

Report of the Assistant Chief Officer - Director of Prevention

2023-24 Performance Report: Q3 (01 October – 31 December 2023)

Purpose of report

1. To summarise the Service's performance for Q3, 2023-24.
-

Recommendation

It is recommended that the details of the Q3 2023-24 performance headlines be noted, in particular that:

- i) A total of 2,076 incidents overall were attended in Q3 2023-24 which was an increase of 3% on Q3 2022-23.*
- ii) Fires (312) were 7% lower than Q3 2022-23 and lower than the five-year average of 344.*
- iii) Special services (699) were 4% higher than the corresponding quarter of the previous year and higher than the five-year average of 627.*
- iv) False alarms (1,065) were higher by 6% compared with Q3 2022-23 and above the five-year average of 872.*

Introduction and Background

2. The Service gathers performance data relating to incidents attended and activities carried out to report to the Policy and Resources Committee and the Strategic Leadership Board (SLB) on a quarterly basis. The Q3 2023-24 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 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 2021-25.

Incident Overview

4. A total of 2,076 incidents were attended in Q3 2023-24, an increase of 3% on Q3 2022-23 and an increase of 13% on the five-year average of 1,845 incidents. The Service also attended 16 'Over the Border' incidents during this quarter. More context is provided later in this report. However, analysis shows that this is made up of:

- a. 312 Fires: The number of fires attended in Q3 2023-24 was 7% lower than Q3 2022-23 and was also significantly lower than the five-year average of 344. Last year storms had significantly influenced and contributed to a decrease in the lower than usual number of outdoor fires.
- b. 699 Special Services: The number of Special Services attended in Q3 2023-24 was 4% higher than Q3 2022-23 and also higher than the five-year average of 627 incidents. This increase was mostly driven by a rise in the number of rescues or evacuation from water incidents as a result of the six storms recorded in Q3 2023-24 (storms Babet, Ciaran, Debi, Elin, Fergus and Gerrit).
- c. 1,065 False Alarms: The number of false alarms attended in Q3 was 6% higher than Q3 2022-23 and 22% higher than the five-year average of 872. These incidents fall into the following incident types: False alarm due to apparatus, False Alarm - Good intent and False Alarm - Malicious. This increase was mainly due to an increase in the number of False alarms due to apparatus by 9%. However, both Good Intent False Alarms and Malicious False Alarms have jointly decreased by 1% when compared to Q3 2022-23.

Prevention

5. 1,898 Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV) were completed in Q3 2023-24. This exceeds the quarterly target of 1,875 HFSVs per quarter. Out of 1,898 HFSVs, 469 were delivered by Prevention Technicians with 1,429 delivered by Wholetime crews. HFSVs are targeted at those at greater risk of fire based on data and analysis as outlined in the Prevention Strategy. Trends are monitored on a monthly basis and fed into adjusting and focusing prevention activity as required.

Protection

6. The Service continues to conduct the Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP) of business premises. In Q3 2023-24, 315 inspections were completed compared to 381 in Q3 2022-23. This represents a 17.32% decrease and is due to Protection staff realigning workloads in Q3 2022-23 to increase capacity in delivering other areas of Protection work in Q4 2022-23. However, the Fire Safety (Protection) Department remain on track to deliver their annual target of 1,000 Fire Safety inspections in 2023-24.
7. Whilst total Enforcement Activities have decreased by 39% compared to Q3 in 2022-23, this was due to scheduled building regulations training and continued professional development to maintain staff competence and ensure departmental resilience.

Enforcement Type	Q3 2023-24	Q3 2022-23
Alterations	1	5
Enforcements	2	10
Prohibitions	11	8
Total	14	23

8. All fires in commercial premises are subject to a Post Fire Audit and the number of audits has increased from 29 to 39 in Q3 2023-24, when compared to Q3 2022-23. The Service attended more building fires in Q3 2023-24 (an increase by 20 incidents, 16%) when compared to same period last year.
9. New building safety legislation was introduced on 1 October 2023 and the department have proactively identified business leads to highlight their fire safety responsibilities along with offering support and signposting to other assistance where needed. The department is proactively identifying business leads to support them in their fire safety responsibilities and offer assistance where needed.

Response

Fires

10. While the number of Primary Fires has not significantly changed (an increase by one incident), the number of Secondary Fires has decreased by 27% in Q3 2023-24 when compared to Q3 2022-23. Among the Primary Fires, the highest decrease was Vehicle and Transport Fires by 18%, whilst among the Secondary Fires the highest reduction was observed in the Other Outdoor (including land) Fires, decreasing by 44%.
11. Unfortunately, during this timeframe there were two fatalities in Primary Fires with a further three victims going to hospital where an injury appeared to be serious. Both of these fatalities concerned elderly persons (over 65 years of age).
12. 76% of the Primary Building Fires were classified as accidental with the highest percentage (42%) starting in the kitchen area. 31% of the property types for these incidents were recorded as a house of a single occupancy. For those incidents where household occupancy type was recorded, 42% concerned people leaving alone and 18% concerned person over pensionable age. This information is fed back into the Prevention and Protection departments to further focus relevant activity and for trend analysis.
13. There were five incidents in Q3 2023-24 where five or more pumps attended, two Primary Fire, two Special Service and one False Alarm incidents. Of these large incidents, two incidents occurred in Wyre Forest, one incident happened in Ledbury, Redditch and Pershore.
14. There was a 27% decrease in Secondary Fires from 94 in Q3 2022-23 to 69 in Q3 2023-24. With a minor exception of outdoor equipment and machinery fires,

all remaining property categories saw minor reduction in the number of fires attended when compared to the same period last year.

Special Services

15. The largest increase among Special Service incident types was rescue or evacuation from water. This incident category resulted in a 314% increase over the same period in 2022-23 and can be attributed to the storms recorded in Q3. The Animal assistance incident type saw the second highest increase of 53% over the same period in 2022-23.

Road Traffic Collisions

16. There were 165 Road Traffic Collision incidents during Q3 2023-24, 14% less when compared to the same period in 2022-23. However, the overall number of RTC incidents appears to be slightly declining when examining the last five years.
17. The number of fatalities resulting from RTC's in Q3 2023-24 was four and this was the same figure during the past three years for the same period of time. The number of serious injuries was similar to the same period in 2022-23 whereas the number of slight injuries has decreased by 16%. The number of occasions when first aid was given to casualties has increased by 64% (an increase by seven casualties) in Q3 2023-24 when compared to Q3 2022-23. Information related to RTC's is fed into the Prevention department for review and to inform future training and awareness activities.

Attendance Performance Measure

18. On 1 April 2023, the Service launched the Attendance Performance Measure (APM). The Service evaluates the time taken for the first appliance to get to a much wider range of incidents and compares that against the expected travel time over three time zones (10, 15 and 20 minutes). Q3 2023-24 is the third time the Service is reporting on this new measure, therefore there may be a need to adjust the way data is collected and analysed which will be monitored and reviewed regularly.
19. Incident types that usually attract an emergency response (blue light conditions) are mainly used for this report and these are then split into three time zones based upon the expected travel time from the station to the incident location. The use of the new APM now means that the Service is able to examine attendance at a far greater number of incidents providing a much larger range of useful data. The previous attendance standard would only have examined 149 incidents (primary building fires) in the Q3 2023-24, while the new APM has exceeded this by 192%.
20. Out of the 435 incidents examined this quarter, 296 (68%) met the APM. This equates to meeting the APM in:
 - a. Zone 1 (10 mins) on 100% out of 235 occasions.
 - b. Zone 2 (10-15 mins) on 39% out of 137 occasions.

- c. Zone 3 (15-20 mins) on 13% out of 63 occasions.
21. In this quarter, 54% of the incidents examined by the APM were in Zone 1 (10-minutes). Please note that the number of times an appliance had to attend an incident outside of its own station area was removed from the analysis.
 22. This is a very useful baseline for future analysis and comparison as the Service progresses through this reporting year. It also provides the Service with accurate data to identify areas of improvement when responding to emergencies.
 23. The three main reasons why the APM was not met during this quarter were:
 - a. Road obstruction/Traffic conditions etc (18 incidents).
 - b. Difficulty in locating incident address (15 incidents).
 - c. Traffic conditions causing delayed turn in time to stations (On-Call & Day Crewed only) (9 incidents).

The information has been passed on to Response managers who will review this data to ascertain which delays may be unavoidable and also to determine what learning outcomes and improvements can be made. This will ensure that the Service will understand the reasons, put in the relevant mitigations and improve response times where there is scope to make a difference.

On-Call Appliance Availability

24. The first On-Call appliance availability has decreased by 7.30% to 72.42% during Q3 2023-24, compared to the same quarter of 2022-23. Availability for all On-Call appliances fell by 5.22% to 63.98% in Q3 2023-24. For the first On-Call appliance 11 fire stations (44%) had over 85% availability. In comparison, 10 fire stations (40%) had over 85% availability over the same period in 2022-23. 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.

People

25. In terms of workforce diversity, the proportion of female staff remained the same level of 19% when compared to Q3 2022-23.
26. The 2021 Census data has recently been released and this has provided a more up-to-date picture of the Service's workforce profile. The population of ethnic minorities within the community has increased from 7% to 10%. Ethnic minority representation in the Service has slightly decreased when compared to the same period in 2022-23 and it is currently at 4% from 6%. The Service continues to monitor employment trends and in the coming year will focus on positive action for under-represented groups as well as exploring development opportunities to support career progression for women.

27. Overall absence due to staff sickness decreased slightly to 2.27 days lost per person compared to 2.52 days in the same period in Q3 2022-23. Input for managers is continuing on the recently updated Attendance Management Policy with an emphasis on early intervention and support. By putting measures in place early, this can influence the length of absence or even prevent the absence occurring e.g. welfare support or occupational health advice.
28. Wholetime and Fire Control staff groups both showed a decrease in sickness rates in comparison to the same period in 2022-23, while Support staff showed a small increase in sickness levels. In terms of the split between long-term and short-term absence, long-term absence represents 59% of all staff sickness absence in this quarter. Mental Health – Stress, Respiratory - Cold/Cough/Influenza and Genitourinary / Gynaecological/ Reproductive categories were the most significant reasons for absence in this quarter. These figures and trends are monitored by the Health & Safety Committee who meet on a quarterly basis.

Conclusion/Summary

29. Further information on the headlines set out above is included in Appendix 1.
30. The SLB will continue to receive performance reports and oversight of the measures being taken to address any issues arising. Where improvements are required any necessary action will be reported to the Policy and Resources Committee.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	The figures reported may change due to increasing scrutiny over the Command & Control, Incident Recording System, Community Fire Risk Management Information System and HR Connect, and improved data quality control measures put in place.
Strategic Policy Links & Core Code of Ethics (identify how proposals link with current priorities & policy framework and align to the Core Code of Ethics)	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. The data considered directly links with the ethical principle of Putting Our Communities First.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	Relevant data is fed into the Health & Safety Committee as appropriate.
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that	None.

has been carried out on this matter)	
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 3 2023-24