

Communities Committee

Item No.

Report title:	Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service – key performance challenges
Date of meeting:	4 July 2018
Responsible Chief Officer:	Tom McCabe – Executive Director, Community and Environmental Services
Strategic impact Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service is at the heart of community protection in Norfolk. The core role of the service is focused on preventing emergencies, protecting our communities and emergency response. With the ever increasing demand on public services, Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service has a key role in working with partners, other agencies and local communities to support residents living longer, healthier and safer within their own homes reducing the demand on local services.	

Executive summary

Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service have performed well against the majority of the indicators where performance is measured year on year, and also against our family group of services.

Whilst there are a number of areas of success and good performance, there are areas where we need to continue to focus our efforts:-

- On-call/retained duty system availability (performance is improving, and is better than others, but we are not yet hitting our challenging target)
- Emergency Response Standards
- Fires in non-domestic buildings
- Arson
- Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs)

With the support of the Communities Committee, the service has refocused, restructured and created additional resources to support service delivery and manage risk. This work will continue, targeting resources to the areas of highest risk.

The Norfolk Fire and Rescue service standards are set out in the agreed Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). The current IRMP runs until March 2020. Work to develop the new IRMP will start during Summer 2019. This will review the full range of risks from a prevention, protection and response perspective and assess how the service manages risk.

Recommendations:

1. **The Committee notes the performance of the Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service, including how this relates to and reflects national trends. Where improvement is needed, task and finish roles to address specific issues and risks are put in place.**

1. Context

- 1.1. This report sets out detailed end of year performance information for the Fire and Rescue Service. In terms of context, as presented to Committee at the last meeting, in comparison to our family group the Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service is:-
- 3rd lowest budget per fire station
 - 4th lowest budget by population
 - 4th largest in area (sq m) covered by fire stations
 - 5th lowest budget per area
- 1.2. The service is also currently operating within some specific budget and resource pressures, as set out in section 5 below.
- 1.3. Unfortunately data is not collected consistently across all Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) which does make benchmarking a challenge. The Inspectorate (HMICFRS) are inspecting all FRS this financial year which we hope will highlight the need for consistency to better highlight the different costs associated with running FRS and reconciling this with results.

2. Overall performance

- 2.1. Detailed end of year performance information is set out in Appendix 1.
- 2.2. Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service have delivered positively against the majority of the performance indicators. This has been delivered with a commitment to focus on core activities of managing risk and response.
- 2.3. This performance has been delivered against the backdrop of restructuring and senior leadership changes. This includes the permanent appointment of the Chief Fire Officer and a temporary senior structure put in place to provide strong leadership for performance in order to fulfil the Service commitments to the Fire Authority.
- 2.4. Performance is managed within the service with department and function plans sitting below the service plan (agreed by Communities Committee in March), which is linked to the Integrated Risk Management Plan. Managers are held to account via the 1:1 process and collectively by the Steering Groups and Service Management Team.

3. Areas of success

- 3.1. **On-call / Retained Duty System availability** The on-call/retained duty system provides the backbone of our emergency response. The overall performance trajectory is positive and we perform very well compared to others. Most notably, our performance is the highest in the family group. However, we have not achieved our target for 2017/18.

Our target is also one of the highest across our peer group. We have set ambitious and challenging targets for our response resources as we recognise that the public want us to help them as quickly as possible in an emergency. We will continue to work towards our challenging target. This area of work requires a greater level of support and a project put in place to improve performance, including through recruitment activity, still has some work outstanding.

- 3.2. Performance for employee **sickness and absence** has significantly improved and is better than the target. We set ourselves challenging targets for sickness absence and despite the physical nature of firefighting we have achieved them. We have been successful in 2017 in providing improved support for physical and mental wellbeing. There is more to be delivered to ensure that there is a service wide appreciation of mental illness and the signs to look out for. We will continue to develop and align support mechanisms currently in place to ensure all NFRS staff have access to the best possible support.
- 3.3. **Community Safety - Prevention activities** - We achieved the majority of targets for community fire safety activities in 2017-18. Performance for the number of Home Fire Risk Checks, targeted at the most vulnerable in communities, improved and we performed almost 500 more checks than the previous year. However, did not reach the really challenging stretch target we set ourselves last year; the target increased by 1,000.

4. Areas for further focus and development

- 4.1. There are a number of areas of performance that require addressing to ensure our service continues to develop and focus in what is important to the communities of Norfolk. The key issues are:
- 4.1.1. Performance against our **Emergency Response Standards** (ERS) continues to improve, but we remain slightly below target. The following are the key challenges to improving performance in this area:
- The nearest resource not being available (there is a link to on-call/retained duty system availability)
 - The next nearest resource having to travel further
 - The call profile is changing as Automatic Fire Alarms are at a lower level than when the indicator was established. As these were mainly in the urban areas the whole-time response skewed the overall picture.
- 4.1.2. The number of **Fires in non-domestic buildings** are higher than the family group. This has been incorporated into the Community Safety Plan and appropriate activities will be planned, including continued prevention work. The levels of smoke detector ownership need to be higher, and this will be captured in the 2018/19 Community Safety planning work.
- 4.1.3. **Arson** – Although we remain below target, the rate of deliberate fires across all incident types has increased slightly, in line with national trends. Again, this is incorporated into the Community Safety Plan and appropriate activities will be planned, including continuing our Fire Starter programme.
- 4.1.4. **Road Traffic Collisions** - The number of people killed and seriously injured on our roads has not decreased. NFRS is committed to supporting the Road Safety Partnership in making our roads safer and also supports the PCC's office in delivering safety messages. Communities Committee has already established a Member Task and Finish Group to review the approach to KSIs, and NFRS will support this group, as needed. We will also continue our focus on prevention work, for example the number of road casualty reduction events aimed at future drivers increased by 21% last year.
- 4.2. In terms of addressing these issues, the Chief Fire Officer will continue to realign and re-direct available resources. A number of task and finish roles will be needed to address specific areas of underperformance and

associated risk, and arrangements will be made for these.

5. Financial Implications

5.1. The service is currently operating within some specific budget and resource pressures. The key ones are:-

- Preparation for the Inspection by the HMICFRS later this year is driving an unplanned workload. NFRS has resourced this in order to support the Inspection and ensure that our Service is shown in the best possible light.
- In addition, providing information and support to the development of the PCC's local business case is further drawing on resources.
- The workforce profile presents challenges in that a relatively high number of individuals are expected to retire over the next few years. We have been taking positive action to ensure that we manage this risk and have secured additional resource in advance. This approach reduces the risk of any resource 'gaps', but means that the salaries budget comes under additional pressure in the short-term.
- The Retained Duty System/On call budget will come under pressure as recruitment campaigns start to increase this part of the establishment. Historically, underspends in this area have been used to off-set other areas of work and activity across the Service.
- Task and finish/project posts agreed to meet specific needs are being put in place. Where possible, these will be funded from the capital programme.
- Flooding - Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service was successful in securing funding from DEFRA, which was match funded by NCC. This enables NFRS to support a national response and provide resources to match the risk that prevails in our county. The national funding does not currently meet the cost of training and equipment replacement. This remains a non-statutory duty for FRS' and the swift water rescue (working in fast moving water) remains voluntary.

5.2. We will continue to work with finance and other colleagues to understand and manage these pressures as far as possible, and will be referenced in the finance monitoring report to Committee.

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper or want to see copies of any assessments, eg equality impact assessment, please get in touch with:

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If you need this report in large print, audio, braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.

Our Performance in 2017/18

Performance information is set out on the following pages, using the following key:-

Key	
	Target not achieved (5% or more off target)
	Target almost achieved (up to 5% off target)
	Target achieved
	Target exceeded by 5% or more
SvM	Surveillance measure, no target set
DoT	Direction of Travel – this shows as comparison between the last two years performance (2016/17 and 2017/18)

Where data is available, information about how we compare to other Fire and Rescue Services is also included. This includes comparisons to our Fire and Rescue Family Group.

Fire and Rescue Family Group

Authorities within Family Group (FG) 2 are: Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Cambridge, Dorset and Wiltshire, Durham and Darlington, East Sussex, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire, Royal Berkshire, Suffolk, and West Sussex.

Prevention: community fire safety measures





Performance measure	End of year performance			2017-18 target	DoT	Family Group comparison
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18			
m1 Number of Home Fire Risk Checks completed for vulnerable people	3,798	3,280	3,751	4,500#	↑	N/A
m3 Number of road casualty reduction events aimed at future drivers held	28	43	52	25	↑	N/A
m32 Number of accidental fires in the home that we attended (and rate per 10,000 homes)	450 (11.11)	396 (9.70)	430 (10.47)	400 (9.74)	↑	Rate only (11.37)*
m36 Number of deaths in accidental fires in the home (and rate per 100,000 pop)	5 (0.57)	2 (0.23)	2 (0.23)	SvM	→	No number, rate only (0.21)+
m37 Number of injuries in accidental fires in the home (and rate per 100,000 pop)	20 (2.30)	17 (1.94)	21 (2.27)	25 (2.82)	↑	Rate only (2.33)+
m50 The number of arson incidents we attended (and rate per 10,000 pop)	596 (6.85)	538 (6.13)	625 (7.06)	630 (7.12)	↑	Rate only (10.99)+

#Stretch target set for 2017/18 – increased the target by 1,000 compared to 2016/17

*Incomplete data returns by some FRSs – 7 quarters of data missing from 48

+Incomplete data returns by some FRSs – 11 quarters missing from 48

Protection: community fire protection measures

Performance measure	End of year performance			2017-18 target	DoT	Family Group comparison
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18			
m56 Percentage of non-domestic premises we audited	100%	No data since June 2016	663	600		N/A
m38b Number of accidental non-domestic premise fires we attended (and rate per 1,000 premises)	170 (5.09)	160 (4.67)	175 (5.3)	181 (5.48)		N/A
m48 Number of people injured in accidental non-domestic premises fires (and rate per 100,000 population)	3 (0.34)	5 (0.57)	1 (0.11)	5 (0.56)		N/A
m47 Number of people that died in accidental non-domestic premises fires (and rate per 100,000 population)	2 (0.23)	1 (0.11)	0	SvM		N/A

Response

Performance measure	End of year performance			2017-18 target	DoT	Family Group comparison
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18			
m8a Percentage of time that part time (retained) firefighter stations are available to respond to emergencies (first fire engine only)	86.1%	82.1%	83.1	90%	↑	56.5%*
Percentage of life risk incidents that we attended within our Emergency Response Standards	77.5%	78.4%	78.8%	80%	↑	N/A
m53 Number of incidents we attended	7,106	7,334	7,399	SvM	↑	N/A
m52 Number of people rescued at incidents we attended	730	709	756	SvM	↑	N/A
m34 Percentage of road traffic collisions attended where fire and rescue service freed a person from the vehicle.	12.7% (227 out of 1,790)	23.1% (173 out of 748)	20.7% (153 out of 736)	SvM	↓	20.4%**
m33a Number of false automatic fire alarms (AFAs) we attended	1,225	1,370	1,374	SvM+	↑	N/A
m30 Percentage of 999 calls answered by Control within 5 seconds	97%	96.1%	96.91	95%	↑	N/A

Resources

Performance measure	End of year performance			2017-18 target	DoT	Family Group comparison
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18			
m13 Percentage operational firefighting staff on full duties	93.4%	Data not yet available	Data not yet available	85%		N/A
m22a Number of days sickness absence per full time employee (including part time firefighters)	10.10	10.16	8.35	8.4	↓	N/A
Number of days sickness absence per full time employee (excluding part time firefighters)	7.99	7.72	6.98	7.13	↓	N/A
m24 Number of reportable health and safety absences lasting more than 7 days	16	7	7	16	↓	N/A
Percentage of firefighters and uniformed managers posts undertaken by women	2.6% (20/750)	2.62% (19/725)	WTS~ 7/267 2.62% RDS~ 15/471 3.18% CTRL~ 14/25 56.00%	SvM	↑	(national) WDS: 5.5% RDS: 4.5% CTRL: 76.0%

~ WTS = Whole Time Staff, RDS = Retained Duty System Staff, CTRL = Control Room Staff
2017 Figures