



HEREFORD & WORCESTER Fire Authority

Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee

AGENDA

Wednesday, 10 September 2025

10:30

**Wyre Forest House Council Chamber
Wyre Forest District Council, Wyre Forest House,
Finepoint Way, Kidderminster, Worcestershire, DY11 7WF**

Wyre Forest House Location Map

SAT NAV: DY11 7FB

Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster, DY11 7WF
Reception at Wyre Forest House 01562 732101

From Stourport:

Head towards Kidderminster on the A451 Minster Road, passing Stourport High School and Stourport Sports Club on your left. When you reach the traffic lights at the crossroads, turn left into Walter Nash Road West (signposted Wyre Forest House). Then take your first left onto Finepoint Way. Follow the road around to your left and Wyre Forest House is at the end of the road on the left. Visitor parking is available and signposted from the mini roundabout.

From Kidderminster:

From Kidderminster, follow the signs for Stourport and head out of Kidderminster on the A451 Stourport Road, this road becomes a dual carriageway. You will pass 24/7 Fitness and Wyre Forest Community Housing on your left. At the crossroads with traffic lights turn right into Walter Nash Road West (there is a dedicated right hand-turn lane), signposted for Wyre Forest House. Then take your first left onto Finepoint Way. Follow the road around to your left and Wyre Forest House is at the end of the road on the left. Visitor parking is available and signposted from the mini roundabout.



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- the right to attend all Authority and Committee meetings unless the business to be transacted would disclose “confidential information” or “exempt information”;
- the right to film, record or report electronically on any meeting to which the public are admitted provided you do not do so in a manner that is disruptive to the meeting. **If you are present at a meeting of the Authority you will be deemed to have consented to being filmed or recorded by anyone exercising their rights under this paragraph;**
- the right to inspect agenda and public reports at least five days before the date of the meeting (available on our website: <http://www.hwfire.org.uk>);
- the right to inspect minutes of the Authority and Committees for up to six years following the meeting (available on our website: <http://www.hwfire.org.uk>); and
- the right to inspect background papers on which reports are based for a period of up to four years from the date of the meeting.

Please note that when taking part in public participation, your name and a summary of what you say at the meeting may be included in the minutes.

A reasonable number of copies of agenda and reports relating to items to be considered in public will be available at meetings of the Authority and Committees. If you have any queries regarding this agenda or any of the decisions taken or wish to exercise any of these rights of access to information please contact Committee & Members’ Services on 01905 368209 or by email at committeeservices@hwfire.org.uk.

WELCOME AND GUIDE TO TODAY’S MEETING. These notes are written to assist you to follow the meeting. Decisions at the meeting will be taken by the **Councillors** who are democratically elected representatives and they will be advised by **Officers** who are paid professionals. The Fire and Rescue Authority comprises 25 Councillors and appoints committees to undertake various functions on behalf of the Authority. There are 19 Worcestershire County Councillors on the Authority and 6 Herefordshire Council Councillors.

Agenda Papers - Attached is the Agenda which is a summary of the issues to be discussed and the related reports by Officers.

Chairman - The Chairman, who is responsible for the proper conduct of the meeting, sits at the head of the table.

Officers - Accompanying the Chairman is the Chief Fire Officer and other Officers of the Fire and Rescue Authority who will advise on legal and procedural matters and record the proceedings. These include the Clerk and the Treasurer to the Authority.

The Business - The Chairman will conduct the business of the meeting. The items listed on the agenda will be discussed.

Decisions - At the end of the discussion on each item the Chairman will put any amendments or motions to the meeting and then ask the Councillors to vote. The Officers do not have a vote.



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority
Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee
Wednesday, 10 September 2025, 10:30

Agenda

Councillors

Mr D Boatright-Greene (Chairman), Ms D Toynbee (Vice Chairman), Mr D Boulter, Mrs J Carwardine, Mr B Hopkins, Mr M Jones, Mr J Kenyon, Mr T Miller, Mr A Monk, Mr D Morehead, Mr R Phillips, Mrs H Robson, Mrs J Shaw

No.	Item	Pages
1	Apologies for Absence To receive any apologies for absence.	
2	Declarations of Interest (if any) This item allows the Chairman to invite any Councillor to declare an interest in any of the items on this Agenda.	
3	Named Substitutes To receive details of any Member of the Authority nominated to attend the meeting in place of a Member of the Committee.	
4	Confirmation of Minutes To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 9 July 2025.	1 - 6
5	Budget Monitoring 2025/26 – Quarter 2 For Members to scrutinise the current position on the revenue and capital budget for 2025/26, and to receive an update on Treasury Management.	7 - 14
6	Property Update To provide Members the opportunity to scrutinise the Property update, specifically reviewing the Hereford Fire Station Update and Project Overview provided at Appendix 1.	15 - 24

7	Overview of the Fire Control Project	25 - 33
	To provide Members the opportunity to scrutinise the Fire Control Project overview and progress to date.	
8	Fire Cadets Annual Review – 2024/2025	34 - 38
	To provide Members the opportunity to scrutinise the Fire Cadets activity for 2024/2025.	
9	Quarter 1 Performance Report	39 - 60
	This report affords Members the opportunity to scrutinise the Service's performance for Quarter 1 (Q1) 2025 to 2026.	



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority
Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee
Wednesday, 09 July 2025, 10:30

Chairman: Mr D Boatright-Greene
Vice-Chairman: Ms D Toynbee

Minutes

Members Present: Mr D Boatright-Greene, Mr B Hopkins, Mr T Miller, Mr D Morehead, Mr R Phillips, Mrs H Robson, Mrs J Shaw, Ms D Toynbee

0293 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr D Boulter, Cllr J Carwardine, Cllr M Jones and Cllr A Monk.

0294 Named Substitutes

There were no named substitutes.

0295 Declarations of Interest (if any)

Cllr R Phillips declared that he was Vice Chair of the Firefighters Scheme Advisory Board (England and Wales), Chair of the Local Government Pension Scheme Advisory Board (England and Wales) and a member of the NJC for Fire Service (Grey Book and Green Book).

Cllr J Shaw declared that her husband was employed by Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service and a member of the Firefighters Pension Scheme.

[Cllr D Morehead entered the meeting at 10.32am].

0296 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 5 March 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

0297 Efficiencies 2025-2027

The Chief Fire Officer presented a report outlining financial challenges in the current year 2025/26, anticipated further budgetary reduction in 2026/27 and plans to mitigate the impact of these.

[Cllr T Miller entered the meeting at 10.36am].

Members were informed that this current year 2025/26 the Authority saw a significant reduction in funding from central government. Based on the Treasurer's forecast there would most likely be similar reductions in real terms funding next year, alongside other cost pressures such as annual inflation, wage increases and a rise in Employer National Insurance costs. It was anticipated that over the next two years the Authority would need to manage a reduction in funding of over £1m. This would be managed by reducing some annual revenue budgets and annual spending where possible, not filling vacant posts and posts created by leavers and some minor departmental restructuring, which could result in potential redundancies.

The Chief Fire Officer gave assurances that within this year only (2025/26) it was his intention not to reduce firefighter posts on fire stations, or the front-line staffing for delivery of Prevention or Protection services. The Chief Fire Officer believed the Service might be able to achieve up to circa £1m of efficiencies without needing to reduce front-line staffing, however this assurance could not be given around any future savings in 2026/27 or other years.

Members noted that staff had been communicated with and advised of the challenges faced and the Chief Fire Officer had communicated the issues faced and potential solutions, alongside early engagement with staff and the trade unions. The Service would continue to keep staff and their representatives updated as this matter progressed.

Members thanked the Chief Fire Officer for providing clear documentation and approved the plans to address the impact of financial challenges during 2025/26 and 2026/27.

RESOLVED that the Committee approved the plans to address the impact of financial challenges during 2025/26 and 2026/27.

0298 Budget Monitoring 2025/26 – Quarter 1

The Treasurer presented Members with a report to scrutinise the current position on the revenue and capital budget for 2025/26, and to receive an update on Treasury Management.

Following scrutiny and discussion, Members accepted the revenue budget allocation adjustments and noted the changes in the budget and the consequential impact on the Medium Term Financial Plan.

Members noted that the Authority was significantly under-borrowed to the extent of around £10m. This shortfall was funded by disinvesting the large cash balances held in relation to the ear-marked revenue reserves and monies statutorily set aside for future repayment of loans. As the Invest to Improve programme progressed this cash would be used up and additional long-term borrowing would be required. The cost of which is already included in the MTFP.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

i) Confirmed the revenue budget allocation adjustments;

ii) Noted that the budget had now moved from a £359,000 deficit to a small £125,000 surplus;

iii) Noted the consequential impact on the MTFP; and

iv) Noted the changes to the Capital Budget.

0299 Update on the Attendance Performance Measure (APM)

The Assistant Chief Officer - Director of Prevention presented Members with the opportunity to scrutinise and consider the Attendance Performance Measure (APM) process.

Following scrutiny of the report, noting that the APM was significantly lower for water rescue mobilisations, Members agreed that wholetime crews should be assessed against On-Call response zones due to the time it took crews to don Personal Protective Equipment when responding to water rescue incident types. It was also noted that when the APM is not met, officers are asked to submit a response explaining why the attendance time was not met and for any actions that could be undertaken to improve in the future.

RESOLVED that Members approved the following proposed changes to the APM process:

i) The response zones (isochrones) should be re-evaluated in the financial year 2025-26;

ii) When responding to water rescue incident types, wholetime crews should be assessed against On-Call response zones due to

the time taken to don Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) prior to mobilisation; and

iii) Further work would be undertaken to establish the impact on response times for On-Call staff to don the same water response PPE, and a future report with any recommendations would be submitted.

0300 Pensions Board Update (Fire Pension Schemes)

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented an update on the establishment and activities of the Pensions Board.

Members were reminded of the Matthews Remedy and the McCloud/Sargent Remedy, which was useful for new Members, and were reassured that these were part of a national issue and not a failure of Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority.

RESOLVED it be noted that the Pensions Board continued to be compliant with the Public Services Pensions Act 2013.

0301 Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking Statement 2024 / 2025

The Assistant Chief Officer - Director of Prevention presented the Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking Statement 2024/2025 for Members' scrutiny and approval.

Members were pleased to note that there was no evidence of modern slavery in Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service or supply chains and approved the Statement for publication on the Service website.

RESOLVED that Members approved the updated Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking Statement 2024/2025 for publication on the Service website.

0302 Update from the Joint Consultative Committee

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented a report to inform and allow the Committee to scrutinise the activities of the Joint Consultative Committee since the last update provided on 20 November 2024.

Members noted the current and existing issues under discussion with employee representatives.

RESOLVED that the following new and existing items currently under discussion by the Joint Consultative Committee be noted:

- i) Resource Review Update***
- ii) HMICFRS Action Plans***
- iii) Community Risk Management Plan Update***
- iv) Budgets and Finance Update***
- v) Policies (noted and discussed)***
- vi) Promotion Processes***
- vii) Property Update***
- viii) Projects Update***

0303 Performance Report Quarter 4 2024 to 2025 (01 Jan to 31 Mar 2025)

The Assistant Chief Officer - Director of Prevention provided Members with an opportunity to scrutinise the Service's performance for Quarter 4 2024 to 2025.

Members noted the performance data for Quarter 4 2024/25 including the total number of incidents attended had decreased by 0.2% to 1,837 compared to the same quarter of 2023/24, 1,713 Home Fire Safety Visits had been completed and 354 Protection inspections had been undertaken. Members commented that the visual graphics were very easy to understand however the percentages shown for Days/Shifts Lost per Person could be explained better. Members were assured that this would be looked at for future reports.

[Cllr D Toynbee left the meeting at 12.26pm].

RESOLVED that the Committee noted the details of the Q4 2024 to 2025 performance headlines, in particular that:

- i) A total of 1,837 incidents were attended in Q4 2024 to 2025 which was a decrease of 0.2% (-4 incidents) compared to Q4 2023 to 2024.***
- ii) Fire incidents (364) increased by 26% (+75 incidents) when compared to Q4 2023 to 2024 and were higher than the five-year average of 337.***
- iii) Special Services Incidents (614) decreased by 10% (-66 incidents) when compared to Q4 2023 to 2024. Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) decreased by 16% (-31 incidents) compared to Q4 2023 to 2024.***

iv) False alarms (859) decreased by 1% (-13 incidents) compared with Q4 2023 to 2024.

The Meeting ended at: 12:33

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman

Report of the Treasurer

Budget Monitoring 2025/26 – Quarter 2

Purpose of report

1. For Members to scrutinise the current position on the revenue and capital budget for 2025/26, and to receive an update on Treasury Management.
-

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Committee:

- i. Confirms the revenue budget allocation adjustments (paragraphs 7 to 8 & Appendix 1);*
- ii. Notes that the budget has now moved from a £125,000 surplus to a small £8,600 surplus;*
- iii. Notes the consequential impact on the MTFP, (paragraphs 11 to 12 & Appendix 2); and*
- iv. Notes the changes to the Capital Budget (paragraph 14 & Appendix 3).*

Introduction and Background

2. This report sets out the position in relation to budgets at the end of the first quarter of the financial year. It includes separate sections on Revenue and Capital budgets:
 - For the Revenue Budget, there is normally an Out-turn projection nominally based on second quarter (26 weeks) information, but the timing of this Committee is such that there are only 19 weeks actual spend data available.
 - For the Capital report, because capital projects tend to last beyond a single financial year, the report shows progress against the approved scheme totals.
3. The report also includes proposed budget adjustments, which are explained more fully below, and an early assessment of the Spending Review outcomes.
4. Details are also included about the Authority's Treasury Management position for the period and the latest available month end position on investments.

Revenue Budget

5. In February 2025 the Fire Authority set Budget which had a net deficit of £0.432m and agreed, if necessary, to fund this amount from the Budget Reduction Reserve, whilst asking the Chief Fire Officer to identify savings to cover this gap (and future budget gaps identified in the MTFP).
6. The budget was set before the final outcome of the national negotiated pay awards was known (the Quarter 1 projection included the impact of the Grey Book but not the Green book awards). This has the impact of adding a further £0.366m to the deficit bringing it up to a total of £0.798m.
7. To offset this the Strategic Leadership Board has agreed a final savings plan which reduces costs by £0.807m in this year, bringing the budget to an overall small surplus of £0.008m.
8. The full year impact of these savings is **£1.1m.**
9. As some of these savings and costs were recognised at Quarter 1, Appendix 1 shows the changes to the final position.
10. Against the revised budget of £44.669m (*Appendix 1: Column 6, Row 31*) there are 3 significant variations to report at this point:
 - Facilities Management: £0.070m over. This relates to 2024/25 business rates for the fire share of the joint Bromsgrove Fire/police station which were not notified until August 2025.
 - Finance: £0.080m additional income. At the Policy & Resources Committee meeting on 31st January 2018, it was agreed that the Authority could join the LGA led “Truck Manufacturers Cartel – Compensation Claim”. This has now been settled and the Authority is to receive £0.080m. This will be used to fund vehicle purchases and will offset future capital financing costs by around £0.009m per year.
 - Capital financing: savings in costs as a result of 2024/25 programme slippage.
11. The net saving from the above is £0.110m and will be transferred £0.080m to the capital reserve to fund vehicles as indicated and £0.030m to the Budget Reduction Reserve.

Impact on the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

12. Appendix 2 show the impact of the pay awards and revised savings plan on the MTFP, and show a reduction in the gap over the period.
13. This is, however, before the impact of the “Fair” Funding Review.

Capital Budget

14. The approved capital budget is detailed in Appendix 3 and is divided into five blocks:
- Vehicles – in accordance with the approved Vehicle Strategy.
 - Major Buildings – in accordance with the approved Property Strategy.
 - Future Buildings Schemes.
 - Major Equipment.
 - Minor Schemes – allocated by the Strategic Leadership Board (SLB).
15. There have been a number of changes to the budget since it was last reported to the Authority in the Provisional Financial Out-turn report in June 2025 and these changes are summarised below:

	Vehicles £m	Major Builds £m	Major Equip £m	Alloc. Minor £m	Unalloc Minor £m	Future Builds £m	TOTAL £m
P&R Committee - July 2025	2.494	16.298	1.460	2.126	0.616	1.383	24.377
Major Schemes Allocation		0.650				(0.650)	0.000
Minor Schemes Allocation				0.587	(0.587)		0.000
Revised Budget	2.494	16.948	1.460	2.713	0.029	0.733	24.377

16. Allowing for the Schemes awaiting allocation or approval, the Budget available to be spent at the start of 2025/26 is £19.218m; of which £13.829m relates to the new Hereford Fire Station; and is summarised below:

		£m
Total Approved Budget	<i>Column 4 Line 51</i>	24.376
less: prior year spend	<i>Column 5 Line 51</i>	(4.396)
		19.980
Less: Future Buildings	<i>Column 6 Line 15</i>	(0.733)
Less: Unallocated Minor	<i>Column 6 Line 49</i>	(0.029)
Approved to Spend		19.218

17. Against this budget £1.038m (5%) (*Column 7, Line 51*) has been incurred, with an additional £13.927m (72%) committed by way of orders and contracts.
18. Members will note that there is little expenditure against the programme. This is because the Fleet Plan is currently under review where the quality or recent investment by the Authority means that some planned replacements are not yet required. It is expected that there will be changes to the budget proposed in the Quarter 3 Report.
19. The revenue costs of financing the capital programme are contained within the revenue budget.

Treasury Management

20. Since October 2008 the Authority has adopted a policy of avoiding long-term borrowing where working cash balances permit and will only incur long-term borrowing to finance long-term assets.
21. However, it should be noted that the Authority is significantly “under-borrowed” to the extent of around £10m. This shortfall is funded by disinvesting the large cash balances held in relation to the ear-marked revenue reserves and monies statutorily set aside for future repayment of loans. As the Invest to Improve programme progresses this cash will be used up and additional long-term borrowing will be required.
22. As a result of recent increases in interest rates, the long-term borrowing rate now exceeds the average rate of the current debt. It might be considered worth taking new borrowing now, before rates climb higher, but given the level of revenue balances in the short term this is not deemed prudent.
23. Rates are always under review to ensure borrowing is taken at an appropriate point. Members can be assured that the MTFP takes account of the impact of this need in respect of Capital financing charge, and the recently approved MTFP has been updated for the new interest rates.
24. At 31 March 2025 long-term borrowing stood at £8.488m.
25. All existing borrowing is via the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB), and it is probable that any future borrowing will be from the same source, as PWLB remains the only practical alternative for the Fire Authority.
26. In accordance with the Authority’s Treasury Management Strategy (approved in February each year by the Fire Authority) surplus funds are invested by Worcestershire County Council (WCC) alongside their own funds. Investment is carried out in accordance with WCC’s own Treasury Management Strategy, which is developed from the Prudential Code for Capital Finance and is used to manage risks from financial instruments.
27. The Treasurer continues to advise that investment should be focused on security and, as a consequence, surplus funds continue to generate lower returns, which are factored into the revenue budget.
28. Short-term investments via WCC at 31st July 2025 (*which is the latest data month end data available as this report was written in mind August*) are shown in the table below. For completeness the current account balance is now also shown:

Money Market Funds	8.686
Cash+	1.594
Call	0.120
<hr/>	
via WCC	10.400
Current Account	3.950
	<hr/>
	14.350

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	Yes – whole Report
Strategic Policy Links & Core Code of Ethics (Identify how proposals link with current priorities & policy framework and align to the Core Code of Ethics)	Budget and Financial Plan underpins all other strategies
Productivity & Efficiency (Identify how proposal improves productivity or efficiency)	n/a
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	n/a
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	n/a
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	n/a
Data Protection Impact Assessment (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)	n/a

Supporting Information

- Appendix 1: Revenue Budget Monitoring 2025/26 Quarter 2
- Appendix 2: Medium Term Financial Plan Review
- Appendix 3: Capital Budget Monitoring 2025/26 Quarter 2

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority
Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee - 10th September 2025
Budget Monitoring 2025/26: Revenue

Col Line	(2) 2025/26 Budget Quarter 1 £	(3) Adjusted Jul-2025 Pay Award £	(4) Adjusted Budget Reductions £	(5) Apr-2025 Pay Award £	(6) 2025/26 Budget Quarter 2 £	(7) 2025/26 Forecast Out-turn £	(8) 2025/26 Forecast Variation £	
1	Wholetime Firefighter Pay/NI/Pension	17,703,900	52,400	(56,500)		17,699,800	17,699,800	0
2	On-Call Fire-fighter Pay/NI/Pension	5,348,800	15,600			5,364,400	5,364,400	0
3	Control Pay/NI/Pension	1,111,000	3,200			1,114,200	1,114,200	0
4	Support Pay/NI/Pension	5,845,000		37,100	219,200	6,101,300	6,101,300	0
5	Other Employee Costs	90,000				90,000	90,000	0
6	Unfunded Pension Costs	995,000				995,000	995,000	0
7	Employee Related	31,093,700	71,200	(19,400)	219,200	31,364,700	31,364,700	0
8	Strategic Management	113,000				113,000	113,000	0
9	New Dimensions	49,000				49,000	49,000	0
10	Operational Policy	70,600				70,600	70,600	0
11	Protection	46,000				46,000	46,000	0
12	Prevention	285,500				285,500	285,500	0
13	Training	601,800				601,800	601,800	0
14	Operational Logistics	1,211,800		(65,600)		1,146,200	1,146,200	0
15	Fleet Maintenance	682,200				682,200	682,200	0
16	Property/Facilities Management	2,571,500				2,571,500	2,641,500	70,000
17	PCC Charges	460,000				460,000	460,000	0
18	PCC Charges - Capitalised	(98,200)				(98,200)	(98,200)	0
19	Information & Comms Technology	2,575,500		24,000		2,599,500	2,599,500	0
20	Policy & Information	74,800		5,000		79,800	79,800	0
21	Corporate Communications	70,900				70,900	70,900	0
22	Human Resources/Personnel	601,000		1,200		602,200	602,200	0
23	Authority Costs	61,400				61,400	61,400	0
24	Legal Services	147,700				147,700	147,700	0
25	Insurances	478,500				478,500	478,500	0
26	Finance (FRS)	150,900				150,900	70,900	(80,000)
27	Finance SLA	169,600				169,600	169,600	0
28	Running Costs	10,323,500	0	(35,400)	0	10,288,100	10,278,100	(10,000)
29	Capital Financing	3,016,000				3,016,000	2,916,000	(100,000)
30	Capital Financing	3,016,000	0	0	0	3,016,000	2,916,000	(100,000)
31	Pay Award Provision Apr 2025 (2%)	119,200			(119,200)	0	0	0
30	Provisions/Contingencies	119,200	0	0	(119,200)	0	0	0
31	Core Budget	44,552,400	71,200	(54,800)	100,000	44,668,800	44,558,800	(110,000)
32	Funding Grants	(9,006,865)				(9,006,865)	(9,006,865)	0
33	Special Grants	(2,172,387)				(2,172,387)	(2,172,387)	0
34	Retained Business Rates	(3,217,202)				(3,217,202)	(3,217,202)	0
35	Council Tax Payers	(30,280,932)				(30,280,932)	(30,280,932)	0
36	Total Funding	(44,677,386)	0	0	0	(44,677,386)	(44,677,386)	0
37	Structural Gap(Surplus)	(124,986)	71,200	(54,800)	100,000	(8,586)	(118,586)	(110,000)
38	to/(from) Capital Reserve	0				80,000	80,000	80,000
39	to/(from) Budget Reduction Reserve	124,986	(71,200)	54,800	(100,000)	8,586	38,586	30,000
40	Use of Reserves	124,986	(71,200)	54,800	(100,000)	8,586	118,586	110,000
41	Net	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority
Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee - 10th September 2025
Medium Term Financial Forecast Revision

Col Row	(2) 2025/26 Budget £	(3) 2026/27 Forecast £	(4) 2027/28 Forecast £	(5) 2028/29 Forecast £	(6) 2029/30 Forecast £
1	45,109,400	46,359,300	47,460,000	48,582,100	49,726,000
2	(44,749,686)	(45,478,987)	(46,717,576)	(47,985,176)	(49,285,676)
3	359,714	880,313	742,424	596,924	440,324
4	72,300	73,700	75,200	76,700	78,200
5	194,800	259,700	259,700	259,700	259,700
	626,814	1,213,713	1,077,324	933,324	778,224
	<u>Budget Reductions Identified</u>				
6	(443,000)	(443,000)	(443,000)	(443,000)	(443,000)
7	(308,800)	(308,800)	(308,800)	(308,800)	(308,800)
8	(124,986)	461,913	325,524	181,524	26,424
9	71,200	72,300	78,300	84,300	91,300
10	100,000	102,000	104,000	106,100	108,200
11	12,500	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
	<u>Adjustments to Budget Reductions Identified</u>				
12	(19,400)	(319,100)	(319,100)	(319,100)	(319,100)
13	(47,900)	(47,900)	(47,900)	(47,900)	(47,900)
14	(8,586)	319,213	190,824	54,924	(91,076)

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority
Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee - 10th September 2025
Budget Monitoring 2025/26: Capital

Col. Line	(2) REVISED BUDGET Qtr.1 £	(3) Major Schemes Allocation £	(4) Minor Schemes Allocation £	(4) REVISED BUDGET Qtr.1 £	(5) Expenditure to 24/25 £	(6) Available 2025/26 £	(7) Expenditure in 25/26 £	(8) Remaining Unspent £
Vehicle Programme								
1	338 - BA Maintenance Van (1)			95,000	49,879	45,121		45,121
2	339 - Cars 24/25 (11)			286,000		286,000		286,000
3	340 - Vans 24/25 (8)			208,000		208,000		208,000
4	343 - Ancillary Cars 25/26 (2)			55,200		55,200		55,200
5	345 - Appliances 25/26 (3)			927,000		927,000		927,000
6	347 - USAR Crew-bus 25/26 (1)			97,600		97,600		97,600
7	350- Water Carriers 25/26 (3)			675,000		675,000		675,000
8	352 - EPU 25/26 (1)			120,000		120,000		120,000
9	415 - Large Van 25/26 (1)			30,000		30,000		30,000
10	Total			2,493,800	49,879	2,443,921	0	2,443,921
Major Buildings								
11	Hereford FS			14,601,819	773,299	13,828,520	942,338	12,886,182
12	283 - Broadway FS			1,696,000	1,633,294	62,706		62,706
13	413 - Training Facilities	650,000		650,000		650,000		650,000
14	Total	650,000	0	16,947,819	2,406,593	14,541,226	942,338	13,598,888
15	Future Building Schemes	(650,000)		732,728		732,728		732,728
Major Equipment								
16	395- Breathing Apparatus Sets			1,300,000	1,240,480	59,520	1,936	57,584
17	412 - Fire Control System (Reserve)			160,000	34,635	125,365		125,365
18	Total	0	0	1,460,000	1,275,114	184,886	1,936	182,950
Minor Schemes								
19	254 - Leintwardine Rear Extension		103,000	350,000	56,358	293,643		293,643
20	358 - Service Wide: Appliance Bay Pits		(30,000)	0				0
21	373 - Eardisley Refurb.			56,000	15,000	41,000	30,310	10,690
22	377 - Bromyard Extend		94,000	202,000		202,000		202,000
23	380 - Ross Drill Tow			120,000	112,650	7,350		7,350
24	382 - Veh Mount CCTV			135,000	81,279	53,721		53,721
25	386 - Incident Ground Welfare			70,000	8,890	61,110		61,110
26	387 - Life Jackets			66,000	64,190	1,810		1,810
27	396 - Mainline Branch		5,200	43,200		43,200		43,200
28	397 - Hose reel Branch		6,000	48,000		48,000		48,000
29	399 - PPV Ram Fan		(25,000)	0				0
30	400 - T1 Finance Software Upgrade			40,000		40,000		40,000
31	401 - Core and Command Equip		(30,290)	19,710	19,710			0
32	403 - Station End Equip (Reserve Funded)		(12,000)	198,000	196,106	1,894	1,525	369
33	404 - Fire Control (Secondary)			456,000	6,755	449,245		449,245
34	405 - SIP 999 Service ISDN PSTN			100,000		100,000		100,000
35	407 - Wireless Equip		(19,000)	51,000	33,086	17,914	17,000	914
36	408 - Laptop Replacement P1			100,000	51,656	48,344	28,945	19,399
37	409 - Mobile Phone Replace			20,000		20,000	1,008	18,992
38	410 - Ladders			23,189	18,990	4,199		4,199
39	411 - Ops Logs Refurb			120,000		120,000		120,000
40	416 - Ladders (25/26)		19,400	19,400		19,400	14,607	4,793
41	425 - ICT - Citrix Replacement		75,000	75,000		75,000		75,000
42	Kingsland Refurb.		102,000	102,000		102,000		102,000
43	Water First Responder Equip		60,000	60,000		60,000		60,000
44	RAM Fans		18,200	18,200		18,200		18,200
45	Lap Top Replacement (25/26)		100,000	100,000		100,000		100,000
46	Mobile Phone Replacement (25/26)		20,000	20,000		20,000		20,000
47	ICT-ESX Host Replacement		100,000	100,000		100,000		100,000
48	Sub-Total	0	586,510	2,712,699	664,668	2,048,031	93,395	1,954,636
49	Minor Schemes - Unallocated		(586,510)	29,441		29,441		29,441
50	Total	0	0	2,742,140	664,668	2,077,472	93,395	1,984,077
51	Capital Budget	0	0	24,376,487	4,396,254	19,980,233	1,037,669	18,942,564

Report of Assistant Chief Fire Officer: Director of Protection and Assets

Property Update

Purpose of report

1. To provide Members the opportunity to scrutinise the Property update, specifically reviewing the Hereford Fire Station Update and Project Overview provided at Appendix 1.

Recommendation

It is recommended that having scrutinised the details of the Property update, specifically reviewing the Hereford Fire Station Update and Project Overview, those details be accepted and approved.

Background

2. Due to the number of property projects that are now moving forward and the significant expenditure that will be incurred, the Committee will continue to be provided with regular updates on progress.

Budgets

3. Previous reports to the Committee have referenced the UK construction tender price index, and the associated inflationary pressures being seen across the building sector. Taking this into account the Treasurer is building in contingency funds in anticipation of our current capital build programme. Members will be updated as the projects develop, with particular regard to the largest projects which are still to be tendered, notably the North Herefordshire Strategic Training Facility.

Property Update

4. **Redditch Fire Station:** It was reported to the Committee meeting in March that fire crews occupied the new fire station in January. An official opening will be completed as part of a joint police / fire station open day on Sunday 28th September 2025.
5. **Hereford Fire Station:** An update was presented to Committee in March 2025. However, a further update, and project overview to date has been completed and provided at **Appendix 1** for members to scrutinise.

6. **North Herefordshire Strategic Training Facility:** Previous updates to the Committee have reported the additional modelling requested by the Environment Agency related to site flood risk. All queries have now been resolved, and planning permission has been granted.
7. A pre-tender process via a construction procurement framework to identify a suitable contractor to build the training facility has been completed. Officers are now considering submissions and reviewing specifications and costs. Proposals may need to alter to fall within the allocated budget, and Officers are currently exploring value engineering options with our cost consultants. Members will be updated when additional progress is made.
8. **Relocation of Training Centre to Wyre Forest Fire Station:** The last property update confirmed that a number of proposed layout options had been provided by the architects who completed the Wyre Forest development, and these had been reviewed by the DCFO and Training Centre managers.
9. Following the last update to Members, Officers have reviewed the use of the existing space at Wyre Forest Fire Station, and plans are now progressing to move Training Centre staff to available space in the existing facility. The initial plans to extend the existing High-Volume Pump building are still being progressed, which will provide options for the future if deemed necessary. Once the Training staff have fully occupied the Wyre Forest site, Officers will review the potential training centre requirements and impact on any future buildings that may be required. Following completion of minor ICT reconfiguration Training Centre Staff are due to move by the end of August 2025.
10. **Ross-on-Wye Working at Height Facility:** Following the last Committee update work has been completed at Ross-on-Wye Fire Station to provide a new 3-storey working at height facility (drill tower). This provides crews with a versatile facility that features a roof extension for roof ladder training, platforms and a trap door, balcony and ledges for Safe Working at Height (SWAH) training.
11. **Leintwardine Fire Station:** Following an extensive planning, design and consultation process a proposed extension and refurbishment to Leintwardine Fire Station has been awarded to a local Herefordshire building contractor. Works are due to commence in October, and the Committee will be updated as works progress.
12. **Operational Logistics:** A refurbishment of the offices, welfare facilities and communal areas has commenced at the Services Operational Logistics department at Malvern. The contractor has completed approximately fifty percent of the works, and when finished will provide staff with a clean and modern working environment.
13. **Planned and reactive property maintenance:** General maintenance and building works continue across the Service's estate. Notably, upgrades to insulation and modern electrical heating systems are being progressed at Kington and Leominster Fire Stations, which form part of the Services Environmental Sustainability plans.

Site Disposals

14. **Former Kidderminster Fire Station:** As set out in the last property update, Officers continue to market the site, and Members will be updated when any prospective offer for the site is made.

Summary

15. The property, development and maintenance programme is extensive and complex, but continues to move at pace. Members should be aware of the volatile and changing construction industry, combined with rapidly increasing costs of materials and labour. Officers are progressing all property related matters as quickly as resources permit in order to mitigate these costs wherever possible, whilst also meeting planning and other regulatory requirements.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues).	Note reference to the UK construction tender price index, and the associated inflationary pressures being seen across the building sector.
Strategic Policy Links & Core Code of Ethics (identify how proposals link with current priorities & policy framework and align to the Core Code of Ethics).	Details underpin several key property, and environmental sustainability priorities for the Fire Authority.
Productivity & Efficiency (Identify how proposal improves productivity or efficiency).	All new building proposals have been carefully considered, e.g. new turn-out system at Redditch and Hereford Fire Stations.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	None.
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter).	The capital build programme (Redditch, Hereford, and North Herefordshire Strategic Training Facility) and Leintwardine extension projects have been fully consulted on via the Local Authority planning process.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?).	None.

Data Protection Impact Assessment (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling).	None.
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Appendices

Appendix 1: Hereford Fire Station Update & Project Overview

Hereford Fire Station Update & Project Overview

Purpose of report

1. To provide an update and project overview for Members on the replacement of Hereford Fire Station which forms part of the Fire Authority capital build programme.

Background

2. The Authority's Asset Management Plan 2009-2013, adopted in 2009 identified that:
 - the design of Hereford Fire Station, opened in 1951, was no longer fit for purpose;
 - the building's services were approaching the end of their useful life; and
 - some elements of the building were deteriorating.
3. Following completion of further property condition surveys, an Asset Management Strategy report was brought to Policy & Resources Committee in March 2011 which highlighted four stations as priorities for replacement. These were:
 - Bromsgrove (completed 2014);
 - Malvern (completed 2014);
 - Redditch (project completed January 2025); and
 - Hereford.
4. As a result of the 2011 report, members agreed a series of capital allocations for each of the above schemes, with individual proposals being subject to further reports and approval once initial investigations had been completed.
5. Hereford Fire Station was the only scheme approved in 2011 which had not so far been delivered or was in the process of being delivered. The main reason for this had been the difficulty in finding a suitable site. However, this had not been for the want of trying and several alternative proposals have been investigated over the years:
 - An early proposal to include a new fire station as part of the Edgar Grid redevelopment did not come to fruition;
 - Proposals for a new station on land at Bath Street were withdrawn in 2014 considering objections from the Planning Conservation Officer regarding the demolition of the former Industrial School on the site;
 - In 2016 members approved a proposal to investigate the feasibility of a joint Fire & Rescue, Police and Herefordshire Council hub on Council owned land at Merton Meadow. A feasibility report funded by money from the government's One Public Estate initiative subsequently identified the site as being unsuitable due to the risk of flooding;
 - Following the decision not to proceed with the Merton Meadow site, an alternative site was acquired by the Police & Crime Commissioner at Holmer Road, Hereford and members gave approval in November 2018

for officers to investigate a Joint Fire & Rescue and Police Station on this site. However, once detailed layout design work was undertaken, it became apparent the site was too small to accommodate the partners' requirements, particularly as regards the number of Police vehicles on the site. The PCC's office sought to acquire additional land nearby for additional parking but the costs of providing a satisfactory access proved to be prohibitive; and

- In June 2020 officers reported that in view of the restricted nature of the Holmer Road site and concerns about possible congestion on the adjoining road network which would have impeded access and egress without significant traffic control measures being introduced, the site was no longer considered suitable and attention would instead focus on the potential for redevelopment of the existing fire station site at St. Owen Street.
6. A complete list of papers concerning the Hereford Project from 2015 to date is provided in [Appendix A](#). The earlier investigations, reports and design processes for the numerous previously proposed sites came at a significant cost and it was felt by the Fire Authority that a viable solution that could reach completion was necessary.

Approved Proposals

7. As previously reported to the Fire Authority on 17th June 2021, architects were appointed to undertake a high-level feasibility options appraisal of the existing Hereford Fire Station site at St Owen Street, Hereford. This was as part of the strategic direction of the then newly appointed Chief Fire Officer Jonathon Pryce and Councillor Roger Phillips (Chair of the Fire Authority), to deliver a new fire station for Hereford city following an inability to achieve this for over two decades. As all other potentially viable opportunities had been explored during the previous decade it was agreed by Members to pursue a rebuild on the existing site.
8. The St Owen Street site is in a prime location, but it was the condition of the existing building and facilities that was of primary concern. However, extensive analysis demonstrated that the low level of calls in Hereford city and the risk profile, did not pose any significant advantage to a relocation from the existing site, nor did it preclude it.
9. A preferred option was identified, proposing a new four bay fire station on the same site, with associated accommodation, with improved access and egress from the site and enhancing car parking. The proposals also provide space for partners, office space for Herefordshire based prevention and protection teams, and dedicated rooms for level one incident command training and assessments. The final Design & Access Statement, submitted as part of the planning application is provided in [Appendix B](#).

10. It was reported to the Fire Authority in October 2022 that final surveys and assessments had been completed during August, and a formal planning application was being prepared. Staff at the site had been extensively consulted and as the planning application progressed staff continued to be engaged with, as well as ensuring that all other appropriate local stakeholders were briefed on the proposals. The ACFO attended Hereford City Council (24/01/23) to present proposals and consult with elected local Members for the proposed new fire station design on the same site, and the CFO attended to take questions concerning the project. Other local Members were also engaged with on a more informal basis, including Fire Authority Members.
11. A full planning application was submitted to Hereford Council on 4 October 2022 and validated on 21 November 2022. Full detail can be found under the planning portal reference P223339/F [link here](#). Planning permission was granted on 13 April 2023 with a number of conditions. A copy of the Planner Officer's Delegated Decision Report, dated 13 April 2023 is provided at [Appendix C](#), along with the Planning Decision Notice at [Appendix D](#).
12. Due to the decision taken by the Fire Authority to redevelop the existing fire station site, arrangements for a temporary fire station during redevelopment had to be explored. Officers instructed Berrys, a local commercial chartered surveyors practice, to provide an independent site search outlining the availability of commercial property in Hereford that could accommodate the temporary station whilst the new station was being built.
13. The search identified that, at the time of carrying out the exercise (July 2023), there were only a few commercial sites currently available in central Hereford. Five sites were identified and an assessment against the user requirements was carried out. A copy of Berrys' Site Search can be found within HWFRS Site Search Report dated September 2023 (see [Appendix E](#)), provided as part of the planning application submission for the St Owen Street site.
14. The evidence within the site search completed by Berrys, along with operational knowledge informed the report. When taking the Service's requirements into account, focusing on the on-call turn out times, the size of the unit and yard area, and the ease of fitting out the building to provide the accommodation required, it was recommended that Option 2 (Unit 5, Mortimer Road) was the most suitable site. It is worth noting that there was strong interest in the site, so negotiations with the landowner needed to commence in a timely manner.
15. To provide appropriate accommodation and facilities for fire crews at the temporary building, initial designs were completed, and a planning application submitted for a change of use and the erection of a temporary radio antenna at Mortimer Road was submitted to Hereford Council on 10 June 2024, with the application being validated on 2 July 2024. Full detail can be found under the planning portal reference P241471/F [link here](#).

16. Planning permission was granted on 16 October 2024 with several conditions, and building works were completed in June 2025 allowing crews to occupy the temporary facility in early July. A copy of the Planner Officer's Delegated Decision Report, dated 16 October 2024 is provided at [Appendix F](#), along with the Planning Decision Notice at [Appendix G](#).

Budgets

17. Previous reports to the Committee have referenced the UK construction tender price index, and the associated inflationary pressures being seen across the building sector.
18. In a confidential report to the committee in September 2021 it was noted that the original budget allocation for the scheme was made in 2011. There had been no adjustment for inflation since then but there had been some expenditure on the various abortive schemes. The current UK construction tender price index at that time was 192 and reflected an annual rise in construction costs of approximately 3.81% per annum since 2011 (139-192), further detail was provided in a confidential appendix to that report.
19. The estimated cost of the proposals in 2021 left a shortfall compared to the existing allocation. The Treasurer advised at that time that the estimated shortfall could be financed through borrowing, and repayment accommodated within anticipated capital financing budgets.
20. An additional review was completed from 2021 to 2024 utilising the Construction Output Price Indices, published by the Office of National Statistics in August 2024, which indicated an additional increase of 24.22% for all new construction work.
21. Furthermore, an assessment of construction costs for the fire station schemes at Redditch and Broadway was completed. Officers were satisfied that the Hereford project costs closely aligned to these in terms of value for money. They were also in line with the current market and published construction indices for the 13-year period (2011 to 2024). Whilst the overall cost of this project was significant and the largest undertaken to date by the Fire Authority, it was noted that this is partially because of decades of previously failed attempts to rebuild Hereford Fire Station.
22. It was also noted in September 2024 that further delays or attempts to redesign, re-engineer or relocate Hereford Fire Station would take considerable time and most likely counteract any potential savings that could be realised, against the annual increases in build and design costs that showed no indication of slowing down, despite overall national inflation rates reducing that year. Indeed, recent projections suggest construction inflationary pressure will continue to increase by 10.8% in 2025/26.

23. Members were also made aware from budget monitoring reports that there had been a repeating underspend in capital financing costs as a result of delays to major capital build schemes. In anticipation of the imperative to replace Hereford Fire Station and escalating construction industry costs, the Treasurer had maintained the capital financing budget. The Treasurer confirmed in September 2024 that, subject to the confidential details presented to Members concerning the revised project costs, these could be contained within the existing budgets for the whole of the MTFP period.

Contractor Selection/Tender Process

24. A main contractor was appointed via the Pagabo procurement framework and has worked with the design team to develop the detailed designs and specifications.
25. Final contracts were agreed and signed between the Fire Authority and Speller Metcalfe Midlands Limited (SMML) on 18 February 2025.

Construction progress to date

26. Following completion of the temporary facility at Mortimer Road, crews have moved out of St Owen Street and are settled into the temporary fire station.
27. Enabling works, asbestos removal and demolition commenced at St Owen Street officially on 16 June 2025, with a programme set at approximately 86 weeks, and a practical completion date for the new Hereford Fire Station as January 2027.

Summary

28. The Fire Authority's Asset Management Plan 2009-2013 identified the need to replace Hereford Fire Station. Hereford Fire Station was the only scheme approved in 2011 which had not so far been delivered, following the difficulty in finding a suitable site, with several alternative proposals having been investigated over the years.
29. In 2021 architects were appointed by Place Partnership Limited to undertake a high-level feasibility options appraisal to redevelop the existing St Owen Street site. A full planning application was submitted to Hereford Council in October 2022 and approved in April 2023.
30. The Fire Authority have been advised throughout concerning the project budget allocation, with previous reports to the Committee referencing the UK construction tender price index, and the associated inflationary pressures being seen across the building sector.

31. A contractor tender process followed and work to find an alternative temporary fire station site for the period of construction commenced with local chartered surveyors. An industrial building at Mortimer Road, Hereford was selected as a preferred option, and a change of use planning application submitted in June 2024 was approved in October 2024.
32. Fire crews moved into the temporary fire station facility in June 2025, and demolition work commenced at St Owen Street in mid-June.

Appendices

Appendix A: Timeline of Committee Papers / Updates referencing Hereford Project

Appendix B: Hereford Fire Station - Design & Access Statement, 30 Sept 2022

Appendix C: Hereford Fire Station - Delegated Decision Report, 13 April 2023

Appendix D: Hereford Fire Station - Planning Decision Notice, 13 April 2023

Appendix E: HWFRS Site Search Report - Temporary Hereford Fire Station, Sept 2023

Appendix F: Temporary Fire Station - Delegated Decision Report, 16 Oct 2024

Appendix G: Temporary Hereford Fire Station - Planning Decision Notice, 16 Oct 2024

Report of Assistant Chief Fire Officer: Director of Protection and Assets

Overview of the Fire Control Project

Purpose of report

1. To provide Members the opportunity to scrutinise the Fire Control Project overview and progress to date.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Members note the Fire Control Project Overview, including the eleven referenced background papers, and decisions that have been made by the Fire Authority to date: noting the contract sign-off date of 14 December 2024, and project progress to date.

Introduction and Background

2. On 12 September 2018, Members of both Shropshire and Hereford & Worcester FRAs approved the creation of a Strategic Fire Alliance. The scoping of future requirements to ensure a resilient Fire Control function was identified as a priority and Officers were authorised to begin preparing options appraisals. The Strategic Fire Alliance Board and Programme Delivery Board were established to oversee progress. [Creating a Strategic Alliance 12 September 2018](#)
3. Through 2019 Stakeholder engagement and risk reviews were conducted alongside market engagement to explore available Fire Control mobilising systems. In October 2019 Members approved the adoption of a formal Fire Alliance and agreed the project priority for Fire Control was to scope the future requirements to ensure a resilient Command and Control function. [Strategic Alliance Update 15 October 2019](#)
4. In February 2020 Officers were tasked with conducting an in-depth analysis of the technical capability and longevity of existing control rooms, and to complete a gap analysis against recommendations from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 report. A draft options appraisal report was presented to Chief Fire Officers. [Strategic Fire Alliance - Projects update 12 February 2020](#)
5. In May 2020 due to the impact of COVID-19, key resources were redirected to operational duties and the Fire Control project was deferred. In September 2020, a new Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) was appointed to lead the project and was tasked with reviewing progress and proposing recommendations for moving the project forward. This was reported to

Members at the Fire Authority meeting in October 2020. [Strategic Fire Alliance Projects Update 14 October 2020](#)

6. Work continued to finalise a strategic options appraisal of the opportunities for Fire Control provision, with a shortlist and preferred option to be presented to the Fire Alliance Board. A full business case was scheduled for completion and presentation by April 2021. [Strategic Fire Alliance Report 16 December 2020](#)
7. For many fire services, including those who have previously established joint fire control systems, the major issue that is either a barrier to progress or a significant disadvantage in a joint Fire Control model is the loss of the Control function within each FRS. This not only removes the local knowledge and expertise held in each Fire Control in each FRS but also means the Fire Authority and Chief Fire Officer must cede responsibility and ownership for the crucial role of taking 999 calls, and mobilising assets to another Fire Service. This is often seen as presenting elements of legal and political risk.
8. These issues outlined above formed the basis for the lack of progress until 2021 when the Chief Fire Officer, alongside the Chair and Vice-Chair agreed with their Shropshire counterparts to explore a single system hosted remotely but retaining each FRS's own Control rooms and staff. This relies on close and continued collaboration and trust in the development, implementation and legacy arrangements to ensure a single system of working and methodology is agreed and maintained. It is hoped that the benefits of resilience, efficiency and improved operational delivery, whilst keeping operational independence and maintaining the internal staffing and Control function in each FRS will prove to be the newest and most effective solution in the UK, something already emerging from feedback from other FRSs and the National Chiefs Fire Council (NFCC).
9. During 2021, the emphasis moved from the strategic options appraisal to developing a joint specification for a new Command and Control system. It was agreed that HWFRS would produce a specification that would allow both Services to procure the same system but at different times. The Fire Alliance Board would review and approve the business case including the specification, resource plan, project plan and formally initiate the project. [Strategic Fire Alliance Board Update 13 October 2021](#)
10. In December 2021 the full business case was approved by the Strategic Management Board and Members approved the use of funding from the Fire Control reserve. [Replacement Mobilising System Reserve Budget 15 February 2022](#)
11. In April 2022 Shropshire FRS opted for procurement at the same time as HWFRS. In October 2022 the joint specification and procurement documents for a system which would allow the deployment of operational resources from either control room were nearing readiness for formal tender. A Project Manager was appointed and resource and project plans agreed with SFRS. Recognised as a multi-million pound complex project central to the response

function of both services, this project became a key focus of the Fire Alliance Board. [Strategic Fire Alliance Update 12 October 2022](#)

12. Just as the tender documents were being finalised for publication, HWFRS were approached by Cleveland Fire Brigade (CFB) and County Durham & Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS), who expressed an interest in being part of the procurement. As this had the potential to enhance resilience and reduce the cost of the system, it was agreed to adjust the tender and specification accordingly. In January 2023 the invitation to tender was published, and following rigorous evaluation from all four services, the contract was awarded to Motorola Solutions in June 2023, following approval by Fire Authority Chairs. [Fire Alliance Fire Control Update 18 October 2023](#)
13. There then followed a period of contract negotiations which resulted in the finalisation of a 7-year contract and a collaboration agreement between the four Services, known as the Integrated Fire Control Collaboration (IFCC), which was signed on 14 December 2023. The formal project start-up meeting took place on 25 January 2024. [Fire Alliance Update 13 February 2024](#)
14. The estimated cost saving to HWFRS through this joint procurement is estimated to be around £3.5 million over 7 years, plus an additional £0.5 million in the procurements of replacement Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) software. [Fire Alliance Update 16 October 2024](#)

The Business Case - Why are we doing this?

15. The main principle behind HWFRS's Response Strategy is to mobilise the most appropriate resources to an incident considering the incident type and the potential risks that may be known or suspected, and to arrive as promptly and safely as possible. The most appropriate initial resource, often known as the Pre-Determined Attendance (PDA), is normally mobilised by Fire Control Operators based on the information available to them at the time of the emergency call; however, they also use their skills, experience and professional judgement to ensure the right assets are deployed at the right time.
16. To support them in this, Fire Control Operators rely on Command and Control systems that are designed to enhance their efficiency in carrying out their role, by presenting them with a current view of where resources are, enabling them to process critical information and make informed decisions to mobilise resources within seconds, maximise interoperability between agencies and maintain situational awareness as incidents escalate.
17. The Command and Control system currently in use went live in September 2012. Although it is adequate as a means of mobilising resources, due to the number of manual interventions it is not at all efficient. It has not flexed when software that it uses becomes obsolete, nor kept pace with advances in technology or new working practices such as those introduced to meet the recommendations of the Grenfell and Manchester Arena inquiries.

18. Currently, HWFRS and SFRS can receive calls and mobilise resources for each other via a direct link between their respective mobilising systems. However, this arrangement is operationally inefficient, as Fire Control Operators must be logged into one system, or the other, and cannot function across both simultaneously. This limitation effectively reduces the number of available operators for each Service, often necessitating the deployment of additional staff in covering the control room to maintain adequate support levels.
19. Furthermore, although both Services utilise the same mobilising platform, differences in configuration; such as the methods used to search for risk premises, require additional training and reduce interoperability. The current setup also lacks full resilience; if one FRS's system experiences an outage, it becomes inaccessible to the other Service, preventing mutual assistance and further compromising operational capacity. To address these challenges, it was essential to identify a technical solution that would allow each control room to operate independently while also enabling seamless, simultaneous mobilisation across both Services.
20. While recognising the need to align certain control room practices, it was equally important to preserve each Service's autonomy in operational procedures and resource deployment, ensuring that decisions, such as Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) policies remain tailored to their respective geographical risk profiles. To better support Fire Control room operations and reduce risks to the public and the organisation, a more reliable, flexible, and resilient mobilising solution is required.
21. The new system is cloud-hosted which offers key advantages, including enhanced resilience through geographically distributed data centres, improved security via continuous updates and monitoring, and remote access for staff during emergencies or business continuity events. It also reduces the physical footprint within the estate and lowers the workload on FRS ICT teams by shifting infrastructure, maintenance and upgrades to the system provider.
22. The inclusion of CFB and CDDFRS in the procurement brings further benefits in cost savings, resilience, and control staff flexibility. The wider geographical separation between SFRS / HWFRS and CFB / CDDFRS reduces the likelihood of all control rooms experiencing peak demand simultaneously, for example during widespread flooding. The new cloud-hosted solution will enhance this capability by enabling operators in any control room to log into one, multiple, or all service areas at once, ensuring a rapid and co-ordinated response

The new Command and Control System - Why the Motorola system?

23. Following a full open competitive tender process, bidders were invited to spend a day with HWFRS and representatives from the other Services to demonstrate their systems to enable us to clarify our understanding of their bid and assess the system functionality offered. The bids were rigorously evaluated by all four Services for quality, cost, functionality, technical resilience and security. As a result of this thorough evaluation, the contract was awarded to Motorola

Solutions. Their proposal offered the best value for a robust, cloud-hosted mobilising system that met the collective needs of all four Services.

24. Motorola have already delivered this system into individual Fire Services such as Bedfordshire and Essex, but the very real collaboration between the four Fire and Rescue Services, being led by HWFRS, will be the first of its kind, which not only brings greater resilience but also affordability, allowing the communities of HWFRS to benefit from the improvements that can be achieved through access to the latest technology. The system has a proven track record of ongoing development and innovation to meet the needs of the fire sector.
25. It not only allows the Service to provide the benefits of the most up to date technology to better support our communities, but it will also improve our ability to scale up operations to deal with multiple calls and major incidents when required. This aligns with the expected outcomes and recommendations from recent high profile national incidents.
26. It offers several improvements over our current system such as the integration of WHAT3WORDS, Officer and Crewing Availability systems, the ability to transfer incident details electronically between control rooms, and other agencies, and the ability to accurately pinpoint the location of callers who are using mobile phones.
27. Instead of Fire Control staff contacting Officers to respond to incidents by telephone, Officers will be mobilised using a mobile phone App, this will provide them with all of the incident details, which fire appliances have been mobilised, how many crew, their real-time location and will also provide instant access to all risk information available at the address or surrounding premises.
28. Fire appliances are currently mobilised through a tablet mounted in the cab, but the new software will provide enhanced facilities such as satellite navigation, the ability to see and track other resources that have been mobilised to the incident, and the ability to pass messages to Control via an advanced data messaging system. This will be more efficient and cost effective than fire crews dictating messages by radio for Fire Control staff to type onto the incident log.
29. Enhanced Incident Command functionality which allows for an overview of resources, risk assessments and operations on the incident ground, will be available both via a web interface for use when Senior Officers need oversight of major incidents, and also on the incident ground in the command support unit, as well as on every fire appliance.
30. Through this incident command functionality, a fire survival module allows real time flow of information between the fire ground and fire control. For incidents where people are trapped in fire, particularly multiple people such as during the Grenfell Tower fire, this will create an up to the minute picture of where people are still trapped, and from where they have already been evacuated.

31. An example of Motorola's commitment to innovation is a trial of the use of artificial intelligence to give Fire Control staff an estimate as to the truthfulness of a caller, allowing for a more robust challenge from Fire Control staff, potentially reducing the number of hoax calls attended by the Service.

Benefits of Collaboration – Why are we doing this in partnership?

32. Motorola are providing a single system for all four control rooms which will be hosted in their secure resilient data centres and accessed from each Fire Control through a secure and diverse internet link.
33. On a day-to-day basis, each control room will manage calls and mobilise resources within its own Service area. However, the new system provides the flexibility for staff in any of the four Services to instantly and simultaneously expand their operational view to include one, several, or all Service areas. This means operators can support other control rooms in real time, enhancing resilience and ensuring a co-ordinated response during periods of high demand, local site failures, or temporary staff shortages.
34. Each control room typically operates with three staff, but the shared system effectively expands the available pool to twelve operators, allowing flexible and immediate assistance across Services. In the event of local site failures or temporary crewing shortages, any control room can take full responsibility for call handling, mobilising resources and managing incidents across all Service areas for as long as necessary, ensuring continuity and resilience.
35. Sharing the Command and Control system across four Fire Services has led to a considerable reduction in the set up and running costs for the system itself. Early estimates are that the Fire Authority has made savings of close to £3.5 million over 7 years on the system, based on the joint collaboration, rather than procuring a single system and this is replicated for each of the other three Authorities too.
36. In addition to the significant cost savings, the shared system also enables valuable joint training opportunities. Enabling shared training across all four Services, allows staff to access consistent, high-quality training regardless of which control room they are based in. This not only improves system familiarity and operational confidence but also fosters collaboration and standardisation of control room practices and will ensure that operators are well-prepared to support any Service area when needed.
37. By pooling resources in this way, the four Services benefit from shared training costs which also enables access to high-quality, consistent CPD opportunities for all of their control room staff.

38. Further cost savings have been achieved on the procurement of Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) software, which has realised further savings of close to £0.5 million over 7 years. As the project progresses, we are continuing to look for opportunities for further cost savings that might be made through the collaboration.
39. The new Command and Control System is scheduled to be live in all four Services during 2026.

Summary

40. Following contract sign-off, which was a significant milestone for the Service after many years of work, the project to deliver the new Command and Control System commenced in January 2024.
41. It will deliver a resilient Fire Control system, while maintaining control room teams in each Service, and also allowing them to support each other if there is a need to scale up operations or in the event of equipment failures in one of the control rooms.
42. The way in which the Motorola system can be configured allows each Service to maintain autonomy to mobilise according to their own risk profiles. It demonstrates our commitment to provide a high-quality new mobilising system, alongside three partner Fire Services, and being the first of its kind in the UK represents a new way of collaborating.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues).	Budget implications already agreed and approved by the Fire Authority, included within the MTFP.
Strategic Policy Links & Core Code of Ethics (Identify how proposals link with current priorities & policy framework and align to the Core Code of Ethics).	Links to delivery of the CRMP and Core strategies, specifically the Response Strategy.
Productivity & Efficiency (Identify how proposal improves productivity or efficiency).	Cost avoidance identified via collaboration with the three other Services, and system efficiencies concerning ways of working by Fire Control staff.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	Risk Register is maintained as part of Prince2 project management principles, and reviewed regularly at IFCC Board meetings, chaired by HWFRS Assistant Chief Fire Officer.

Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter).	Wide consultation has been carried out with all stakeholders and continues throughout the project.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?).	The system has been designed in accordance with WCAG 2.2 AA government standard for software accessibility, and an updated EIA will be reviewed prior to the system go-live.
Data Protection Impact Assessment (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling).	DPIAs are all aligned to current standards and Codes of Compliance for the current system and will be refreshed when the data transfer happens against the project timeline.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 - Fire Control Project Timeline

Background Papers

Note: other previous papers / reports are provided via links within this paper as listed below for reference.

1. Creating a Strategic Alliance, 12 September 2018
2. Strategic Alliance Update, 15 October 2019
3. Strategic Fire Alliance Update, 12 February 2020
4. Strategic Fire Alliance Update Paper, 14 October 2020
5. Strategic Fire Alliance Report, 16 December 2020
6. Strategic Fire Alliance Board Update, 13 October 2021
7. Replacement Mobilising System Reserve Budget, 15 February 2022
8. Strategic Fire Alliance Update, 12 October 2022
9. Fire Alliance Fire Control Project Update, 18 October 2023
10. Fire Alliance Update, 13 February 2024
11. Fire Alliance Update, 16 October 2024

Fire Control Project Timeline

2018

- 12 September: Strategic Fire Alliance approved by Shropshire and Hereford & Worcester FRAs. Fire Control identified as a priority.

2019

- Throughout 2019: Stakeholder engagement, risk reviews, and market engagement conducted.
- 15 October: Formal Fire Alliance adopted; Fire Control project prioritised.

2020

- February: Technical and gap analysis initiated; draft options appraisal presented.
- May: Project deferred due to COVID-19.
- September: New Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) appointed.
- October: Progress reviewed and recommendations proposed.

2021

- April (planned): Full business case scheduled for completion.
- 13 October: Joint specification for new Command and Control system developed.

2022

- December: Full business case approved; funding from Fire Control reserve authorised.

2023

- January: Invitation to tender published.
- July: Contract awarded to Motorola Solutions.
- 14 December: 7-year contract and collaboration agreement signed.

2024

- 25 January: Formal project start-up meeting held.
- 16 October: Estimated savings of £3.5 million over 7 years reported, plus £0.5 million in MDT software procurement.

2025

- March: Factory Acceptance Tests Complete

Report of Assistant Chief Officer: Director of Prevention

Fire Cadets Annual Review – 2024/2025

Purpose of report

1. To provide Members the opportunity to scrutinise the Fire Cadets activity for 2024/2025.
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Recommendation

It is recommended that having scrutinised the report, it be agreed that the Fire Cadets programme continues to thrive, delivering meaningful contributions to the Service's Prevention agenda and offering young people valuable skills, experiences and opportunities for personal development.

Background and Introduction

2. The UK Fire Cadets programme, supported by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and affiliated with the Fire Standards Board, operates across 200 units nationwide. It is a nationally recognised, inclusive, and progressive uniformed youth organisation delivered through Fire and Rescue Services.
3. Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) established its Fire Cadet unit at Droitwich Fire Station in September 2022 to support the Authority's statutory prevention functions.
4. Councillor Richard Morris was appointed Fire Authority Fire Cadet Champion for 2025 / 2026 at the Fire Authority meeting held in June 2025.

Fire Cadets – Droitwich Unit

5. The Fire Cadet unit at Droitwich is overseen by a team of volunteer instructors. The instructors are made up of Service Wholetime and On-Call staff, previous Fire Cadets (who have transitioned to a supervisory role in the unit) and a small number of parents whose children have previously been Fire Cadets themselves. The unit's two most senior Instructors have over 26 years' experience of working with Fire Cadets in HWFRS and lead the unit.
6. All Fire Cadet instructors volunteer support at weekly drill nights and additional activities. Drill nights are held every Wednesday for two hours, with Volunteer Instructors working before and after, to plan each session.

7. All Fire Cadet Instructors have a current Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Certificate.
8. There are currently 18 Fire Cadets, 10 Instructors and 1 Young Instructor (under the age of 18).
9. The Station Commander for Prevention is the formal liaison for the unit and oversees the recruitment of volunteers. The role includes carrying out regular reviews of policy documents, guidance and procedures as well as overseeing budgetary spending.

Event Attendance

10. Throughout the year, the Fire Cadets attend both Service and community events to support Prevention activities and safety messaging. This year the Fire Cadets supported the Prevention department by delivering 116 Home Fire Safety Visit (HFSV) referrals. This fantastic achievement has helped increase our HFSV referrals in support of the Service's Prevention strategy to keep people safe from fire and harm.
11. Events included representing the Service at The Mayor of Droitwich's Civic Ceremony and attending the High Sheriff's Shrieval Service at Worcester Cathedral in October 2024.
12. In September at the Portsmouth Historic Docks, two teams of three Cadets took part in their first ever United Kingdom Rescue Organisation (UKRO) Trauma Challenge against other Fire Cadet units from around the country. The training for this event started in June 2024 and out of ten national Fire Cadet teams, HWFRS Fire Cadets were awarded third place, receiving positive feedback from the judges. This achievement is underpinned by the professionalism and dedication of the unit's instructors in preparing the Fire Cadets to compete against units of greater experience in this type of competition.
13. In November 2024, the Fire Cadets supported the Worcestershire Medal and Awards Ceremony by meeting and greeting guests. The High Sheriff of Worcestershire's Award was also presented at the ceremony to the Top Fire Cadet. The recipient was nominated by the leaders of the Fire Cadets for demonstrating determination, enthusiasm and a desire to improve their personal skills.
14. On 10 May 2025, the annual Fire Cadets "Pass Out" Parade took place at Droitwich Fire Station. This was the annual celebration of success ceremony for all new Fire Cadet members who have achieved the required standard of skills, knowledge and discipline. The ceremony was an opportunity for those passing out to demonstrate their skills to family and friends and the Fire Cadets carried out numerous demonstrations showcasing the firefighting skills they had learnt since commencement in September 2024. This included hose running and ladder drills.

15. Assistant Chief Fire Officer Ade Elliott, Assistant Chief Officer Anna Davidson and Assistant Director Jon Butlin presented awards to all seven Fire Cadets who successfully completed their training. Other awards for the Highest Achiever, Most Improved and Highest Attendance, were presented by the Mayor of Droitwich.
16. All Fire Cadets have now successfully completed all the modules to be awarded the National Fire Cadets Award Level 1 and are now working towards the completion of the Level 2 award.
17. On 17 July 2025, Fire Cadets hosted the Secretary from the Trinidad and Tobago Branch of the Institute of Fire Engineers and the National Fire Cadet Manager where discussions involved ways it could work collaboratively in the future and share best practice. This has enhanced the reputation of the Service's Fire Cadets and provided potential opportunities to shape further the Fire Cadets support to the Prevention Strategy.
18. A recruitment campaign for the next cohort of Fire Cadets took place during the summer, recruiting ten young people for the year 2025 / 2026. The process commenced in July with a recruitment open evening, and the new Cadets will start with the unit in mid-September 2025.

Training

19. Over the last year all Instructors and Fire Cadets became qualified and certificated in Active First Aid which was delivered by HWFRS Paramedics.
20. All instructors have completed safeguarding training relevant to their roles as set out in the Services' Safeguarding Training Competency Framework. This includes Level 2 and 3 Safeguarding Children and Young People, Suicide Awareness, Prevent, Mental Capacity Act and Managing Allegations training.
21. All instructors have completed additional mandatory training including Ethical Dilemma workshops and social media training.

Budgets

22. The Fire Cadets receive an annual budget of £8,000 to maintain its function and this is managed by the Prevention Department. Additionally, the Fire Cadets and volunteers proactively fund-raise to meet the costs of their team building activities. The branch also intermittently receives charitable donations from local benefactors.
23. HWFRS Fire Cadets continue to have membership of Young Solutions Worcestershire, a progressive infrastructure charity dedicated to keeping young people safe and involved. Young Solutions provide training options and offer advice and support when required.

Fire Cadets Meetings

24. The Fire Cadets are overseen and supported by the Fire Cadet Management Group who meet on a quarterly basis. This group sets the direction of the Fire Cadets and ensures that the aims and objectives are met and that the Fire Cadets policy is complied with.
25. To ensure effective governance of the Fire Cadets unit, an Executive Committee has been formed. Chaired by the Assistant Director for Prevention, the Executive Committee ensures full integration of Fire Cadets within the Service and meets on a bi-annual basis. The meeting provides opportunity for the FRA Fire Cadet Champion to assist in decision making, provide guidance and expert opinion pertaining to Fire Cadet activity and to promote the work of the Fire Cadets in its discharging of the Fire Authorities statutory functions.

The Year Ahead

26. In September 2025, two Fire Cadets will be attending the National Memorial Arboretum to represent the Cadets at the Annual Service of Remembrance and Wreath Laying Ceremony.
27. Two Fire Cadets have also been nominated to attend the London Cenotaph Remembrance parade on 9 November 2025, where, with other Fire Cadets from across the UK they will pay tribute to all those who served and died during conflict.

Conclusion/Summary

28. The Fire Cadets programme continues to thrive, delivering meaningful contributions to the Service's Prevention agenda and offering young people valuable skills, experiences and opportunities for personal development.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	The Service provides an £8K budget annually to cover Fire Cadets running costs and provides suitable accommodation for their base location (Marshall House at Training and Development Centre).
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<p>Strategic Policy Links & Core Code of Ethics (Identify how proposals link with current priorities & policy framework and align to the Core Code of Ethics)</p>	<p>Youth engagement supports the Service's Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) and Prevention by engaging with young people locally to develop and enjoy an immersive experience in a Fire and Rescue environment and in doing so assisting them to influence their peers. It also allows the Service to demonstrate inclusivity by recognising the diversity of our community and providing equality of access to our Prevention agenda.</p> <p>CCofE – Putting our Communities First, Leadership, Equality Diversion and Inclusion (EDI).</p>
<p>Productivity & Efficiency (Identify how proposal improves productivity or efficiency)</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).</p>	<p>Working with Young People does present an element of corporate risk; however, the unit is well supported and managed within the Prevention Department and has performed well in two recent (independent) audits. Relevant risk assessments are completed for specific activities / event attendance.</p>
<p>Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)</p>	<p>A People Impact Assessment (PIA) was completed for initial unit set up. A PIA is completed for new activities.</p>
<p>Data Protection Impact Assessment (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Report of the Assistant Chief Officer: Director of Prevention

Quarter 1 Performance Report

Purpose of report

1. This report affords Members the opportunity to scrutinise the Service's performance for Quarter 1 (Q1) 2025 to 2026.
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Recommendations

It is recommended that having scrutinised the details of the Q1 2025 to 2026 performance, those details be accepted and approved and that the following headlines, in particular, be noted:

- i) A total of 2,115 incidents were attended in Q1 2025 to 2026 which was an increase of 3.6% (+73) compared to Q1 2024 to 2025.***
- ii) Fire incidents (665) increased by 54.7% (+235) when compared to Q1 2024 to 2025 and were higher than the five-year average of 477.***
- iii) Special Services (614) decreased by 2.5% (-16) when compared to Q1 2024 to 2025. Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) decreased by 18.5% (-35) compared to Q1 2024 to 2025.***
- iv) False Alarms (836) decreased by 14.9% (-146) compared with Q1 2024 to 2025.***

Introduction and Background

2. The Service gathers performance data relating to incidents attended and activities carried out to report to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis. The Q1 2025 to 2026 Performance Report is attached as Appendix 1 and provides information on overall incident numbers for Prevention, Protection and Response activities with an overview of the Service workforce. A cumulative summary of the performance is reported separately in the Annual Service Review.
3. The Performance Report relates closely to the Prevention, Protection and Response strategies as well as the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2021 to 2025.

Incident Overview

4. A total of 2,115 incidents were attended in Q1 2025 to 2026. This was an increase of 73 incidents (+3.6%) compared to the 2,042 incidents recorded in Q1 2024 to 2025 and 12.2% above the five-year average of 1,885. In addition to the 2,115 incidents, the Service also attended 19 over the border incidents this quarter.
 - a. 665 Fires: The number of fires attended in Q1 2025 to 2026 increased by 54.7% (+235 incidents) when compared to Q1 2024 to 2025. The number of fires recorded in this quarter was 39.5% higher (+188 incidents) than the five-year average of 477.
 - b. The number of fire incidents in this quarter has been significant and reflective of the warm and dry weather conditions. Since February 2025, the number of fire incidents recorded increased each month, peaking at 240 in June.
 - c. Whilst no individual month in this quarter recorded a new high for the number of fires in the longer-term trend, the consistency of above average numbers and the month-on-month increases in fire incidents is noteworthy.
 - d. 614 Special Service Incidents: The number of Special Service incidents attended in Q1 2025 to 2026 were 2.5% fewer than in Q1 2024 to 2025 (-16 incidents) but remained above the five-year average of 538 incidents. Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) were fewer this quarter at 154, down by 18.5% (-35 incidents) compared to Q1 2024 to 2025 but above the five-year average of 138 incidents.
 - e. 836 False Alarms: The number of false alarms attended in Q1 2025 to 2026 was 14.9% lower (-146 incidents) than in Q1 2024 to 2025 and 3.9% below the five-year average of 870 (-34 incidents).

Prevention

5. 1,736 Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs) were completed in Q1 2025 to 2026; of those visits, 398 (23%) were delivered by Prevention Technicians and 1,338 (77%) were delivered by operational crews. HFSVs are targeted at those at greater risk of fire, based upon data and analysis as outlined in the Prevention Strategy. Trends are monitored monthly and analysed to adjust and focus prevention activity as required.
6. The number of HFSVs were 8% short of the forecasted completion of 1,875 HFSVs this quarter. In addition to the 1,736 HFSVs completed, there were 49 visits where an appointment had been pre-arranged but on arrival at the property, the individual refused the visit. The Prevention department is currently exploring ways in which all undertaken prevention activity can be better recorded to provide a more accurate picture of the resources committed to meeting the HFSV target.
7. The Prevention department continues to work with Response in meeting the 1440 HFSVs required by Operational crews in support of the 1875 quarterly target.

Protection

8. The Service continues to conduct the Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP) of business premises. Qualified Fire Safety Inspectors from the Protection Department conducted 374 inspections in Q1 2025 to 2026 which is above the quarterly target to reach the annual target of 1,350 inspections.
9. There have been 23 total enforcements this quarter, a reduction of 14 compared to Q1 in 2024 to 2025.

Enforcement Type	Q1 2025 to 2026	Q1 2024 to 2025
Alterations	1	15
Enforcements	5	10
Prohibitions	17	12
Total	23	37

10. All fires in commercial premises are subject to a Post Fire Audit. 47 Post Fire Audits were conducted in the quarter.
11. In this quarter, a block of flats in Worcester was issued with a Prohibition Notice as the premises were noted under the Cladding Safety Scheme. After interim works were agreed, residents from the ground and first floors have returned to their homes. The Prohibition Notice remains in force for the second and third floor flats whilst remediation works are being investigated.

Response

Fires

12. Primary fires¹ and secondary fires² increased significantly in Q1 2025 to 2026 compared to the previous year and compared to the five-year average. Primary fires increased by 19.7% (+46 incidents) and secondary fires increased by 111.7% (+201 incidents) compared to Q1 2024 to 2025.
13. The warm and dry weather conditions experienced during this period have been a significant factor in the increases in fire incident recordings. The Met Office has reported that this was England's third warmest April on record and provisionally the second warmest May and the warmest June on record³.
14. Secondary fire incidents involving Grassland, Woodland and Crops rose by 145.8% (+121 incidents). This category includes property types such as grassland (up by 330%, +33 incidents), domestic garden vegetation (up by 110%, +22 incidents) and hedges (up by 200%, +14 incidents).

¹ Primary Fires include all fires in buildings, vehicles and some outdoor structures or any fire involving casualties, rescues or fires attended by five or more fire engines. Chimney Fires are fires in a building where the flame was contained within the chimney structure and did not involve injuries, fatalities, rescues or attendance by five or more fire engines.

² A Secondary Fire is any other fire incident that does not meet the definition of a Primary Fire nor a Chimney Fire.

³ April 2025 Monthly Weather Report; May 2025 Monthly Weather Report; June 2025 Monthly Weather Report, The Met Office Weather and Climate summaries 2025.

15. There were five Chimney Fires in this quarter which is the lowest number in this three-month period in the last ten-years.
16. There were 67 Dwelling Fires this quarter which is below the five-year average of 85. Of those 67 dwelling fires, 78% of the total were confined to the room of origin and 32 incidents (48%) started in the kitchen. Where a fire started in a kitchen, 44% (14 incidents) were caused by cooking/use of a cooking appliance.
17. The most frequently recorded household occupancy type at the dwelling fire incidents was for lone persons over the pensionable age (24%, 16 incidents). This information is fed back into the Prevention department to further focus relevant activity and for trend analysis.
18. There have been three fire related fatalities and four serious injuries at fire incidents this quarter.
19. In this quarter, there were eight fire incidents that required the attendance of five or more fire engines. Two occurred in Hereford and two in the Kingsland area. The remaining four incidents took place in Evesham, Ewyas Harold, Redditch and Wyre Forest station grounds.

Special Service Incidents

20. In comparison to last year, Q1 2024 to 2025, there was a slight reduction in Special Services. In this quarter, 614 were recorded which is 16 fewer incidents than in Q1 of 2024 to 2025 (-2.5%).
21. The most significant decrease in a Special Service category was in RTC incident recordings (-35 incidents). There were also fewer incident records of assistance to other agencies (-3 incidents), effecting entry/exit (-8 incidents) and rescues from water (-6 incidents).
22. There were slight increases in incident recordings of Animal Assistance (+11 incidents), Flooding (+4 incidents), Lift Releases (+8 incidents) and other Special Services (+13 incidents).

Road Traffic Collisions

23. There were 154 RTC incidents recorded in Q1 2025 to 2026, which is a 18.5% decrease (-35 incidents) compared to the same period in 2024 to 2025.
24. 77% of RTCs attended in Q1 2025 to 2026 concerned either making a vehicle or the scene safe (119 incidents), which is consistent with the proportions recorded in Q1 2024 to 2025 (78%, 147 incidents).
25. Similarly, the proportion of incidents involving an extrication or a release of person(s) from a vehicle were recorded in similar proportion to last year, accounting for 16% of total RTCs this year (24 incidents) compared to 15% (29 incidents) in Q1 2024 to 2025.

26. There were seven fatalities resulting from RTCs in Q1 2025 to 2026, which is three more than in the same period last year. Information related to RTCs is fed into the Prevention department for review and to inform future training and awareness activities.

False Alarms

27. There were 836 False Alarms attended in Q1 2025 to 2026 which was 14.9% lower (-146 incidents) than in Q1 2024 to 2025.
28. False alarms are categorised into the following types: Apparatus, Good Intent and Malicious. The reduction in false alarms this quarter was mainly due to fewer Apparatus false alarms (-26.8%, -205 incidents) and Malicious false alarms (-12.5%, -2 incidents). However, there was an increase in Good Intent false alarm calls (+30.5%, +61 incidents).
29. In addition to the 836 incidents attended, a further 90 Automatic Fire Alarms (AFAs) were call filtered by Fire Control following the Fire Authority's approval of the unwanted fire signal procedures.

Attendance Performance Measure (APM)

30. The Service evaluates the time taken for the first appliance to arrive at an incident against the expected travel time over three time zones (10, 15 and 20 minutes).
31. Incident types that usually attract an emergency response (blue light conditions) are used for this report. The expected travel times are split into three zones based upon the incident location. The use of the new Attendance Performance Management (APM) system allows the Service to examine attendance at a far greater number of incidents, providing a much larger range of useful and comparable data.
32. Out of the 707 incidents examined this quarter, 586 (83%) met the APM. This equates to meeting the APM in:
 - a. Zone 1 (10 mins) on 83% out of 476 occasions.
 - b. Zone 2 (10-15 mins) on 82% out of 186 occasions.
 - c. Zone 3 (15-20 mins) on 84% out of 45 occasions.
33. In this quarter, 67% (476 incidents) of the incidents examined by the APM were in Zone 1 (10 minutes).
34. Monitoring this data will allow the Service to identify areas of improvement when responding to emergencies.
35. The three main reasons why the APM was not met during this quarter were: difficulty in locating the reported incident (29 incidents), forgetting to book in attendance immediately on arrival (18 incidents) and delayed turnout time (14 incidents). The information has been passed on to Response managers who will review this data to ascertain which delays could be avoided and determine any learning outcomes and improvements. This will ensure that the Service can understand the reasons, put in

relevant mitigations and improve response times where there is scope to make a difference.

On-Call Fire Engine Availability

36. The first On-Call fire engine availability was 80.6% during Q1 2025 to 2026. Availability for all On-Call fire engines was 76.2%.
37. For the first On-Call fire engine, 12 of the 24 fire stations (50%) had over 85% availability and five had between 75% and 84% availability. This information is fed back to managers in Response and directly links to the project work presently being undertaken with a strategic intent to improve On-Call availability, to build a sustainable recruitment model for the future systematically targeting support for those stations who have low appliance availability.

People

38. In terms of workforce diversity, the proportion of female representation has increased slightly to 21% of the workforce, which is a 1% increase from the proportion reported in Q1 2024 to 2025.
39. In the latest Census data, the population of people from an ethnic minority within our communities was 10%. Ethnic minority representation in the Service has slightly increased by 1% when compared to the same period in 2024 to 2025 and it is currently at 6%. The Service continues to monitor employment trends and consider various ways of attracting and retaining individuals from all backgrounds.
40. Overall absence due to staff sickness has decreased since Q1 2024 to 2025 from 2.47 to 2.05 days lost per person in this quarter. This is a significant reduction compared to the figure reported in Q1 2023 to 2024 of 4.27 days lost per person.
41. Among Wholetime and Fire Control staff groups, days lost per person have decreased compared to the same period in 2024 to 2025. For Wholetime staff, days lost have decreased from 2.93 to 2.44 and for Fire Control, days lost have decreased from 3.76 to 1.69. For Wholetime staff, 60% of the days lost were due to long term absence. In Fire Control, 18% of days lost were due to long term absence.
42. For Support Staff the average days lost per person increased slightly from 1.42 to 1.47 compared to the same period in 2024-25 where 60% of days lost were due to long term absence.
43. The Service does not report on On-Call absences due to the non-standard working hours and varying availability bandings of the On-Call Duty System, which prevents an accurate determination of lost working days or shifts.

44. The top three reasons for absence this quarter were musculoskeletal (lower limb), hospital/post operative, and mental health (stress - relating to a combination of perceived work-related factors and personal factors). Managers proactively manage absence cases in line with the Service's Attendance Management policy, and these figures and trends are monitored on a quarterly basis by the Health and Safety Committee.

Conclusion/Summary

45. Further information on the headlines set out above is included in Appendix 1.
46. The Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee will continue to receive performance reports to scrutinise the measures being taken to address any issues arising and advise of any necessary actions to be taken.

Corporate Considerations

<p>Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)</p>	<p>The figures reported may change due to increasing scrutiny over the Command and Control, Incident Recording System, Community Fire Risk Management Information System and HR Connect and improved data quality control measures put in place.</p>
<p>Strategic Policy Links & Core Code of Ethics (Identify how proposals link with current priorities & policy framework and align to the Core Code of Ethics)</p>	<p>The areas included link with the Annual Service Review and Annual Service Plan and the strategic objectives of the Service as outlined in the CRMP and three core strategies.</p> <p>The data considered directly links with the ethical principle of Putting Our Communities First.</p>
<p>Productivity & Efficiency (Identify how proposal improves productivity or efficiency)</p>	<p>The report provides quarterly figures for the Service's performance of all directorates, indicates changes when compared to the same period last year, provides an explanation for anomalies and recommends further improvements to ensure efficient and effective service delivery.</p>
<p>Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores)</p>	<p>Relevant data is fed into the Health & Safety Committee as appropriate.</p>
<p>Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)</p>	<p>None.</p>

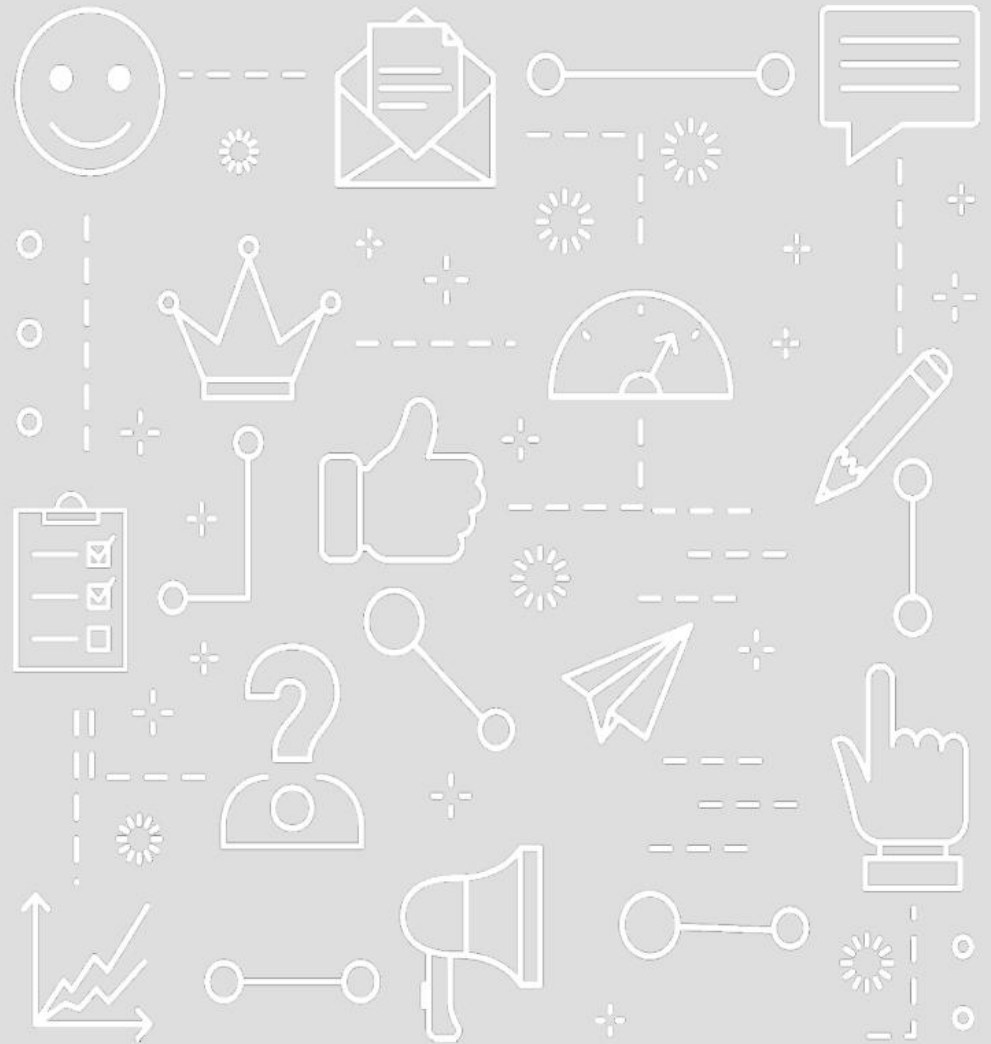
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	No, the report concerns operational activity and other areas of general performance data.
Data Protection Impact Assessment (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)	Not required – no personal data is identified.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Performance Report: Quarter 1 2025 to 2026



HEREFORD & WORCESTER
HWFR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE







Performance Report

Quarter 1 2025 to 2026 (01 April to 30 June 2025)

Report of the Assistant Chief Officer: Director of Prevention

Incident Overview Q1 2025 to 2026 (01 Apr to 30 Jun 2025)

	Total	Change since Q1 2024 to 2025	Narrative
 All Incidents	2,115	↑ 3.6%	An increase of 3.6% (+73 incidents) compared to the number recorded in Q1 2024 to 2025. In addition to the 2,115 incidents, 19 over the border incidents were attended.
 Fires	665	↑ 54.7%	An increase of 54.7% (+235 incidents) compared to Q1 2024 to 2025. Above average number of fire incidents were recorded in each month of this quarter, peaking at 240 in June.
 Special Services	614	↓ 2.5%	A decrease of 2.5% (-16 incidents) compared to Q1 2024 to 2025. The number of road traffic collisions (RTCs) were down by 18.5% (-35 incidents).
 False Alarms	836	↓ 14.9%	A decrease of 14.9% (-146 incidents) compared to Q1 2024 to 2025. Mainly driven by a reduction in false alarm due to apparatus recordings (-26.8%, -205 incidents).

District Overview

Incidents per District Q1 2025 to 2026



Fire



Special
Services



False
Alarms



All
Incidents

Change since
Q1 2024 to 2025

North District	325	230	358	913	↑ 7%
South District	195	232	307	734	↓ 0.9%
West District	145	152	171	468	↑ 4.5%
Total	665	614	836	2,115	↑ 3.6%

All districts experienced a higher number of fire incidents and a reduction in false alarm incidents in this quarter compared to Q1 last year in 2024 to 2025. An additional 90 Automatic Fire Alarms (AFAs) were call filtered by Fire Control following Fire Authority approval of new unwanted fire signal procedures.

Prevention



Fire Prevention Checks Completed	Q1 2025 to 2026	Q1 2024 to 2025
Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV)	1,736	1,811
HFSV Feedback Q1 2025 to 2026		
Proportion of Positive Responses		100%



The number of HFSVs completed has decreased by 4% (-75) compared to the same period last year. There were 49 unsuccessful visits in Q1 2025 to 2026.

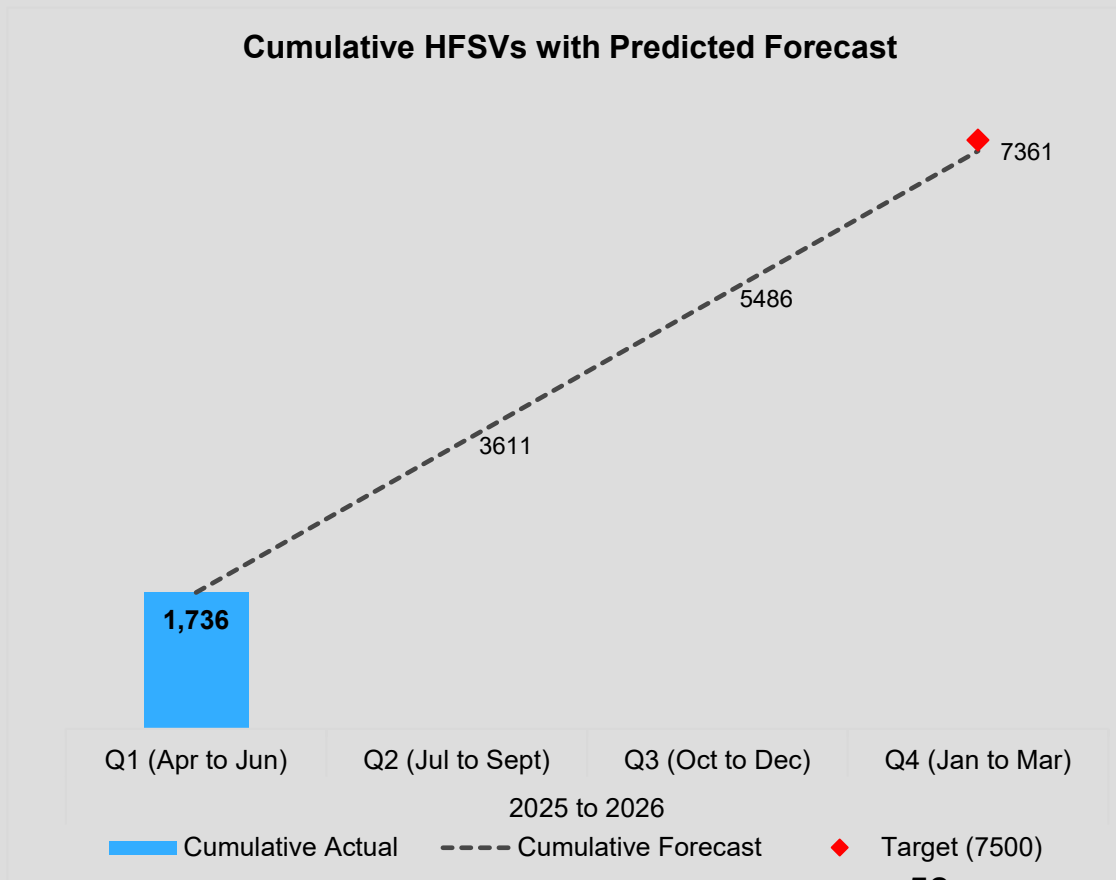
A reduced number of partnership referrals are being received for a station area. This has been identified as an area of concern and is being managed by the local Station Commander in collaboration with the Prevention Team.

Prevention



Home Fire Safety Visit (HFSV) Tracking

The target for HFSVs is 7,500 per year, which equates to a quarterly Key Performance Indicator (KPI) of 1,875. The graph below shows the cumulative progress towards that target throughout the year.



The figures fall 8% short of the forecasted completion of 1,875 HFSVs this quarter.

While there are several reasons for this shortfall, it is worth noting that the majority of stations performed well. Only two stations fell more than 10% below their expected targets.

During this quarter, Hereford Station moved location, meaning that there was a period of two weeks whereby routine HFSVs were not completed.

Assurance has been provided by the Station Commander that these figures will be made up during Quarter 2.

Protection



Inspections Completed	Q1 2025 to 2026	Q1 2024 to 2025
Risk Based Inspection Programme	374	465
Total Enforcement Activity	23	37
Specific Post Fire Audit	47	36

Fire Safety Full Audit Questionnaire	Q1 2025 to 2026
Proportion of Positive Responses	96%

The Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP) are inspections carried out by specialist qualified Fire Safety staff.

The Advice/Concerns Log generated 161 requests for help during this quarter.

The department is proactively identifying business leads to highlight their fire safety responsibilities and offer support and signposting where needed.

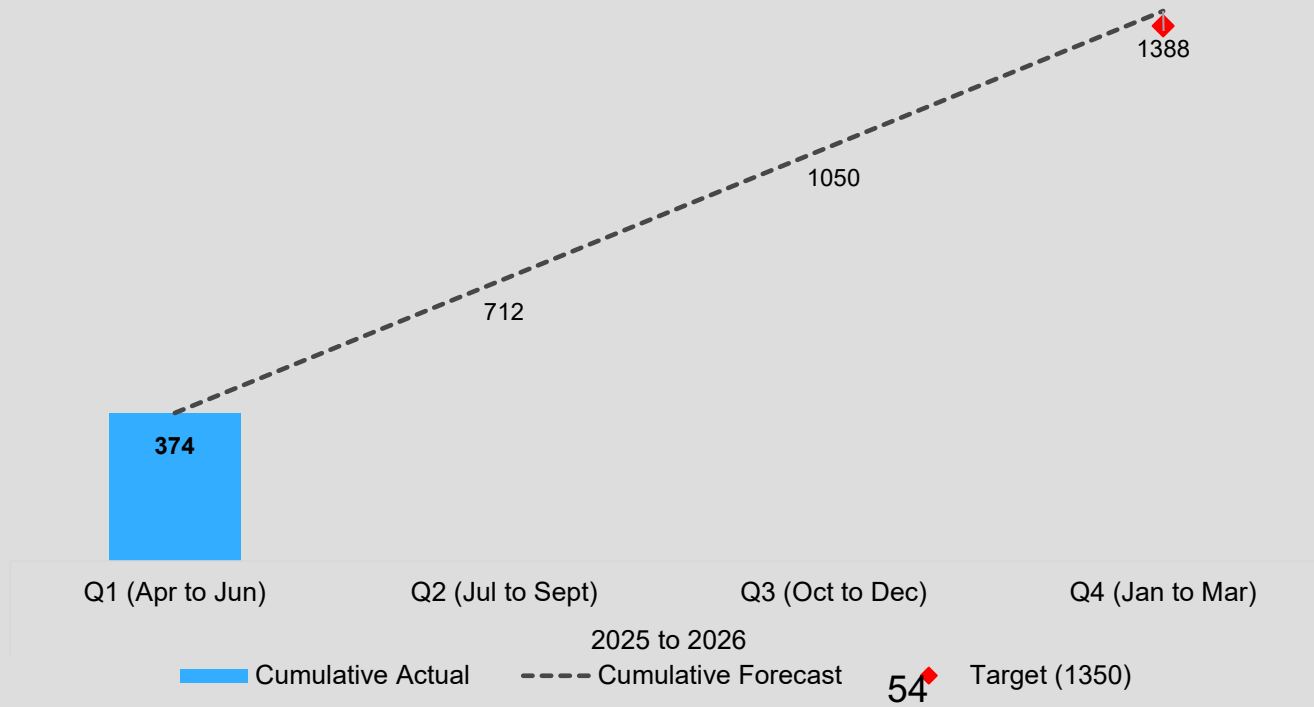
Protection



Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP) Tracking

The target for RBIPs is 1,350 inspections per year which equates to a quarterly KPI of 338. The graph below shows the cumulative progress towards that target throughout the year.

Cumulative RBIPs with Predicted Forecast



The department are on track to reach the annual target.

Response - Fires

Primary Fires: 279



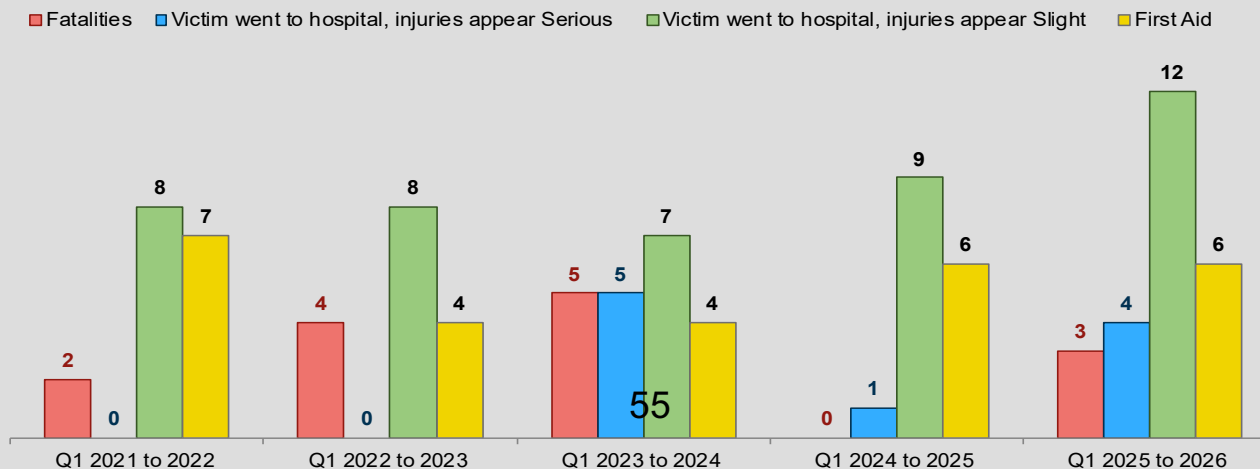
Primary Fires	Q1 2025 to 2026	Q1 2024 to 2025	Change	
Building Fires	131	133	-2	-1.5%
Outdoor Fires	77	21	56	266.7%
Vehicle & Transport Fires	71	79	-8	-10.1%
Total	279	233	46	19.7%

There were eight fire incidents in this quarter that were attended by five or more fire appliances; five dwelling fires, two commercial premises and a caravan fire.

There were three fatalities at fire incidents in Q1 2025 to 2026 including one RTC incident that developed into a fire incident.

The Service recorded four serious and twelve slight injuries.

Primary Fire - Injuries and Fatalities



Secondary Fires : 381



Secondary Fires	Q1 2025 to 2026	Q1 2024 to 2025	Change	
Grassland, Woodland and Crop	204	83	121	145.8%
Other Outdoors (including land)	94	56	38	67.9%
Buildings & Transport	21	10	11	110.0%
Outdoor Structures	55	26	29	111.5%
Outdoor Equipment & Machinery	7	5	2	40.0%
Total	381	180	201	111.7%

Chimney Fires: 5



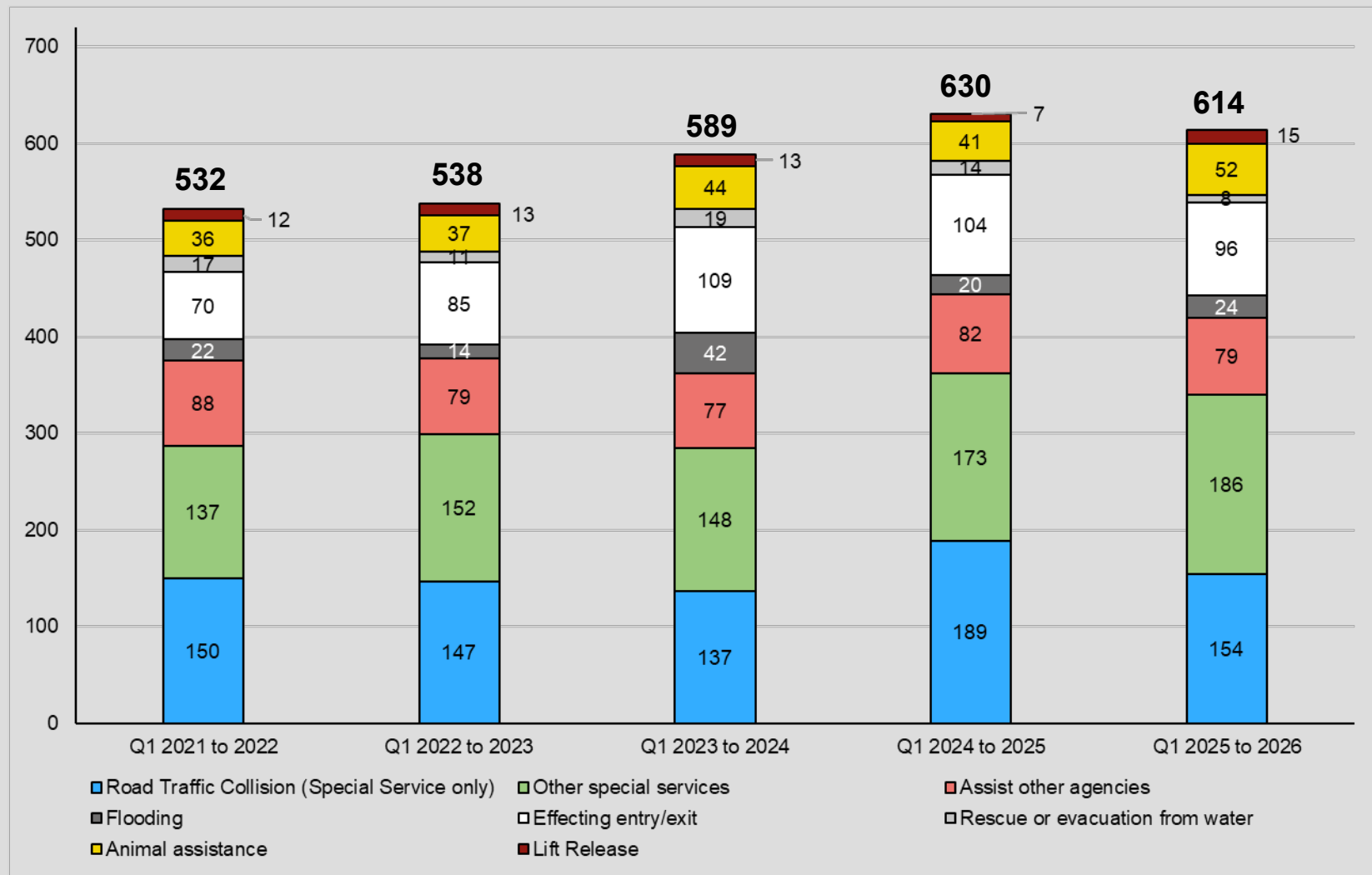
Chimney Fires	Q1 2025 to 2026	Q1 2024 to 2025	Change	
Total	5	17	-12	-70.6%

Response – Special Services



614

Special Service incidents in Q1 2025 to 2026



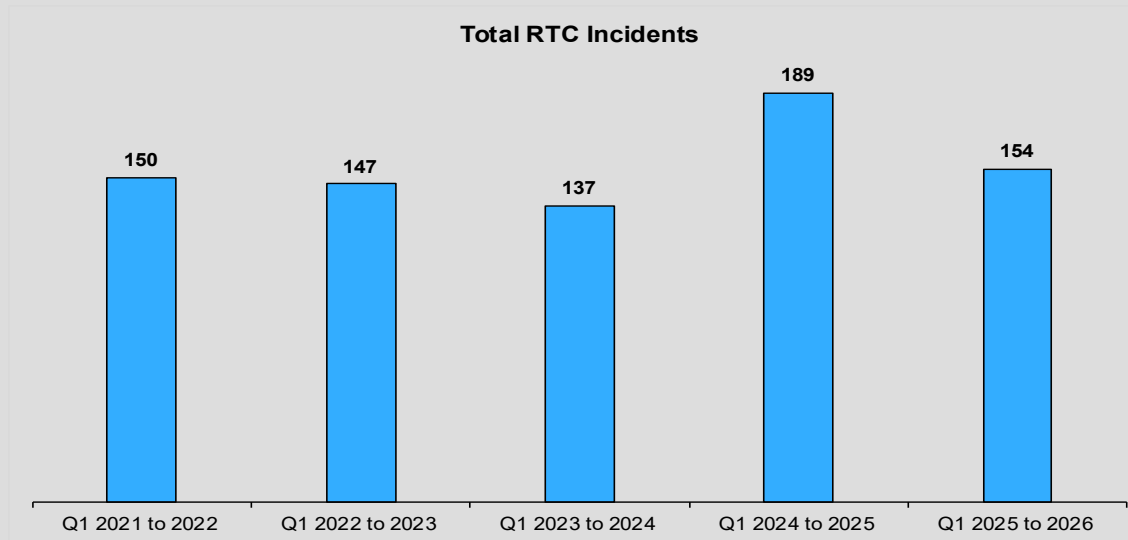
RTC (Special Service only) means that a RTC was classified as a special service incident type. If a fire was associated with an RTC, then the incident would be classified as a fire and not included here.

Other special services includes the following categories: Other Transport incident, Other rescue/release of persons, Making Safe (not RTC), Removal of objects from people, Removal of people from objects, Advice Only, Suicide/attempts, Medical Incident - First responder, Medical Incident - Co-responder, Evacuation (no fire), Water provision, Stand By, No action (not false alarm), Hazardous Materials incident, Spills and Leaks (not RTC).

Response – Road Traffic Collisions (RTC)



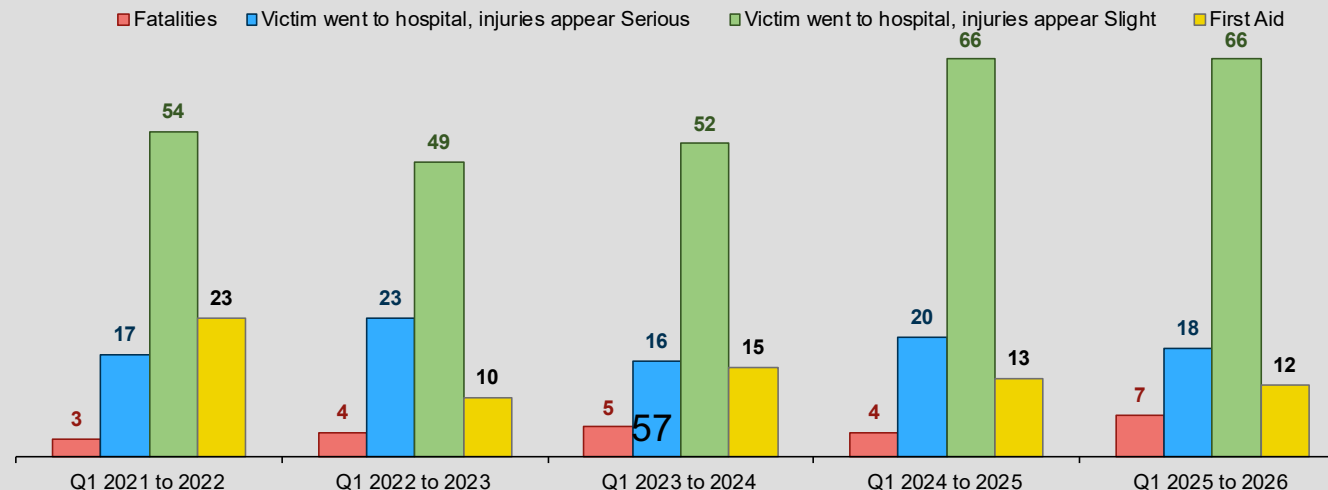
154
RTC
Incidents in
Q1
2025 to 2026



The number of RTC attended incidents decreased by 18.5% (-35) compared to Q1 2024 to 2025.

This quarter four of the seven fatalities were at RTCs involving motorcycles. As one RTC incident developed into a fire incident, this fatality has also been reflected in the number of fire fatalities.

RTC - Injuries and Fatalities



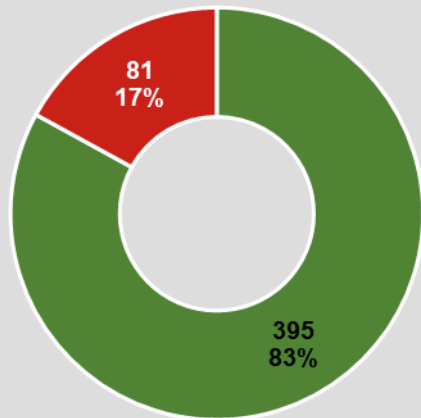
Response – Attendance Performance Measure (APM)



Incidents evaluated for the APM: 707
 Incidents that met the APM: 586 (83%)

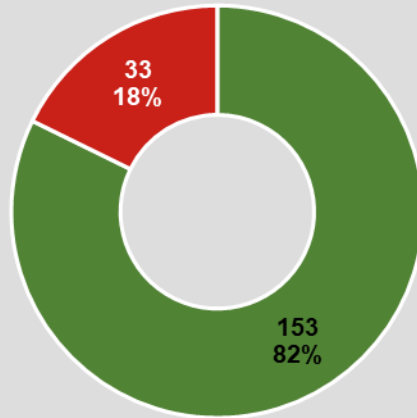
■ APM Met
■ APM Not met

Zone 1
(within 10 minutes)



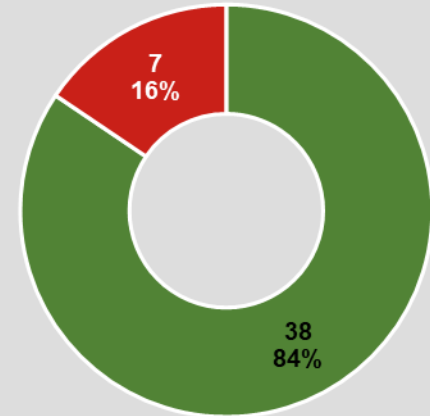
Achieved on 83% of occasions

Zone 2
(between 10 and 15 minutes)



Achieved on 82% of occasions

Zone 3
(between 15 and 20 minutes)



Achieved on 84% of occasions

Top 3 reasons for not meeting the Attendance Performance Measure

Reasons:

1. Difficulty in locating the reported incident
2. Forgetting to book in attendance immediately
3. Delayed turnout time

No. of incidents:

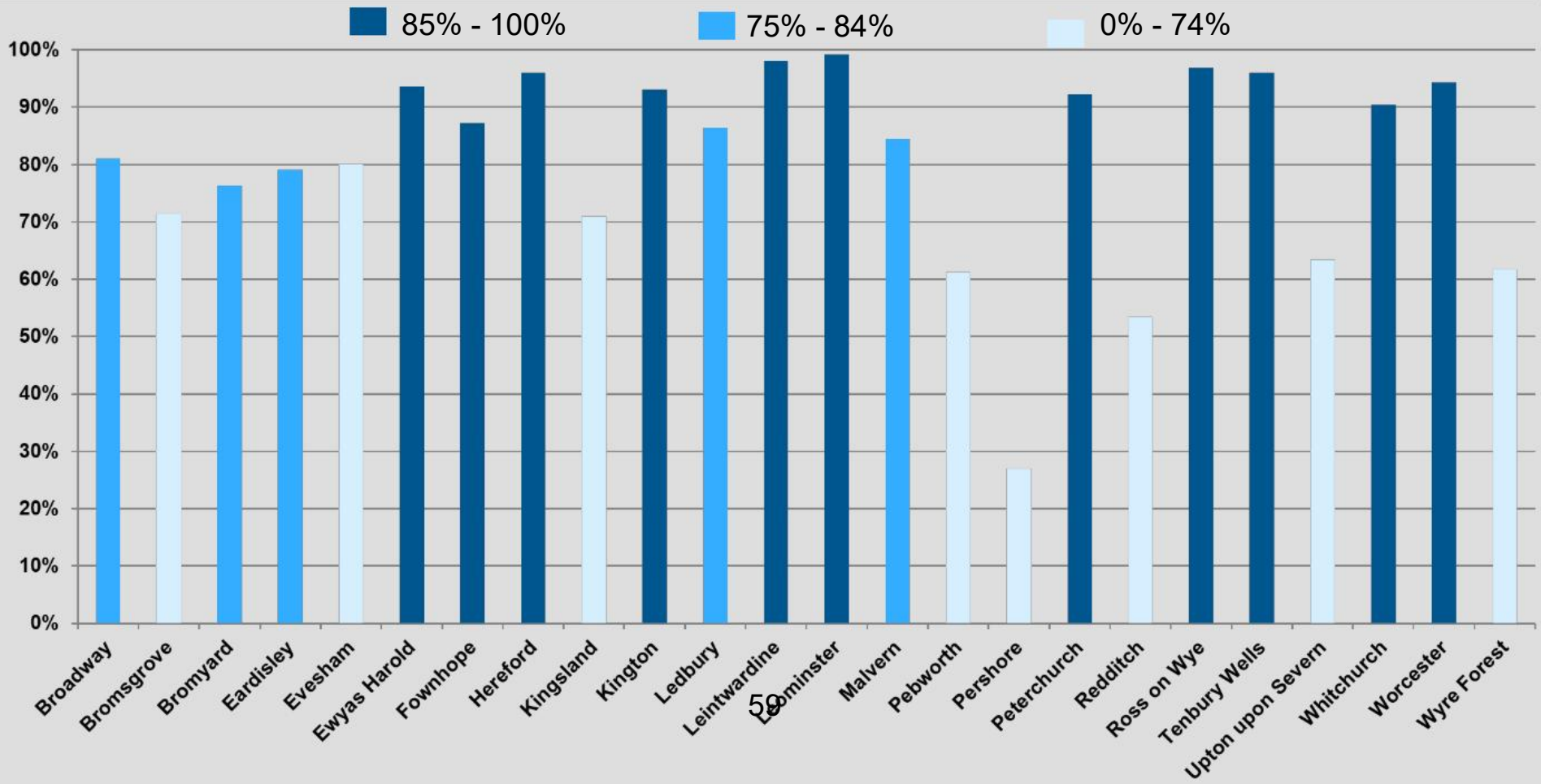
29
18
14

Response – On-Call Fire Engine Availability



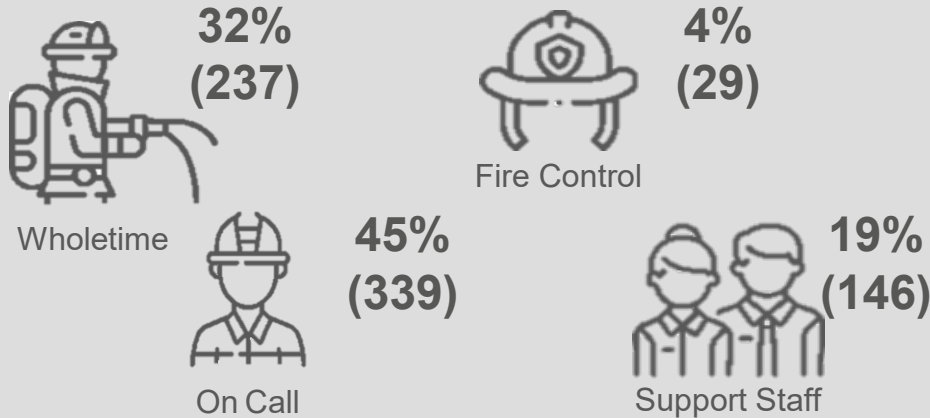
First On-Call Fire Engine **80.6%**

First On-Call Fire Engine Availability Q1 2025 to 2026

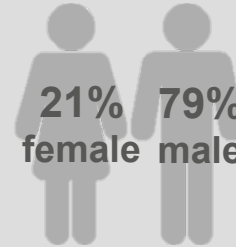


People

Overall Workforce Profile – 751 employees

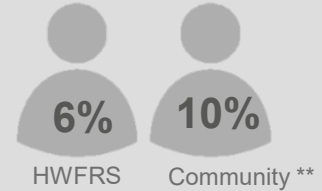


Equalities



Female representation has increased by 1% compared with Q1 2024 to 2025

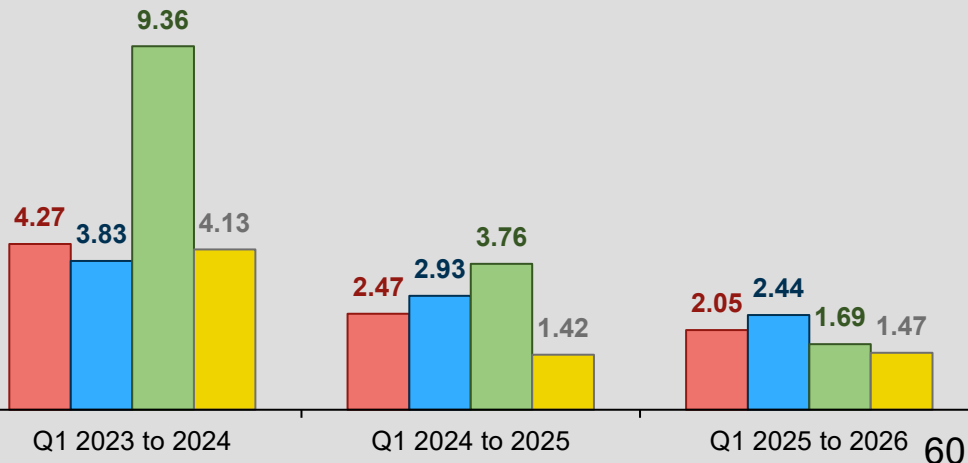
Ethnicity



Ethnic minority representation has increased by 1% when compared to Q1 2024 to 25

Days/Shifts Lost Per Person

■ All Staff ■ Wholetime ■ Fire Control ■ Support Staff



Days/Shifts Lost Per Person

(Long Term / Short Term Absence Detail)

	Whole time	Fire Control	Support Staff
Short Term Absence	0.83 40%	1.38 82%	0.59 40%
Long Term Absence *	1.22 60%	0.31 18%	0.88 60%

Top 3 Reasons for Absence

- Musculoskeletal – Lower Limb
- Hospital/Post Operative
- Mental Health – Stress

*Long Term Sickness is 28 calendar days or more

**Community Ethnic Minority has increased to 10% in Census 2021 from 7% in Census 2011