sarah Warnes, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Strategic Enabler – People, telephone number 0121 380 6907.

PHIL LOACH
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

Scrutiny Committee Briefing Over of Water Related Incidents – Appendix 1

Background

West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority (WMFRA) has a legal duty to provide a fire and rescue service that meets the needs of the local community. It is responsible for providing, training and equipping a Fire and Rescue Service capable of undertaking the Core Functions within the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (FRS Act 2004).

- Fire safety
- Fire-fighting
- Road traffic accidents
- Other emergency rescue activities

Under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, the Fire Authorities have the power to respond to other eventualities, which water related incidents are classed, however, they do not have a statutory duty to do so.

The priorities and objectives for WMFRA are set out within the Fire and Rescue National Framework (May 2018), which are;

- make appropriate provision for fire prevention and protection activities and response to fire and rescue related incidents;
- identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their areas face;
- collaborate with emergency services and other local and national partners to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the service they provide;
- be accountable to communities for the service they provide; and
- develop and maintain a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse.

The Civil Contingencies Act (2004) requires Category One Responders to maintain plans for preventing emergencies and for reducing, controlling or mitigating the effects of emergencies in both the response and recovery phases. Local Resilience Forums are encouraged to develop specific flood plans, a multi-agency flood plan (MAFP), to complement other partners' plans, and to

provide more detail to generic Major Incident Plans. In spring 2006 the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) undertook a detailed capability assessment of flood emergency planning and preparedness in England and Wales, based on the outputs of a National Capability Survey undertaken the same year. The analysis showed a shortfall in capability to rescue people when compared against the planning assumptions for a severe East Coast flood.

The floods in summer 2007 tested flood rescue capability across England. Sir Michael Pitt's review praised the role of many organisations carrying out flood rescue, including both statutory and voluntary organisations. The Pitt Review concluded that a national framework (Concept of Operations) was required, establishing standards for typing and accreditation of rescue teams and setting standards for equipment and training.

The Defra Flood Rescue Concept of Operations was produced as part of the project along with a Flood Rescue National Asset Register. This register contained accredited teams which met the team typing standards, enabling teams to be deployed nationally in the event of a wide area flood incident. This facilitates different local capabilities being 'plugged' seamlessly into a regional or national response during wide area flooding.

Capability

West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) believes in operational excellence and through our Integrated Risk Management Plan we prepare for all foreseeable risks. Our response priorities focus on dealing excellently with emergency incidents, where the risk to life will be reduced through our commitment to operational excellence, enabling an assertive, effective and safe emergency response to all incidents whilst supporting firefighter safety.

Water related incidents can involve rescues from rivers, lakes, canals and waterways or involving flooding. WMFS crews not only respond to incidents within the West Midlands area to help people, but our skills and expertise can be called upon Nationally to support other Fire and Rescue Services affected by major incidents.

WMFS has the ability to respond to these types of incidents

through both equipment and competent firefighters. Our firefighters are trained to six different levels;

- Level 1 – Water awareness

All firefighters are trained and assessed to this level and all of our response vehicles carry personal floatation devices (PFD) and in addition, all Pump Rescue Ladders carry life jackets which enable us to work near water. This level enables firefighters to carry out a land-based rescue and not enter the water.

Additionally, firefighters can carry out a Voluntary water rescue swimmer assessment, this would mean that they could enter the water to conduct a rescue swim. Since May 2019, there are 167 firefighters who have completed this assessment and are able to conduct the rescue swim.

- Level 2 – Water rescue first responder

Level 2 water rescue personnel are deployed to wading water incidents where personnel can lead persons to safety in shallow water. Additionally, they have awareness of unstable surface hazards such as mud and ice which may be encountered at water and flood incidents.

There are currently four fire stations trained to this level, Perry Barr, Sheldon, Woodgate Valley and Coventry. This is further supplemented by the two Technical Rescue Stations (TRU), at Bickenhill and Wednesbury.

- Level 3 – Water rescue technician (undertaken by TRU)

Specialist rescue personnel who have been trained in all aspects of water rescue and can deploy systems of work that allow a person to enter the water to affect a rescue in moving water

- Level 4 – Water rescue power boat operator

Technical Rescue crews are trained to operate the power rescue craft.

- Level 5 – Water incident management

Watch Commanders within TRU are trained to be able to advise and command at water incidents.

- Level 6 – Subject matter advisors

We have 6 personnel trained as Tactical Advisors who are members of Technical Rescue. They are trained to provide tactical advice in relation to major or wider-spread flood or water rescue incidents nationally.

Equipment

The equipment available within the WMFS to support crews at water related incidents, is as follows;

- Level 1 on PRL's – throw line, hose inflation kit, PFD's, life jacket and crew saver.
- Level 2 – in addition to PRL, dry suits, helmets, boots, wading poles and extendable reach pole.
- Level 3 – ice paths, inflatable boat, rigid boat, sub-surface viewer and additional lines.

These resources are located across our delivery area based upon our Integrated Risk Management Plan. These resources are also available for national deployment, which we have supported on several occasions at incidents across the country.

Operational incidents

Water related incidents are generally recorded under 'Special Service Calls' and have three Subgroups, Flooding (Environmental), Leaks and blockages and Rivers etc (not Flooding).

Between April 2016 and March 2019 there has been 1,941 Water related incidents. There have been specific events which have led to an increase in incidents, the rise in 2017-18 is mainly due to an increase in incidents in March 2018. March 2018 saw the 'beast from the east' which led to burst pipes caused by the cold. The 2018-19 rise (rise when compared to 2016-17) was due to the floods in May 2018.

SSC Sub-group	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Flooding (Environmental)	143	116	100
Leaks and blockages	385	682	431
Rivers etc (not flooding)	24	32	28
Total	552	830	559

SSC subgroup	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Flooding (Env)	143	116	100
Other (advice only, pumping out, stand by, etc)	106	99	76
Rescue/evacuation	37	17	24
Leaks and blockages	385	682	431
Other (Advice only, pumping out, stand by, etc)	355	642	404
Rescue/evacuation	30	40	27
Rivers etc (not flooding)	24	32	28
Rescue/evacuation	24	32	28

SSC subgroup	Rescues (incl. casualties who were rescued)	Injuries	Fatalities
Leaks and blockages	16	15	1

2016-17	11	5	0
2017-18	1	5	1
2018-19	4	5	0
Flooding (Env)	107	10	0
2016-17	34	5	0
2017-18	5	2	0
2018-19	68	3	0
River etc (not flooding)	48	35	14
2016-17	13	9	3
2017-18	19	11	6
2018-19	16	15	5

Water Safety advice

The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) has a Drowning prevention and water safety campaign which is called 'Be Water Aware'. This aims to raise awareness of the risk of accidental drowning.

The NFCC is a member of the National Water Safety forum and is committed to the National Drowning Prevention Strategy which aims to cut water related deaths by 50% by 2026.

Drowning is amongst the leading causes of accidental death in the UK. We want to make people safer by making them aware of the risks and dangers when around water, what to do if they fall into water and how to help someone who is in trouble in water.

To support FRS's during 'Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Week' the NFCC issue a campaign toolkit to participating FRS's. This includes information on Key messages for raising awareness with the focus groups. Safety advice, what to do if you fall in water. Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Week - #BeWaterAware – 20th -26th April 2020.

WMFS provides information on our website about Water Safety, where there are sections about open water, flooding and boat safety. These sections all provide relevant safety advice when around water along with useful links for more information and resources that are available. Additionally, there is information provided within the Safe and Well booklet that should be left after

every visit.

At Safeside Eastside the main programme for primary schools, called Smart Choices, has a section on water safety and concentrates on cold water shock, helping others and how to get help in an emergency.

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

24 FEBRUARY 2020

1. **AN ANALYSIS OF PROGRESS OF QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE AGAINST 'OUR PLAN' – QUARTER THREE 2019/20**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer.

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 THAT the Committee note the status of the Service's key performance indicators in the third quarter of 2019/20 (Appendix 1).
- 1.2 THAT the Committee note the progress made in delivering the three strategic priorities contained in 'Our Plan' 2019-2022 (Appendix 1).
- 1.3 THAT the Committee note the update on the performance information system detailed in section 5 of this report.

2. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report is submitted to provide the Committee with an analysis of the organisation's performance against 'Our Plan' for 2019-2022.

3. **BACKGROUND**

The third Quarterly Performance Review meeting of 2019/20 was held on 4 February 2020. This quarterly meeting, attended by members of the Strategic Enabling Team and other key stakeholders, and observed by the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee, provides a joined-up method of managing performance and provides assurance around the ongoing performance of 'Our Plan'.

4. **PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- 4.1 The setting of targets against the operational and other performance indicators enables the Service to define in key areas the improvements which contribute to making the West Midlands safer, stronger and healthier, and to manage the resources allocated to this work. The

Service continues to improve and meet targets across a range of indicators.

4.2 Appendix 1 details the performance against our:

- Performance Indicators covering:
 - Response, Prevention and Protection
 - People
 - Safety, Health and Environment
- Strategic Objectives as outlined in 'Our Plan' and milestones due for completion within the year 2019/20.

4.3 Service Delivery Performance Indicators

4.3.1 Response:

- PI 1 – the risk-based attendance standard; performance continues to be positive, with the targets having been met for all four categories of incident type. The performance is rated as over performance against the tolerance levels (blue).
- Average attendance times for Category 1 incidents (the most critical and important of the four categories) is 4 minutes 46 seconds in quarter three, an eight second increase compared to the previous quarter.
- Due to technical difficulties, average attendance times for Category 2, 3 and 4 Incident Types are not available for quarter three at the time of writing. However, historical performance would suggest that performance would remain well within the respective targets, with no evidence forthcoming to suggest otherwise. Quarter three performance for these categories will be included within the report for quarter four to ensure consistency of information.

4.3.2 Prevention:

- The performance indicators for the following areas demonstrate over performance against the tolerance levels (blue):
 - PI 9 The number of deliberate fires in non-domestic premises.
 - PI 11 The number of deliberate rubbish fires.
- The performance indicators for the following areas demonstrate performance is within the tolerance levels (green):

- PI 2 The number of accidental dwelling fires.
- PI 8 The number of deliberate fires in dwellings.
- PI 10 The number of deliberate vehicle fires.
- The performance indicators for the following areas demonstrate under performance against the tolerance levels (red):
 - PI 3 Injuries from accidental fires in dwellings, taken to hospital for treatment.
 - PI 5 The percentage of Safe and Well visits referred by our partners.
 - PI 6 The number of Safe and Well points achieved by the Brigade.
 - PI 12 The number of deliberate fires in derelict buildings.
- The following two performance indicators do not have a performance rating assigned:
 - PI 4 The number of deaths from accidental fires in dwellings.
 - PI 7 The number of people killed or seriously injured in Road Traffic Collisions.

4.3.3 Protection:

- The performance indicators for the following areas demonstrate performance is within the tolerance levels (green):
 - PI 13 – The number of accidental fires in non-domestic premises.
 - PI 14 – The number of false alarm calls due to fire alarm equipment in dwellings and non-domestic premises.

4.4 People Support Services Performance Indicators

4.4.1 The performance indicator for the following area demonstrates over performance against the tolerance levels (blue):

- PI 19 – The average number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness (uniformed and Fire Control staff).

4.4.2 The performance indicators for the following areas demonstrate performance is within the tolerance levels (green):

- PI 15 – The percentage of employees that have disclosed their disabled status.
- PI 17 – The percentage of all staff from black and ethnic minority (BME) communities.
- PI 18 – The average number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness (all staff).

4.4.3 The performance indicators for the following areas demonstrate under performance against the tolerance levels (red):

- PI 16 – The number of female uniformed staff.
- PI 17a – The percentage of uniformed staff from BME communities
- PI 20 – The average number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness (non-uniformed employees).

4.5 Safety, Health and Environment Performance Indicators

4.5.1 There are two areas where under performance has been demonstrated against the tolerance levels (red):

- PI 21 – The total number of injuries
- PI 22 – The total number of RIDDOR injuries.

4.5.2 The following performance indicators are all reported on an annual basis (in quarter four):

- PI 23 – To reduce the Fire Authority's carbon emissions
- PI 24 – To reduce the gas use of Fire Authority premises.
- PI 25 – To reduce the electricity use of Fire Authority premises.

5. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

5.1 The InPhase performance management system is embedded across the organisation. It is envisaged that InPhase will be reviewed for its ongoing performance in the context of the ongoing development and implementation of 3PT.

5.2 In the meantime, full engagement with staff and departments across

the organisation continues with InPhase, ensuring the involvement of all key stakeholders and end users.

- 5.3 3PT is an acronym for a layered approach to portfolio, programme, project, and task management.
- 5.4 Introduction of the 3PT infrastructure has been completed. It is now subject to further development to manage performance in a project environment as work streams are identified for implementation.

6. **CORPORATE RISK**

- 6.1 Corporate Risks are those risks that, if realised, would seriously affect the Service's ability to carry out its core functions or deliver key objectives.
- 6.2 In accordance with the Corporate Risk Management Strategy, all risks maintained within the Corporate Risk Register have been reviewed by Senior Risk Owners in order to update the relevant triggers, impacts and control measures and determine a relevant risk score, if appropriate, based on assessment of likelihood and impact.
- 6.3 A report of progress against our Corporate Risks is submitted separately to the Audit and Risk Committee.

7. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

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

8. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

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.

9. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The level of response, protection and prevention resources required to achieve the targets for the operational indicators shown in Appendix 1 were considered as part of the Authority's 2019/2020 budget setting process which established a total revised net budget requirement of £98.131 million. As at the end of December 2019 actual expenditure was £72.171 million compared to a profiled budget of £72.193 million resulting in a £0.022 million underspend.

- 9.2 The delivery of services which contribute to the performance achievements comprise of goods such as smoke alarms and staff time. The staff time includes those who are solely engaged in prevention work and watch based staff that provide emergency response as well as prevention services.
- 9.3 The full year budget for smoke alarms and other supporting materials in 2019/2020 is £329,600. Actual expenditure as at the end of December 2019 was £241,400. Expenditure for the third quarter is in line with the profiled budget.

10. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

‘Our Plan 2019-22’ Strategic Objectives.

Corporate Action Plan updates.

Corporate Risk Position Statement Quarter 3 2019/20 (exception report).

The contact name for this report is Sarah Warnes, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Strategic Enabler - People, telephone number 0121 380 6907.

PHIL LOACH
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER


APPENDIX 1
Item 6**Performance Indicator Performance – Quarter Three 2019/20**

Key:	
Blue	Over performance against the tolerance levels
Green	Performance is within the tolerance levels
Red	Under performance against the tolerance levels

Response

Our response priorities focus on dealing excellently with emergency incidents:

- Through risk management, the most serious incidents in high-risk areas will be attended within five minutes, to save life, protect homes and businesses, and keep our transport networks moving
- Risk to life and property will be reduced through our commitment to operational excellence, enabling an assertive, effective and safe emergency response to all incidents whilst supporting firefighter safety
- At all incidents attended, rescue operations will be led and co-ordinated by WMFS whilst working collaboratively with other agencies to deliver an excellent response and meet public expectations
- National resilience will be enhanced through delivery of a local, national and international response to major incidents, new risks and humanitarian situations through our specialist response teams



PI 1		The Risk Based Attendance Standard Target: under 5 minutes Actual: 4 minutes 46 seconds Over performance against the tolerance levels
<p>The median attendance time to high-risk (Cat 1) incidents in quarter three was 4 minutes 46 seconds, an 8 second increase compared to the previous quarter (in line with seasonal trends).</p> <p>Attendance times for Category 2, 3 & 4 incidents are not available at the time of writing due to technical difficulties.</p>		

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Prevention

Our prevention priorities focus on making safer, healthier communities:

- The number of people killed or seriously injured by fire-related incidents will reduce as we focus, with our partners, on reducing the risks faced by the most vulnerable people in our communities
- The safety, health and well-being of the most vulnerable people in our communities will improve by targeting 'radical prevention' interventions that are directly linked to vulnerability from fire
- Arson-related incidents will fall, supporting safer and stronger communities, as a result of our partnership working
- Fewer people will be killed or seriously injured on West Midlands roads, and we will keep our transport networks moving, as we work with the West Midlands Combined Authority and other organisations to develop and deliver interventions that support the West Midlands Regional Road Safety Strategy.

PI 2		The number of accidental dwelling fires Target YTD: 1202 (1106 – 1262) Actual to date: 1218 Performance is within the tolerance levels
<p>There have been 1202 Accidental Dwelling Fires for the year to date (YTD), 16 over target but within the tolerance levels.</p> <p>The sources of ignition remain the same as previous quarters with the top four sources being cooking, electricity supply, other domestic appliances, and smoking.</p>		
PI 3		Injuries from accidental fires in dwellings (taken to hospital for treatment) Target YTD: 35 (26 – 41) Actual to date: 46 Under performance against the tolerance levels
<p>There have been 46 injuries this year to date, 11 over target.</p> <p>The highest number of casualties were within the age groups 25 to 44 and 45 to 64, with 11 casualties in each age banding. Of the remaining 24 casualties, 10 were in the 80+ age band, six were 18 to 24, five were 65 to 79, and three were 0 to 18.</p> <p>34.8% of injuries were sustained as a result of the person fighting the fire, of which 30.4% suffered burns. The majority of fires where a person was injured were caused by cooking being left unattended.</p>		

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PI 4		The number of deaths from accidental dwelling fires Target YTD: N/A Actual to date: 10
<p>There have been ten fatalities in accidental dwelling fires this year to date (three in quarter three).</p> <p>Five were in the Black Country North Command Area, four in Black Country South and one in Coventry & Solihull.</p> <p>Four were aged 45 to 64, three were aged 80+, two were aged 65 to 79 and one was in the 25 to 44 age range.</p> <p>Four of the ten incidents were caused by smoking. The other six incidents were caused by either cooking, matches, cigarette lighters, or domestic appliances.</p>		
PI 5		The percentage of Safe and Well visits referred by our partners Target YTD: 40% (40% - 42%) Actual to date: 37.6% Under performance against the tolerance levels
<p>The percentage of Safe and Well visits referred by our partners for quarter three was 37.6%, below the target of 40%.</p> <p>For the first time, we have been able to obtain reliable figures from the Tymly system for partner referrals for the Black Country South Command Area for the third quarter. The figures indicate that 873 of the 1168 visits (75%) on the Tymly system were a result of partner referrals. If these figures are included within the overall figures for the Service, the overall average increases to 42.5%, which is above the quarterly target.</p>		
PI 6		The number of Safe & Well points achieved by the Brigade Target YTD: 194,767 Actual to date: 177,886 Under performance against the tolerance levels
<p>The target for the total Safe and Well points is 259,690 for the year. Quarter three we achieved 56,642 points (which is 8281 below the quarterly target), 177,886 points YTD.</p> <p>The Tymly system continues to be used in the Black Country South Command Area. It uses an updated risk model and does not record Safe and Well points. If it was assumed that these visits accrued the average number of Safe and Well points for Black Country South Command Area during the quarter, the visits would contribute a further 8561 points to the YTD total.</p>		

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8846 Safe and Well visits were carried out this quarter, equating to 1.66 per appliance per 24 hours (including Tymly Safe and Well visits and based on 58 appliances being available 24/7). It should be noted that a number of appliances have been unavailable during this period, in line with the Service's risk-based approach to fleet management.

PI 7



The number of people killed or seriously injured (KSI) in road traffic collisions

Target YTD: Not applicable

Actual to date: 588

Please note that RTC data is highly likely to change due to existing incidents or injuries being retrospectively reclassified, or additional incidents being identified in future time periods.

There have been a total of 588 KSI's year to date, 25 people killed, 563 seriously injured.




During Q3 (Oct-Dec) of 2019/20 there were a total of 130 fatal and serious road traffic collisions across the West Midlands which resulted in a total of 137 KSI's (5 Fatalities and 132 serious). Currently, this represents a reduction of 52 KSI's on Q1 of 2019/20 and a reduction of 130 KSI's for Q3 of 2018/19.

Dudley and Sandwell recorded 20 KSI's (1 fatal and 19 serious), Wolverhampton and Walsall recorded 19 KSI's (1 fatal and 18 serious), Birmingham recorded 75 KSI's (1 fatal and 74 serious), Coventry and Solihull recorded 22 KSI's (2 fatal and 20 serious).

For the quarter:


- 80% of fatalities were pedestrians with the remaining 20% the driver or rider of the vehicle.
- 80% of fatalities were male.
- 40% of fatalities were between 70 and 79 years.
- No fatality hotspots/repeat locations were noted.
- 44% of all serious injuries were to drivers or riders of vehicles, 42% were to pedestrians, and the remaining 14% were passengers.
- Just under half (48%) of all serious casualties were under 30 years, 36% of all serious casualties were between 30 and 59 years, with the remaining 16% over the age of 60 years.
- Males accounted for just under thirds (64%) of all serious injuries.

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PI 8		The number of deliberate fires in dwellings Target YTD: 162 (137 – 180) Actual to date: 158 Performance is within the tolerance levels
<p>Deliberate Dwelling Fires are four below target and within the tolerance levels.</p> <p>Only Coventry & Solihull Command Area is above the tolerance levels, with 33 incidents against a target of 21 (Coventry ten above target and Solihull two above target). Incidents in the Coventry area were higher than expected during August and November. Birmingham South Command Area are three incidents above target.</p>		
PI 9		The number of deliberate fires in non-domestic premises Target YTD: 132 (111 – 146) Actual to date: 105 Over performance against the tolerance levels
<p>There have been 105 deliberate fires in non-domestic premises for the year to date, 27 below target and below the lower tolerance level.</p> <p>Black Country North is the only command to be above target (28 incidents compared to a YTD target of 18). This is largely due to performance in quarters one and two when the number of incidents experienced were above target.</p> <p>All other commands are below target.</p> <p>Black Country South Command have recorded 20 incidents, eight below target. The command has generally been in line with or below target throughout the YTD except for May 2019 which saw the number of incidents significantly above expected levels.</p> <p>Birmingham North Command have recorded 28 incidents, significantly below the target of 55. However, the number of incidents experienced increased during quarter three.</p> <p>Birmingham South and Coventry and Solihull Command Areas are both in line with their respective YTD targets.</p>		
PI 10		The number of deliberate vehicle fires Target YTD: 619 (521 – 687) Actual to date: 532 Performance is within the tolerance levels
<p>There have been 532 deliberate vehicle fires during this year to date, below target and within the tolerance levels.</p>		


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All commands are below their respective targets and within the tolerance levels, with the exception of Birmingham South Command where the number of incidents are below the lower tolerance level.

PI 11		The number of deliberate rubbish fires
		Target YTD: 1392 (1280 – 1460) Actual to date: 1275 Over performance against the tolerance levels

There have been 1275 deliberate rubbish fires for the year to date, below target and the lower tolerance level. 270 incidents were recorded during quarter three, which is the second lowest total for a quarter on record. The lowest number of incidents recorded was 256 during quarter four 2017/18.

Coventry and Solihull Command is the command to be above target (just five incidents). All other commands are below their respective targets and either below or within the associated tolerance levels YTD.

PI 12		The number of deliberate fires in derelict buildings
		Target YTD: 86 (71 – 93) Actual to date: 104 Under performance against the tolerance levels

There have been 104 deliberate fires in derelict buildings recorded YTD, 18 incidents above target, and above the upper tolerance level.

Half of all incidents (52) occurred within the Black Country South Command Area. 14 incidents occurred within the Soho and Victoria ward, five incidents occurred within the Greets Green and Lyng, and Rowley wards, and four incidents were recorded in both Cradley Heath and Old Mill, and Friar Park.

Black Country North Command accounted for 26.9% of all incidents. Six incidents occurred in the Bentley and Darlaston North ward and five incidents occurred in Aldridge Central and South.


Birmingham South Command accounted for 13.5% of incidents, Birmingham North 6.7% and Coventry and Solihull 2.9%. No significant ward locations were observed in these commands.

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Protection

Our protection priorities focus on protecting life and property to make businesses stronger and communities safer:

- Life and property will be protected by targeting high-risk buildings and vulnerable businesses, including residential high-rises, to ensure compliance and enforcement of fire safety legislation
- Improved community safety through implementing outcomes of the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety
- Improved community safety through innovative and contemporary approaches to the delivery of protection activities and working cohesively with partners at local, regional and national levels to influence the development of new and enabling legislation
- Prosperity and economic growth are enhanced by educating and supporting businesses, including collaboration with other regulators and partner agencies
- Disruption to businesses, communities and West Midlands Fire Service caused by unwanted fire signals from fire alarms will be reduced.



PI 13		The number of accidental fires in non-domestic premises Target YTD: 311 (262 – 345) Actual to date: 327 Performance is within the tolerance levels
<p>There have been 327 Accidental Fires at Non-Domestic Properties this year to date, which is over target but remains within tolerance,</p> <p>Black Country North and Coventry & Solihull Commands are over their respective tolerance levels. Birmingham South Command is below the lower tolerance level.</p> <p>Both boroughs are above tolerance within the Black Country North Command (Walsall six incidents above target, and Wolverhampton four above target). A total of 64 incidents have been recorded within the command. With a year to date target of 67, it is likely that the command will exceed target.</p> <p>Both boroughs are above target within the Coventry and Solihull Command (Coventry nine incidents above target and Solihull three above target).</p>		

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PI 14		The number of false alarm calls due to fire alarm equipment in dwellings and non-domestic premises Target YTD: 4791 (4456 – 4982) Actual to date: 4572 Performance is within the tolerance levels
<p>There have been 4572 False Alarms due to Equipment (FAE) this year to date, which is below target and within the tolerance levels.</p> <p>3538 FAEs occurred at dwellings and 1032 occurred at non-domestic properties. Two were unknown. Many FAEs were multiple incidents at the same properties, particularly health premises and sheltered accommodation.</p> <p>27.3% of FAEs occurred within the Birmingham North Command, followed by 20.7% in Black Country North, 18.8% in Birmingham South, 16.8% in Black Country South, and 16.4% in the Coventry and Solihull Command. Although Birmingham North Command recorded the highest volume of FAEs, it was the only command to witness a reduction in quarter three compared to quarter two (a reduction of 1.6%) and to fall below the target and tolerance levels YTD.</p>		


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People Support Services

PI 15		<p>The percentage of employees that have disclosed their disabled status Target: 100% (95% - 100%) Actual to date: 95.2% Performance is within the tolerance levels</p>
	<p>The percentage of employees disclosing their disability status has remained high at 95.2% with 3.5% stating that they do have a disability.</p> <p>When considering declaration rates for ethnicity, religion / belief and sexual orientation, these also remain high at 97.8% for ethnicity, 87% for religion/belief and 86.3% for sexual orientation.</p> <p>A full breakdown of the protected characteristics across the Service is submitted to the Committee on a 6-monthly basis via the Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion, Equality Update, which includes a workforce profile.</p>	
PI 16		<p>The number of female uniformed staff Target: 152 (144 – 160) Actual to date: 138 Under performance against the tolerance levels</p>
	<p>There are 138 female uniformed staff which equates to 10.2% of operational staff. This is above the national average of 6.4%.</p> <p>33.3% of people (15) recruited since April 2019 are female and while this is below the Service's target of 50%, it remains a great achievement to consistently recruit a significant number of women for every trainee firefighter development programme that is held.</p> <p>The recruitment programme for women has been reviewed and evaluated. Questionnaires have been distributed to delegates on the programme who have reported on what they found most useful, least useful, and any improvements that can be made. The overall rating of the programme was an average of 8.75 (based on a 1 to 10 rating). The results of the questionnaire have been utilised in the review and changes have been made to how recruitment activity is delivered. An annual plan for female recruitment programmes has been developed to run through 2020.</p> <p>Work continues with Thinkology and a further female pre-recruitment programme has commenced, including an open evening designed to encourage women to consider applying to the Fire Service, dispelling myths about the role of a firefighter, providing information about the Service, and enrolling individuals onto the programme.</p>	

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40% of uniformed posts are crew commander or above. 23% of female uniformed staff hold the position of crew commander or above, compared to 42% of male uniformed staff. When considering non-uniformed posts, 62% are above a grade 8. 50% of female non-uniformed staff hold a position above a grade 8, compared to 77% of male non-uniformed staff.

PI 17		<p>The percentage of all staff from BME communities Target: 12.4% (11.7% – 13.0%) Actual to date: 11.9% Performance is within the tolerance levels</p>
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The percentage of all staff from black and ethnic minority (BME) communities has remained relatively constant over time, with a slight increase in Q3 (11.9%) compared to Q2 (11.7%) and Q1 (11.5%) of 2019/20.




24.4% of people (11) recruited since April 2019 are from a BME background and while this is below the Service's target of 35%, it is significantly higher than the percentages previously achieved with a consistently good representation of new entrants from BME backgrounds for each firefighter development programme that has been held.

The recruitment programme for people from BME backgrounds has been reviewed and evaluated. Questionnaires have been distributed to delegates on the programme who have reported on what they found most useful, least useful, and any improvements that can be made. The overall rating of the programme was an average of 8.75 (based on a 1 to 10 rating). The results of the questionnaire have been utilised in the review and changes have been made to how recruitment activity is delivered. An annual plan for BME recruitment programmes has been developed to run through 2020.

15.2% of Non-Uniformed and Fire Control staff are BME. When considering non-uniformed posts, 62% are above a grade 8. 60% of BAME non-uniformed staff hold a position above a grade 8, compared to 63% of white non-uniformed staff.

Work continues with Thinkology with regard to targeted advertising towards people from BME backgrounds.

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PI 17a		The percentage of uniformed staff from BME communities Target: 11.4% (10.8% – 12.0%) Actual to date: 10.7% Under performance against the tolerance levels
<p>10.7% of Uniformed staff are from BME communities, below the target and marginally below the lower tolerance level.</p> <p>Since Apr 2019, 16% of fire-fighter recruits have been from BME communities.</p> <p>40% of uniformed posts are crew commander or above. 24% of BME uniformed staff hold the position of crew commander or above, compared to 43% of white uniformed staff.</p>		
PI 18		The average number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness – all staff Target: 2.12 (2.01 – 2.23) Actual to date: 2.13 Performance is within the tolerance levels
<p>An average of 2.13 working days/shifts per person were lost due to sickness during quarter three, marginally above target and within the lower tolerance levels. This represents a 9% decrease compared to the same period in 2018/19.</p> <p>An average of 5.97 working days/shifts per person were lost due to sickness year to date, above the target of 5.52 days. This figure represents a 1.6% decrease compared to the same period in 2018/19.</p>		
PI 19		The average number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness – uniformed and Fire Control staff Target: 2.01 (1.91 – 2.11) Actual to date: 1.88 Over performance against the tolerance levels
<p>An average of 1.88 working days/shifts per person were lost due to sickness during quarter three, below the target and below the lower tolerance level. This represents a 15% decrease compared to the same period in 2018/19.</p> <p>An average of 5.73 working days/shifts per person were lost due to sickness year to date, higher than the target of 5.27 days. However, this figure represents a 1.0% decrease compared to the same period in 2018/19.</p> <p>The top five absence reasons are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health • Joint Problems 		

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- Cold and Flu
- Gastrointestinal
- Muscular Skeletal: Back

These five reasons represent 54% of duty days lost due to sickness.

There were 1366 days lost through restricted duties for this period, compared to 1100 for the same period last year. Joint work continues between Service Delivery, the Business Partners and Occupational Health to identify how best to manage the length of time that an individual remains on restricted duties and this is being monitored via the ridership factor working group on a quarterly basis.

Long term sickness for uniformed staff accounts for 66.2% of all sickness, and 82.4% of all sickness within Fire Control.

Missing data regarding attendance management has increased during this period and focused activity will be required to support managers to ensure sickness information is recorded in a timely manner, as well as the consideration of any system issues. 18% of duty days had no absence reason recorded, and 12% of sickness episodes had no return to work information.

PI 20		The average number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness – non-uniformed staff Target: 2.48 (2.36 – 2.60) Actual: 2.97 Under performance against the tolerance levels
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An average of 2.97 working days/shifts per person were lost due to sickness during quarter three, above the target and above the upper tolerance level. This represented a 9% increase compared to the same period in 2018/19.

An average of 6.78 working days/shifts per person were lost due to sickness year to date, above the target of 6.35 days. This figure represents a 2.9% decrease compared to the same period in 2018/19.

The top five absence reasons are:


- Mental Health
- Post-Operative
- Neurological
- Muscular Skeletal: Back
- Cold and Flu

Missing data regarding attendance management continues. 25% of all duty days had no absence reason recorded and 27% of sickness episodes had no return to work information recorded. Focused activity is being undertaken to address this issue including a targeted approach to supporting managers.

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Long term sickness accounted for 75.3% of all non-uniformed sickness.

Safety, Health and Environment

PI 21		The total number of injuries Target YTD: 95 (90 – 105) Actual to date: 115 Under performance against the tolerance levels
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There were 26 injury reports received for quarter three against a quarterly target of 31.5. This follows two quarters in which a high number of injuries had been reported: 47 in quarter two and 42 in quarter one.

There were no significant trends identified during quarter three.

There were two slips, trips and fall injuries reported (one on ice, one dismounting), three manual handling injuries, and two reddening burns during training. It should be noted that the two reddening burns were experienced during the Trainee Firefighter Development Programme. The reddening burns experienced during tactical ventilation appear to have ceased following changes at the training facility. There were nine injuries classed as struck against or struck by, however there were no trends within this injury type.





By activity, there were:

- Nine injuries at incidents
- One during fitness training
- Six during operational training
- Five during uniformed routine activity
- Five during support staff activity

40 near hit reports were received during quarter three, the lowest number this year (there had been 45 during quarter one, and 53 during quarter two). There were less than 10 reports which were genuine near hits. It should be noted that the majority of near hit reports do not meet a strict near hit criteria but do highlight hazards and other issues.

The number of violence reports had decreased with 15 reports being recorded during quarter three (23 reported in quarter one and 34 in quarter two). All reports for quarter three were incident related. No injuries were reported. Nine were verbal abuse, two were missiles, and one was physical contact. There were three other reports. Police were notified about nine reports with an arrest made in connection with one report.

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PI 22		The total number of RIDDOR injuries Target YTD: 10.5 (10 – 11) Actual to date: 13 Under performance against the tolerance levels
<p>There was just one RIDDOR report during quarter three, 13 reports for the year to date. This follows two quarters in which a higher number of injuries had been reported (five in quarter one and seven in two).</p> <p>Note: RIDDOR refers to the 'Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013. Further information is available via the Health and Safety Executive website.</p>		
PI 23		To reduce the Fire Authority's carbon emissions Forecast YTD: N/A Actual to date: N/A
Performance indicator is reported annually.		
PI 24		To reduce gas use of Fire Authority premises Forecast YTD: N/A Actual to date: N/A
Performance indicator is reported annually.		
PI 25		To reduce electricity use of Fire Authority premises Forecast YTD: N/A Actual to date: N/A
Performance indicator is reported annually.		

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**WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20**

Date of Meeting	Item	Responsible Officer	Completed
2019			
3 September 2019	Analysis of Progress of Corporate Performance against The Plan for Quarter 1 2018/2019	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	3 September 2019
	Dispute Resolution Monitoring	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	3 September 2019
	Consideration of Work Programme	Chair of Scrutiny Committee	3 September 2019
	Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference	Clerk to the Authority	3 September 2019
26 September 2019 (extra meeting called)	Scrutiny Committee Working Group – Review of Business Continuity Arrangements	Chair of Scrutiny Committee	26 September 2019
7 October 2019	Scrutiny Reviews	ACFO Strategic Enabler – People	7 October 2019

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21 October 2019 (extra meeting called)	Scrutiny Committee Working Group – Review of Business Continuity Arrangements	Chair of Scrutiny Committee	21 October 2019
4 November 2019 (extra meeting called)	Scrutiny Committee Working Group – Review of Business Continuity Arrangements	Chair of Scrutiny Committee	4 November 2019
11 November 2019	Analysis of Progress of Corporate Performance against The Plan for Quarter 2 2018/2019	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	11 November 2019
	Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion & Equality Update	ACFO Strategic Enabler – People	11 November 2019
	Fire Control Performance Report	ACFO Strategic Enabler – People	11 November 2019
2020			
Date of Meeting	Item	Responsible Officer	Completed
24 February 2020	Analysis of Progress of Corporate Performance against The Plan for Quarter 3 2018/2019	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	
	Scrutiny Committee Briefing – Overview of	ACFO Strategic	

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	Water Related Incidents	Enabler - People	
24 March 2020	Dispute Resolution Monitoring Report	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	
	Consideration of the Annual Report of the Scrutiny Committee	Chair of Scrutiny Committee	
2 June 2020	Analysis of Progress of Corporate Performance against The Plan for Quarter 4 2018/2019	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	
	Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion & Equality Update	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	
	Fire Control Performance Report	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	
	Annual Report of the Scrutiny Committee	Chair of Scrutiny Committee	

To report as appropriate:

- Updates on the review of safeguarding

Note: separate meetings of any review working group are to be scheduled if and when required

To be scheduled:

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- Members awareness session
- Review of Safe and Well

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November 2019