



# **HEREFORD & WORCESTER Fire Authority**

**Policy and Resources Committee**

## **AGENDA**

**Tuesday, 15 November 2022**

**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”;
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- 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.**

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**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 Committee

Tuesday, 15 November 2022, 10:30

### Agenda

Councillors

Mr R J Phillips (Chairman), Mr C B Taylor (Vice Chairman), Mr D Chambers, Mr A Ditta, Mr J Hardwick, Mrs K Hey, Ms J Monk, Mr D Morehead, Ms L Robinson, Mr L Stark, Mr R M Udall, Mr T Wells

No.	Item	Pages
1	<b>Apologies for Absence</b> To receive any apologies for absence.	
2	<b>Named Substitutes</b> To receive details of any Member of the Authority nominated to attend the meeting in place of a Member of the Committee.	
3	<b>Declarations of Interest (if any)</b> This item allows the Chairman to invite any Councillor to declare an interest in any of the items on this Agenda.	
4	<b>Confirmation of Minutes</b> To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 4 May 2022.	1 - 5
5	<b>Attendance Performance Measure – Public Consultation Report</b> To present the report of findings following public consultation on proposed changes to the Attendance Performance Measure.	6 - 37
6	<b>Budget Monitoring 2022/23 – Quarter 2</b> To inform Members of the current position on the revenue and capital budget for 2022/23.	38 - 44

<b>7</b>	<b>2022-23 Performance Report: Q2 (01 July – 30 September 2022)</b>	<b>45 - 61</b>
	This report summarises the Service's performance for Quarter 2, 2022-23.	
<b>8</b>	<b>Update from the Joint Consultative Committee</b>	<b>62 - 65</b>
	To inform the Committee of the activities of the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) since the last update provided on 4 May 2022.	



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Policy and Resources Committee

Wednesday, 04 May 2022,10:30

**Chairman: Mr R J Phillips**

**Vice-Chairman: Mr C B Taylor**

## **Minutes**

**Members Present:** Ms K S Guthrie, Mrs K Hey, Ms J Monk, Mr D Morehead, Mr R J Phillips, Ms L Robinson, Mr L Stark, Mr C B Taylor, Mr R M Udall, Mr T Wells

### **203 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr D Chambers.

### **204 Named Substitutes**

There were no named substitutes.

### **205 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).

### **206 Confirmation of Minutes**

The Chief Fire Officer announced to Members that Deputy Chief Fire Officer Keith Chance would be retiring from the Service in August. In preparation, AC Ade Elliott had been temporarily promoted to ACFO and GC Samantha Pink had been temporarily promoted to Area Commander. Both were present at the meeting and were introduced to Members. Sam was welcomed as a new member of the Senior Leadership Board.

***RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2022 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.***

**207 Budget Monitoring 2021/22 – Quarter 4**

The Treasurer presented Members with a view of the out-turn position on the revenue and capital budget for 2021/22. It was explained that this was an interim view, in advance of the Provisional Financial Out-turn report to the Fire Authority in June.

The Treasurer highlighted three areas where the revenue budget had been adjusted to £35.275m:

1. Allocation of funds from Fire Control reserve;
2. Tax income guarantee grant; and
3. Funding budgets.

*[Cllr L Robinson entered the meeting at 10.38am].*

With regard to Treasury management, the Treasurer confirmed that there had been no additional borrowing due to the Authority currently holding significant earmarked revenue reserves and capital receipts from the sale of the old HQ building in 2020/21 and the recent disposal of surplus assets in Bromsgrove, Bewdley and Stourport.

*[Cllr K Hey entered the meeting at 10.40am].*

A Member queried the underspend on Prevention following the requirement to carry out inspections by the HMICFRS. The Chief Fire Officer explained that this was due to the Service already holding a significant stock of smoke alarms which haven't been able to be restocked due to Covid. Members were assured that this underspend was for the procurement of the smoke alarms only.

The Chairman suggested that narrative be included in the June Fire Authority report recommending the underspend be added to the budget.

***RESOLVED that the Committee:***

- i) approves the revised core revenue budget at £35.276m;***
- ii) notes the net revenue and capital out-turn projections are still subject to change; and***
- iii) approves the principle that the additional rates grant is earmarked for the major building schemes.***

**208 Pensions Board Update (Fire Pension Schemes)**

ACFO Guy Palmer updated Members on the activities of the Pensions Board for the Firefighter Pension Schemes (FPS) to assist the Scheme

Manager in securing compliance with the Public Services Pensions Act 2013.

***RESOLVED that the following areas of progress were noted:***

***i) the Pensions Board continues to be compliant with the Public Services Pensions Act 2013.***

***ii) in line with the expectations of the Pensions Regulator, it was decided that the Pensions Board would move to four meetings per year.***

**209 Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement 2021/2022**

The Head of Legal Services presented Members with the draft Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement 2021/2022 for adoption which sets out the steps that the Authority have taken to prevent modern slavery in its supply chains and own business. The Statement relates to the financial year 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022.

Members noted that this was very much the first statement produced, future statements would show development and progression in this area.

Members sought assurances regarding the reporting process if staff came across incidents of concern. The Chief Fire Officer explained that arrangements would be similar to current safeguarding arrangements and that staff had received extensive training in this area. He highlighted that eight of the Service's flexible duty officers were designated as national inter-agency liaison officers and have the necessary contacts to report any concerns.

Members were pleased with the work to date and looked forward to receiving further updates.

***RESOLVED that the Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement 2021/2022 be approved and published on the Service website.***

**210 Young Firefighters Association**

The Chief Fire Officer presented Members with the current position of the Young Firefighters Association (YFA) and proposed a review to alter the delivery model prior to recommencement following the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions.

Members noted that moving to UK Fire Cadets would enable the group to take advantage of a nationally structured programme that was evolving and improving with current topics and lessons.

Members approved the move from YFA to UK Fire Cadets and noted that it would commence operating in September 2022, which would align with the start of the new academic year and would also allow sufficient time to implement any changes identified in the gap analysis.

It was agreed by Members that a Member Champion should be elected for HWFRS's UK Fire Cadets, as has in previous years, and this would be proposed at the Fire Authority meeting in June.

**RESOLVED that:**

***i) the existing Young Firefighters Association (YFA) be replaced by the NFCC endorsed format UK Fire Cadets, with a branch based at Droitwich Fire Station.***

***ii) a Member Champion be proposed at the Fire Authority meeting in June.***

**211 Property Services Update**

***RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded for the duration of this item on the grounds that the information to be discussed would likely involve the disclosure of exempt information namely the business affairs of any person including the Authority.***

ACFO Ade Elliott presented Members with an update on the current property programme.

Members noted that there were currently four new build schemes being planned/developed, including; Broadway Fire Station, Redditch Fire Station, Hereford Fire Station and a Strategic Training Facility in north Herefordshire. Planned and reactive property maintenance continues across the Service's estate. Site disposal of the former fire station sites at Windsor Street Bromsgrove, Bewdley and Stourport had been completed and Kidderminster continued to be progressed.

Members were assured that the Treasurer was building in contingency funds in anticipation of the current capital build programme due to the inflationary pressures being seen across the building sector. Members would be updated as projects developed, notably Redditch and Hereford fire station builds.

*[Cllr D Morehead left the meeting at 11.34am].*

**RESOLVED that:**

***i) the property update and progress was noted, and***

*ii) the budget allocation for redevelopment of Broadway Fire Station be increased to the amount shown in Appendix 1 [CONFIDENTIAL - Not For Publication].*

**212 2021-22 Performance Report: Q3 (01 October – 31 December 2021)**

ACFO Guy Palmer presented Members with a report summarising the Service's performance for Quarter 3, 2021-22.

Following Members' concern with on call availability, the Chief Fire Officer assured Members that there were only a handful of Services that had a high level of availability like HWFRS.

Members noted that the new attendance measure would outline all details for on call stations, including availability and number of incidents attended.

***RESOLVED that the Q3 2021-22 performance report be noted.***

**213 Update from the Joint Consultative Committee**

ACFO Guy Palmer updated Members of the activities of the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) since the last update provided on 26 January 2022.

Members noted the current issues under discussion with employee representatives.

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

1. ***The Mental Health at Work Commitment***
2. ***Hybrid Working Trial***
3. ***Day Crewed Duty System Review***
4. ***Policies***
5. ***Job Evaluation***
6. ***12 Hour Day Duty System trial at Hereford Fire Station***
7. ***Review of Corporate Communications***

The Meeting ended at: 11:54

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman

## Report of the Assistant Director: Prevention

### Attendance Performance Measure – Public Consultation Report

#### Purpose of report

1. To present the report of findings following public consultation on proposed changes to the Attendance Performance Measure.
- 

#### Recommendation

*That the Fire Authority be recommended to:*

*(i) approve the proposed changes to the Attendance Performance Measure;*

*(ii) adopt a revised Attendance Performance Measure which:*

- *removes call handling time from the calculation;*
- *measures performance across three travel time zones (10, 15 and 20 minutes travel time from each fire station); and*
- *measures performance across a broader range of emergency incidents rather than just fires in buildings*

#### Introduction and Background

2. At their meeting on 15 February 2022, the Fire Authority gave approval to commence public consultation on changes to the Attendance Performance Measure, as proposed in the Community Risk Management Plan 2021-2025.
3. Independent consultants, Opinion Research Services (ORS) conducted the consultation over the summer of 2022 and their 'Final report of findings' was submitted in October 2022. The report is attached as Appendix 1.

#### Public Consultation on the Attendance Performance Measure – Final Report of Findings

4. The proposed changes to the Attendance Performance Measure aim to give communities a clearer and more realistic picture of the response times they can expect for a wider range of incidents in relation to where they live.
5. The public consultation considered three main changes:
  - a. to **remove call handling time** from the calculation. Attendance times will be measured from the time Fire Control alerts the fire station to respond to an incident to the time of arrival of the first fire engine.

- b. to measure performance across **three travel time zones** (10, 15 and 20 minutes travel time from each fire station) rather than a blanket 10 minute target as at present.
  - c. to measure performance across a **broader range of emergency incidents** (such as fires, road traffic collisions and flooding) rather than just fires in buildings.
6. All three changes were largely supported by those responding to the consultation and a revised Attendance Performance Measure will be drawn up to incorporate the changes. Researchers from ORS will be present at your meeting to give a brief summary of their findings and to answer any questions.

### Conclusion/Summary

7. Public consultation on the Attendance Performance Measure has found good public support for the proposed changes. Your Committee is asked to recommend the Fire Authority to approve a revised Attendance Performance Measure incorporating the above changes at their meeting on 12 December 2022.

### Corporate Considerations

<b>Resource Implications</b> (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	None.
<b>Strategic Policy Links</b> (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	A review of the Attendance Performance Measure was proposed in the Community Risk Management Plan 2021-2025.
<b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	N/A
<b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Public consultation on proposed changes to the Attendance Performance Measure has been undertaken.
<b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	An EIA is not required for this report.

<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b> (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)	Not required – no personal data is identified
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### **Supporting Information**

Appendix 1 – Public Consultation on the Attendance Performance Measure – Final report of findings, Opinion Research Services, October 2022.



HEREFORD & WORCESTER  
**HWFR**  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

# Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service

## Public Consultation on the Attendance Performance Measure

### Final report of findings

Opinion Research Services

October 2022

# Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service: Public Consultation on the Attendance Performance Measure

## Final report of findings

Opinion Research Services

October 2022

## Opinion Research Services

The Strand • Swansea • SA1 1AF

01792 535300 | [www.ors.org.uk](http://www.ors.org.uk) | [info@ors.org.uk](mailto:info@ors.org.uk)

As with all our studies, findings from this report are subject to Opinion Research Services' Standard Terms and Conditions of Contract.

Any press release or publication of the findings of this report requires the advance approval of ORS. Such approval will only be refused on the grounds of inaccuracy or misrepresentation

This version of the report will be deemed to have been accepted by the client if ORS has not been informed of any amendments within a reasonable period of time (1 month)

This study was conducted in accordance with ISO 20252:2019, ISO 9001:2015, and ISO 27001:2013.

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# The ORS Project Team

## Overall project design and management

Kelly Lock

## Questionnaire design and implementation

Catherine Wall

Alex Hymer

## Focus group facilitation

Kelly Lock

Bryony Wilson

## Analysis and reporting

Kelly Lock

Catherine Wall

Richard Harris

Bryony Wilson

# 1. Executive Summary

## The commission

- 1.1 Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) is proposing changes to its Attendance Performance Measure, which is one way in which its performance is monitored and measured. The Measure helps HWFRS analyse how long it takes to reach emergency incidents and to identify where improvements might be made.
- 1.2 In order to understand views on these proposed changes, a formal consultation was undertaken by the Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority (HWFA) between 8<sup>th</sup> July and 16<sup>th</sup> September 2022. HWFA and HWFRS commissioned Opinion Research Services (ORS) to undertake a programme of key consultation activities and to report respondents' views, gathered through an open consultation questionnaire and two focus groups with members of the public. In total, 74 questionnaire responses were received; and 13 residents attended the two focus groups. In addition, a written submission was received from the Fire Brigades Union.

## Main findings

- 1.3 The following sections summarise the main consultation findings. However, readers are referred to the chapters that follow for a full account of people's views.

### Should call handling time be included in the Attendance Performance Measure?

#### Outline

- When a 999 call is made, it is answered by a Fire Control firefighter, who will ask about the nature of the emergency and the location of the incident, before alerting the appropriate fire engines and crews to respond. The time taken between a 999 call being answered by Fire Control and the fire engine and crews being alerted is the 'call-handling time'
- The current Attendance Performance Measure includes 'call-handling time', as well as 'crew turn out time' (the time taken between crews being alerted to the incident, and when they leave the station) and 'travel time' (the time taken between crews leaving the station, and when they arrive at the incident)

#### Proposal

- Attendance times would be measured from the time Fire Control alerts the fire station to respond to an incident to the arrival of a fire engine, in line with national guidance
- 'Call-handling time' would still be measured and reported separately
- The rationale is that it will provide more of a level playing field, as the 'call-handling time' can be affected by factors that are out of the Service's control. It will also allow a better comparison with many other Fire Services who also do not include call-handling time

- 14 There was strong support for removing ‘call-handling time’ from the Attendance Performance Measure from those giving a personal response to the open questionnaire; around three quarters (76%) agreed with the proposal, with more than half (55%) strongly agreeing. Those who said they work for Hereford and Worcester FRS were more likely than all respondents to agree with this proposal.
- 15 Most focus group participants recognised that the call handling time can be affected by issues outside the Service’s control and agreed that it should start on alerting the relevant station crew/s. This, it was felt, would allow the call handler sufficient time to gather and digest the information they are receiving from the caller, which can sometimes take time – and would enable HWFRS to focus on the element of the Measure that is within its remit to improve. It was considered crucial, though, that HWFRS continue to record, analyse, and report the call handling time separately in future to identify any potential issues and areas for improvement.
- 16 In its written submission, the FBU strongly disagreed with the proposal to remove the call handling time from the Attendance Performance Measure and start the clock from the point of mobilisation on the grounds that: the Home Office measures attendance at incidents that includes all three elements (call handling, reaction time to mobilise, and travel time), and it is a technique designed to “mitigate poor performance” and meet response time Key Performance Indicators (KPI’s).

## Should response times be measured by travel zones?

### Outline

- HWFRS wants to give residents a clearer picture of how long it might take a fire engine to arrive at an emergency incident depending on where they live
- The Service has estimated how far a fire engine is likely to be able to travel to an incident within 10 minutes, 15 minutes and 20 minutes of a fire station. The calculation also took account of the location of each fire station and their crewing
- Further calculations showed that about 74% of households live within the 10 minutes travel zone around each fire station; about 22% live within the 15 minutes travel zone; and most of the remaining 4% live within the 20 minutes travel zone

### Proposal

- The proposed new Measure for the arrival of the first fire engine at an incident would be measured across three travel time zones to provide residents with a realistic measurement of real-life expected attendance times: Travel Zone 1 – within 10 minutes; Travel Zone 2 – within 15 minutes; Travel Zone 3 – within 20 minutes
- The proposed new measure is similar to that already in place in Shropshire FRS (SFRS) and was devised jointly by HWFRS and SFRS as part of their strategic alliance activities. Adopting this measure would, it was felt, help ensure a more consistent approach across both Services
- There are a very small number of areas outside the 20 minutes travel zone. Prevention and community safety activity would be carried out in these areas

- 1.7 Respondents to the open questionnaire were generally in support of the proposal to measure the Attendance Performance Measure across three travel time zones; almost four fifths (79%) of respondents giving a personal response agreed with the proposal, with almost half (48%) strongly agreeing.
- 1.8 In the focus groups, there was general recognition that HWFRS can get to some geographical areas quicker than others depending on distance from, and crewing arrangements at, the nearest fire station. As such, it was agreed that having a ‘blanket’ ten-minute Attendance Performance Measure is inappropriate. In light of this, there was widespread support for the proposal to separate the Attendance Performance Measure into 10-, 15- and 20- minute zones. This was considered more representative and transparent, and important in managing expectations and raising awareness of potential wait times in rural areas – as well as the corresponding need to implement protective measures.
- 1.9 One of the perceived benefits of the proposed change was that people would have a much clearer idea of how long they might expect to wait in the event of an emergency incident. It was thus strongly suggested (at the Worcestershire group in particular), that if the new Measure is approved, it should be well publicised to all those living and working in the two counties. However, it was said that care will need to be taken with the messaging so as not to exacerbate any concerns among those living within and especially just outside the 20-minute zone.
- 1.10 The FBU, however, disagreed with the creation of a “postcode lottery” for emergency response, stating that the integrated risk management planning process is designed to determine the necessary speed and weight of response according to the type of risk. Therefore, properties of a similar nature, be it residential or commercial, should expect the same attendance standard.
- 1.11 The FBU also questioned the method used to predict and map attendance times, which it says has neither taken account of historical attendance times over a period of time, nor considered the availability of the fire engines in different areas. Furthermore, the FBU says that the travel time analysis/mapping does not appear to consider: risk information; the effect of road closures; congestion due to the time of day or natural features, such as rivers and hills; or the resources required to adequately deal with a range of incidents.

## Should a broader range of emergency incidents be measured?

### Outline

- Since 2009-10, the Service’s Attendance Performance Measure has only been calculated for fires in buildings (‘primary building fires’). However, the Service now attends a much broader range of incidents.

### Proposal

- HWFRS is proposing that the Service’s Attendance Performance Measure is extended to include a broader range of emergency incidents (such as fires, road traffic collisions and flooding incidents) instead of only ‘primary building fires’.

- 1.12 Of all the proposals, the one to extend the Service’s Attendance Performance Measure to include a broader range of incidents instead of only ‘primary building fires’ received the highest level of support from personal respondents to the questionnaire; the vast majority (95%) of all respondents agreed with

this proposal, with around four fifths (81%) strongly agreeing. However, a preference for only including more serious or life-threatening incidents in the Measure, was also flagged by one respondent.

- 1.13 Focus group participants also overwhelmingly supported the proposal to measure attendance to a broader range of incidents, particularly considering only 7.2% of incidents are currently being measured. This, it was felt, would allow the Service to undertake a much more nuanced analysis of its current attendance times, and determine what resources it might need to make improvements. Indeed, there was some feeling that this should have been done some time ago given the much broader remit of the fire and rescue service nowadays.
- 1.14 When asked what types of incidents they would like or expect to see measured, participants offered mixed views. Some supported measuring attendance times to *all* incidents, resources permitting, on the basis that ‘the more information, the better the understanding’. More, though, preferred a more targeted approach that measures only those incidents that threaten life, property and/or the environment. Ultimately, though, participants were happy to *“leave it to the Fire and Rescue Service to decide what is appropriate to measure and if they want a wider range of measurements... It should be left to the experts to know what to measure.”* (Herefordshire)
- 1.15 The FBU felt that the Attendance Performance Measure should apply to all incident types where there is a foreseeable risk to the lives of the public and firefighters.

## 2. The Consultation Process

### Background to the project

- 2.1 Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) is proposing changes to its Attendance Performance Measure, which is one way in which its performance is monitored and measured. The Measure helps HWFRS analyse how long it takes to reach emergency incidents and to identify where improvements might be made.
- 2.2 The Service's current Attendance Performance Measure was introduced in 2009. Since then, there have been changes to road networks, the level of traffic congestion and traffic calming measures; and it is recognised that the current measure does not take into account the difference between incidents in city centres and more rural locations, or the range of incidents that the Service attends. As such, it is no longer considered a meaningful tool and HWFRS is proposing a new approach to measuring and reporting attendance performance. A revised Attendance Performance Measure will, it is felt, provide managers, elected members, and local communities with a much clearer picture of the emergency incident response for the area in which they live. The data collected will also allow analysts to analyse where performance falls short of expectations, enabling review and improvement.

### The Commission

- 2.3 In order to understand views on these proposed changes, a formal consultation was undertaken by the Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority (HWFA) between 8<sup>th</sup> July and 16<sup>th</sup> September 2022. HWFA and HWFRS commissioned Opinion Research Services (ORS) to undertake a programme of key consultation activities and to report respondents' views, gathered through an open consultation questionnaire and two focus groups with members of the public.
- 2.4 Participants were mainly asked about the proposals to:
  - Remove the 'call handling time' from the measure
  - Measure attendance performance across three travel time zones
  - Extend the measure to include a broader range of incidents.
- 2.5 In total, 74 questionnaire responses were received; and 13 residents attended the two focus groups. In addition, a written submission was received from the Fire Brigades Union.
- 2.6 The 10-week formal consultation period gave residents, staff, and other stakeholders sufficient time to participate, and through its consultation document, HWFRS sought to provide people with sufficient information to understand the issues under consideration and to make informed judgements about them.

### Consultation questionnaire

- 2.7 A consultation document outlining the issues under consideration was produced by HWFRS. Using this as a basis, ORS and HWFRS designed a questionnaire including a series of core questions, as well as sections inviting respondents to make further comments and demographic profiling questions.

- 2.8 The questionnaire was available online (via a link from the HWFRS website) and in paper format between 8<sup>th</sup> July and 16<sup>th</sup> September 2022. In total, 74 questionnaires were completed, all of which were submitted online.
- 2.9 Nine respondents chose not to provide profiling information, however of the remaining 65, most responses (62) were from individuals, and the tables that appear without commentary below and on the following page show the unweighted profiles of the responses to the survey provided by personal respondents (please note that the figures may not always sum to 100% due to rounding).

**Table 1: Age – All respondents who gave a personal response**

Age	Number of respondents (Unweighted)	% of respondents (Unweighted)
Under 45	23	39
45-54	22	37
55 or over	14	24
Not Known	3	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 2: Gender – All respondents who gave a personal response**

Gender	Number of respondents (Unweighted)	% of respondents (Unweighted)
Male	31	54
Female	23	40
Other	3	5
Not Known	5	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 3: Disability – All respondents who gave a personal response**

Disability	Number of respondents (Unweighted)	% of respondents (Unweighted)
Yes	8	14
No	48	86
Not Known	6	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 4: Ethnic Group – All respondents who gave a personal response**

Ethnic group	Number of respondents (Unweighted)	% of respondents (Unweighted)
White British	50	88
Any other ethnic group	7	12
Not Known	5	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 5: Working for HWFRS – All respondents who gave a personal response**

Do you work for Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service?	Number of respondents (Unweighted)	% of respondents (Unweighted)
Yes	32	59
No	22	41
Not Known	8	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 6: Area – All respondents who gave a personal response**

Area	Number of respondents (Unweighted)	% of respondents (Unweighted)
Herefordshire	26	50
Worcestershire	26	50
Not Known	10	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100</b>

- 2.10 In addition, 3 valid responses were received from the following organisations:
- Finstall Parish Council
  - Eardisland Parish Council
  - 1 organisation – no name provided
- 2.11 Responses submitted on behalf of organisations can differ in nature to those submitted by personal responses from members of the public if, for example, they represent the collective views of a number of different people or raise very specific issues. For this reason, ORS typically reports the consultation responses from organisations separately to those of personals.
- 2.12 It should be noted that while open questionnaires are important consultation routes that are accessible to almost everyone, they are not ‘surveys’ of the public. Whereas surveys require proper sampling of a given population, open questionnaires are distributed unsystematically or adventitiously, and are more likely to be completed by motivated people while also being subject to influence by local campaigns. As such, because the respondent profile (as outlined in the full report) is an imperfect reflection of the Herefordshire and Worcestershire populations, its results must be interpreted carefully. This does not mean that the open questionnaire findings should be discounted: they are analysed in detail in this report and must be taken into account as a demonstration of the views of residents who were motivated to put forward their views.

## Interpretation of the data

- 2.13 Where percentages do not sum to 100, this may be due to computer rounding, the exclusion of ‘don’t know’ categories, or multiple answers.
- 2.14 Where differences between demographic groups have been highlighted as significant there is a 95% probability that the difference is significant and not due to chance. Differences that are not said to be ‘significant’ or ‘statistically significant’ are indicative only. When comparing results between demographic sub-groups, overall, only results which are significantly different are highlighted in the text.
- 2.15 The example comments shown throughout the report have been selected as being typical of those received in relation to each proposal.

- 2.16 Charts are used in this report to make it as user friendly as possible. The charts show the proportions (percentages) of respondents making relevant responses. Where possible, the colours of the charts have been standardised with:
- Green shades to represent positive responses (e.g., agreement)
  - Beige shades to represent neutral responses (neither positive nor negative)
  - Red shades to represent negative responses (e.g., disagreement)
- 2.17 The numbers on charts are percentages indicating the proportions of respondents who gave a particular response on a given question.
- 2.18 The number of valid responses recorded for each question (base size) are reported throughout in parentheses. ‘Don’t know’ responses have been treated as invalid when calculating percentages.

## Duplicate and Co-ordinated Responses

- 2.19 It is important that engagement questionnaires are open and accessible to all, whilst being alert to the possibility of multiple completions (by the same people) distorting the analysis. Therefore, while making it easy to complete the questionnaire online, ORS monitors the IP addresses through which questionnaires are completed. A similar analysis of ‘cookies’ was also undertaken – where responses originated from users on the same computer using the same browser and the same credentials (e.g., user account).

## Resident focus groups

- 2.20 Two online focus groups were undertaken with a diverse and broadly representative cross-section of residents across Herefordshire and Worcestershire.
- 2.21 The meetings used a ‘deliberative’ approach that encourages participants to reflect in depth about the fire and rescue service, while both receiving and questioning background information and discussing their ideas in detail. The focus groups began, for the sake of context, with a concise review of HWFRS’s resources and incident levels, before the consultation issues were considered. Discussion was stimulated via a presentation devised by ORS and HWFRS - and participants were encouraged to ask any questions they wished throughout the discussions.

## Attendance and representation

- 2.22 The focus groups were designed to inform and ‘engage’ participants with the discussion issues. The meetings lasted for 1.5 hours and were attended as below in Table 7.

**Table 7: Focus groups (area, time and date and number of attendees)**

Area	Time and Date	Number of Attendees
Worcestershire	Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> August 2022 6:30pm - 8:00pm	7
Herefordshire	Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup> August 2022 6:30pm - 8:00pm	6
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>13</b>

- 2.23 The attendance target for the focus groups was at least six people, which was achieved in both cases. Overall, the 13 participants who took part represented a broad cross-section of residents from the local areas. Once initially recruited, all participants were then written to, to confirm the invitation and the arrangements; and those who agreed to come then received telephone or written reminders shortly before each meeting. As standard good practice, people were recompensed for their time and efforts in taking part.
- 2.24 Although, like all other forms of qualitative consultation, focus groups cannot be certified as statistically representative samples of public opinion, the meetings reported here gave diverse groups of people from the two counties the opportunity to participate. Because the recruitment was inclusive and participants were diverse, we are satisfied that the outcomes of the meeting (as reported below) are broadly indicative of how informed opinion would incline based on similar discussions.

## Written submissions

- 2.25 During the formal consultation process, a written submission was received from the Fire Brigades Union (FBU). ORS has read and summarised this in the report.

## The report

- 2.26 This report summarises the feedback received during the consultation period. ORS does not endorse any opinions but seeks only to portray them accurately and clearly; our role is to analyse and explain the opinions and arguments of the different interests participating in the consultation, but not to 'make a case' for any particular point of view. In this report, we seek to profile the opinions, views, and arguments of those who have responded, but not to make any recommendations as to how the reported results should be used. Whilst this report brings together a range of data to be considered, decisions must be taken based on all the evidence available.

# 3. Key findings

## Introduction

- 3.1 The following chapter reports the findings from the open questionnaire, the two public focus groups and the written submission from the FBU. The chapter has been structured to address each of the areas of discussion in some detail, and in order to differentiate verbatim quotations from other information, they are in indented italics within text boxes.

## Main Findings

### Should call handling time be included in the Attendance Performance Measure?

#### Outline

- When a 999 call is made, it is answered by a Fire Control firefighter, who will ask about the nature of the emergency and the location of the incident, before alerting the appropriate fire engines and crews to respond. The time taken between a 999 call being answered by Fire Control and the fire engine and crews being alerted is the 'call-handling time'
- The current Attendance Performance Measure includes 'call-handling time', as well as 'crew turn out time' (the time taken between crews being alerted to the incident, and when they leave the station) and 'travel time' (the time taken between crews leaving the station, and when they arrive at the incident)

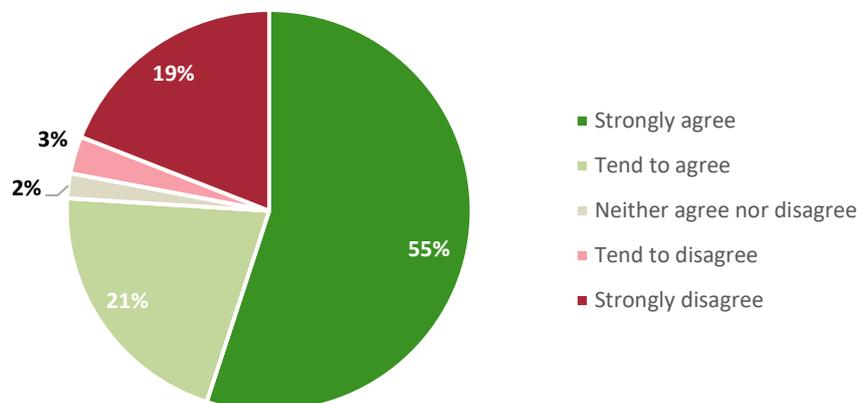
#### Proposal

- Attendance times would be measured from the time Fire Control alerts the fire station to respond to an incident to the arrival of a fire engine, in line with national guidance
- 'Call-handling time' would still be measured and reported separately
- The rationale is that it will provide more of a level playing field, as the 'call-handling time' can be affected by factors that are out of the Service's control. It will also allow a better comparison with many other Fire Services who also do not include call-handling time

## Open questionnaire

- 3.2 Figure 1 shows that there is strong support for HWFRS' proposal to remove the 'call handling time' from the Attendance Performance Measure with around three quarters (76%) of respondents giving a personal response agreeing with this, and more than half (55%) strongly agreeing. However, almost a quarter (23%) disagreed, with around a fifth (19%) strongly disagreeing.

**Figure 1: To what extent do you agree or disagree that ‘call handling times’ should be removed from the Service’s Attendance Performance Measure so that attendance times are now measured from the point of mobilisation to the arrival of the first fire engine?**



**Base: All respondents giving a personal response (62)**

- 3.3 If the open questionnaire results for this question are analysed by sub-group, it can be seen that the level of agreement varies between different groups (Table 8 below). Respondents who are female, those who have no disabilities, those who are White British and those who work for Hereford & Worcester FRS are all significantly more likely to agree with the proposal to remove ‘call handling time’ from the Attendance Performance Measure, while those who do not work for Hereford & Worcester FRS are significantly more likely to disagree with this proposal.

**Table 8: Differences by sub-group – Proposal to remove ‘call handling time’ from the Attendance Performance Measure.**

Significantly more likely to <u>agree</u>	Significantly more likely to <u>disagree</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Female</li> <li>• No disability</li> <li>• White British</li> <li>• Work for HWFRS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not work for HWFRS</li> </ul>

- 3.4 Of the three organisations who answered this question, one strongly agreed with the proposal to remove ‘call handling time’ from the Measure, one tended to agree and one neither agreed nor disagreed.

### Resident focus groups

- 3.5 When asked, almost all focus group participants said that prior to coming along to the session, they would have expected the Attendance Performance Measure to start as soon as a Fire Control firefighter picks up a call. As such, they were initially surprised to learn that HWFRS is proposing to remove it from the Measure.

*“From the moment I recognise that the incident has [started], from my point of view, the clock is ticking. I would have thought that was an integral part of the response time and I hear what you are saying about measuring it separately, but I just feel as an end user that that is part of my expected response time” (Worcestershire)*

- 3.6 After discussion, however, most participants recognised that the call handling time can be affected by issues outside the Service’s control and agreed that it should start on alerting the relevant station crew/s.

*“I don’t think it should be included in that final time. I think it should be from when the information has been relayed correctly from them... I can see [the] point that in my head it would be from when I pick up the phone, but... it should be from the moment the information is clearly relayed and there are clear instructions” (Worcestershire)*

- 3.7 This, it was felt, would allow the call handler sufficient time to gather and digest the information they are receiving from the caller, which can sometimes take time – and would enable HWFRS to focus on the element of the Measure that is within its remit to improve.

*“I feel that it could take someone 60 seconds before they have actually said where and what the issue is and then you are getting penalised... for something [you] can’t control... Some people will be really quick to say, ‘This is the address, and this is the issue’, whereas other people might take longer and that’s not an accurate representation of the actual time it has taken, if you include it” (Worcestershire)*

*“I think it’s a very reasonable thing to do... The time it takes from the call to get to the FRS is one thing. You can’t really improve on that because it depends on the people you are actually talking to... trying to get answers out of some people is impossible... I am in full agreement with this change” (Herefordshire)*

*“I get the fire service taking out something they have no control over to measure something they do have control over...” (Worcestershire)*

- 3.8 It was considered crucial, though, that HWFRS continue to pay close attention to the call handling time in future to identify any potential issues and areas for improvement.

*“... How they get their information and how long it takes to get... to where they need to be ... It is important to gather the information as to what has been said and what processes have [been] gone through to get to the stage of when they were dispatched. So, I think time is crucial and I think emphasis [should be] put on that particular process to try, in time, hopefully to speed that up...” (Worcestershire)*

- 3.9 Only one participant across the two groups opposed the proposed removal of the call handling time after discussion on the grounds that it forms an “integral” part of the Measure, and that its exclusion could be seen as a means of trying to meet unachievable targets.

*“Working in the NHS, I am well aware of targets, and we know that targets often get requested to be changed when they are unachievable, and we need to provide a better way of what we are reporting and trying to achieve. I am just worried that that actually leads to a deterioration in the way that we end up with our numbers and our reporting...” (Worcestershire)*

- 3.10 Overall, then, as long as the call handling time continues to be recorded, analysed, and reported separately, the majority of participants were content with its removal from the Attendance Performance Measure.

*“As long as both aspects are being recorded and analysed then for the general public... it makes no difference for them and it’s easier for the fire service” (Herefordshire)*

### Written submission from the FBU

- 3.11 The FBU strongly disagrees with the proposal to remove the call handling time from the Attendance Performance Measure and start the clock from the point of mobilisation on the grounds that:
- The Home Office measures attendance at incidents that includes all three elements: call handling; reaction time to mobilise; and travel time

*“... Measuring only the reaction and travel time is misleading and in contradiction of the statistics the Home Office produce each year” (FBU)*

- It is a technique designed to “mitigate poor performance” and meet response time Key Performance Indicators (KPI’s)
- 3.12 The FBU also says that crewing levels in Fire Control are frequently below the Service’s minimum level of three which, along with a large volume of calls, will have an impact on call handling time. This problem, it is felt, needs to be resolved by employing more Fire Control staff, not by removing the call handling time from the attendance standard.

## Should response times be measured by travel zones?

### Outline

- HWFRS wants to give residents a clearer picture of how long it might take a fire engine to arrive at an emergency incident depending on where they live
- To do this, the Service has estimated how far a fire engine is likely to be able to travel to an incident within 10 minutes, 15 minutes and 20 minutes of a fire station. The calculation also took account of the location of each HWFRS fire station and how they are crewed
- A further calculation showed that about 74% of households live within the 10 minutes travel zone around each fire station; about 22% live within the 15 minutes travel zone; and the vast majority of the remaining 4% live within the 20 minutes travel zone

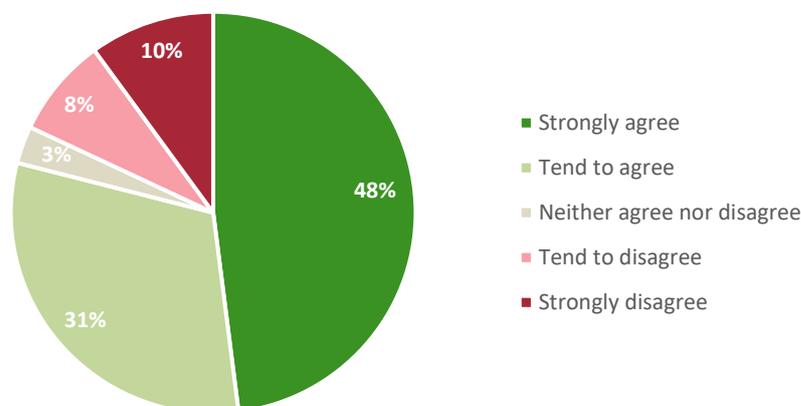
### Proposal

- The proposed new Attendance Performance Measure for the arrival of the first fire engine at an incident would be measured across three travel time zones to provide residents with a realistic measurement of real-life expected attendance times
  - Travel Zone 1 – within 10 minutes
  - Travel Zone 2 – within 15 minutes
  - Travel Zone 3 – within 20 minutes
- The proposed new measure is similar to that already in place in Shropshire FRS (SFRS) and was devised jointly by HWFRS and SFRS as part of their strategic alliance activities. Adopting this measure would, it was felt, help ensure a more consistent approach across both Services
- There are a very small number of areas outside the 20 minutes travel zone. Prevention and community safety activity would be carried out in these areas

### Open questionnaire

- 3.13 Figure 2 shows that there is also strong support for the proposal to measure the Attendance Performance Measure across three travel time zones; almost four fifths (79%) of respondents giving a personal response agreed with the proposal, with almost half (48%) strongly agreeing. However, almost 1 in 5 (18%) disagreed with this proposal, with 1 in 10 (10%) strongly disagreeing.

**Figure 2: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Attendance Performance Measure should be measured across three travel time zones?**



**Base: All respondents giving a personal response (62)**

- 3.14 If the questionnaire results for this question are analysed by sub-group, it can be seen that the level of agreement varies between different groups (Table 9 below). Respondents who are female, those who have no disabilities, those who are White British and those who work for Hereford & Worcester FRS are all significantly more likely to agree with the proposal to measure the Attendance Performance Measure across three travel time zones, while those who do not work for Hereford & Worcester FRS are significantly less likely to agree with this proposal.

**Table 9: Differences by sub-group – Proposal to measure the Attendance Performance Measure across three travel time zones.**

Significantly more likely to <u>agree</u>	Significantly less likely to <u>agree</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Female</li> <li>• No disability</li> <li>• White British</li> <li>• Work for HWFRS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not work for HWFRS</li> </ul>

- 3.15 All three organisations who answered this question agreed with the proposal to measure the Attendance Performance Measure across three travel time zones; two strongly agreed and one tended to agree.
- 3.16 Respondents to the open questionnaire were asked if they had any further comments on the proposals and a few made comments specifically in relation to the proposal to measure the Attendance Performance Measure over three travel time zones. Those who commented were generally concerned that this change would have a negative impact, particularly on rural areas; one respondent suggested that fastest attendance times should be based on the severity of the incident rather than the geographical location and another felt that 10 minutes is too long for a vehicle to arrive at an emergency. There was also a concern that slower response targets for non-urban areas would result in poor performance in these areas not being highlighted.

*“I disagree with the 10, 15 and 20 minutes attendance time concept. Surely the fastest attendance time of 10 minutes should not be aimed at geographical location, but the severity of the incident. It is my view that a fire in a bin within the proposed 10 minute zone can be attended to within 20 minutes because it is not a life risk. Whereas as house fire needs the fastest response regardless of where it is.”*

*“The proposed changes will mean slower attendance targets for the areas outside of urban areas. The consequence is that this poor performance will not be highlighted, and be used to justify service reduction/closure of stations etc. On the basis that the area can be covered by another station with a longer response time.”*

### Resident focus groups

- 3.17 In the focus groups, there was general recognition that HWFRS can get to some geographical areas quicker than others depending on distance from, and crewing arrangements at, the nearest fire station. As such, it was agreed that having a ‘blanket’ ten-minute Attendance Measure is inappropriate. Indeed, there was a strong sense at both groups that the current Measure is setting the Service up to fail given the rurality of much of its area (in Herefordshire especially). In light of this, there was widespread support for the proposal to separate the Attendance Performance Measure into 10-, 15- and 20- minute zones.

*“... I think it’s realistic and would probably ensure that the Fire and Rescue Service was working more efficiently because they haven’t got such an unrealistic target” (Herefordshire)*

*“... It makes sense [as] there’s no point having a target that just can’t be met and is completely unrealistic so if this a better way of measuring things and getting right measurements is key...” (Herefordshire)*

- 3.18 Indeed, this was considered more representative and transparent, and important in managing expectations and raising awareness of potential wait times in rural areas – as well as the corresponding need to implement protective measures.

*“From a relationship perspective, it’s a much better way of dealing with things; to have an honest representation of when you think you will be able to attend and to manage expectations, and if you manage to get there a bit quicker you are on a win” (Worcestershire)*

*“...If we have a, ‘We will get to you in 10 minutes’ and that is completely impossible... People take that as gospel and [if they] get there in 11 minutes then it’s not ok. I think it’s really good to manage expectations and give people more information as to how to cope with that situation... if you know they are going to be 15 minutes, it is more comforting sitting around waiting after those 10 minutes have passed than going ‘where are they?’” (Worcestershire)*

*“I think it is an excellent idea... I am in one of the 20-minute zones which is fine because I think I would be happier knowing it was going to take 20 minutes rather than being told it will take on average 10-minutes...” (Herefordshire)*

*“We could have more accurately reported data that could show in real terms the consequences of living in green [20 minute] ones and [what] needs to happen for those areas if they are less safe... Basically we see that written down, quantified and take some action” (Herefordshire)*

- 3.19 As the second quotation above suggests, one of the perceived benefits of the proposed change was that people would have a much clearer idea of how long they might expect to wait in the event of an emergency incident. It was thus strongly suggested (at the Worcestershire group in particular), that if the new Attendance Performance Measure is approved, it should be well publicised to all those living and working in the two counties.

*“... My question is whether that map will be published to the wider public? ... People who live in those really rural areas understand that they are rural because they have to travel quite a way to the shops etc. But it would be valuable to have that published and known outside of the fire community so that the public knows that, ‘I am calling 999 and I am in an area that has poor coverage because of the locality and geography of the place” (Worcestershire)*

- 3.20 However, it was said that care will need to be taken with the messaging so as not to exacerbate any concerns among those living within and especially just outside the 20-minute zone.

*“... I would be in favour of the zones and that makes more sense to me. My worry would be if I lived in a green [20 minute] zone and what that meant and what the consequences were...” (Herefordshire)*

- 3.21 There were some questions about how the proposed change would work in practice, not least whether the response from neighbouring fire and rescue services had been factored in in relation to border areas.

*“... If there was another neighbouring fire service that had a shorter distance to that location, do you call them in or do you just go for the 20 minutes...?” (Worcestershire)*

- 3.22 Clarification was also sought on whether the nature of a call would affect the attendance time within the travel zones (for example, whether a house fire would attract a faster response than, say, a small animal rescue), and how exactly HWFRS will use the data it gathers through its Attendance Performance Measure.

*“...So, you would look at a map and... figure out where your locations are and say, ‘We expect to reach this place in twenty minutes’. You are not doing that on importance of call; you know, cat up a tree or a building fire. It’s regardless of the call out how fast you would expect yourselves to get there?” (Worcestershire)*

*“What do you do with those measurements because at the end of the day you can get as much raw data as you want but it’s what you do with it? How do you process it? What is the outcome of the analysis? Is that going to provide a better or more targeted service? That to me makes the fire service better for us as the customers” (Herefordshire)*

## Written submission from the FBU

- 3.23 The FBU disagrees with the creation of a “*postcode lottery*” for emergency response, stating that the integrated risk management planning process is designed to determine the necessary speed and weight of response according to the type of risk. Therefore, properties of a similar nature, be it residential or commercial, should expect the same attendance standard.
- 3.24 The FBU also questions the method used to predict and map attendance times, which it says has neither taken account of historical attendance times over a period of time, nor considered the availability of the fire engines in different areas.

*“It is assumed that all ten fire engines that are crewed by wholetime personnel are available 100% of the time, but due to crewing shortages and current duty systems this is not the case”*  
(FBU)

- 3.25 Furthermore, the FBU says that the travel time analysis/mapping does not appear to consider:
- Risk information
  - The effect of road closures due to maintenance, flood, landslide, or another event
  - Congestion due to the time of day or natural features, such as rivers and hills
  - The resources required to adequately deal with a range of incidents (for example, the distribution, availability and number of key skills and assets, such as Rope Rescue, Water Rescue, Large Animal Rescue, All Terrain Vehicles, Ultra Heavy cutting equipment and Road Traffic Collision platforms)
  - The impact of a nearest station’s crew having already mobilised to another incident or being unavailable due to insufficient staff numbers/competencies.
- 3.26 The results of the exercise are also questioned: for example, the predicted attendance times from Upton upon Severn fire station show a ten-minute difference immediately around the station depending on the direction of travel.

## Should a broader range of emergency incidents be measured?

### Outline

- Since 2009-10, the Service’s Attendance Performance Measure has only been calculated for fires in buildings (‘primary building fires’). However, the Service now attends a much broader range of incidents.

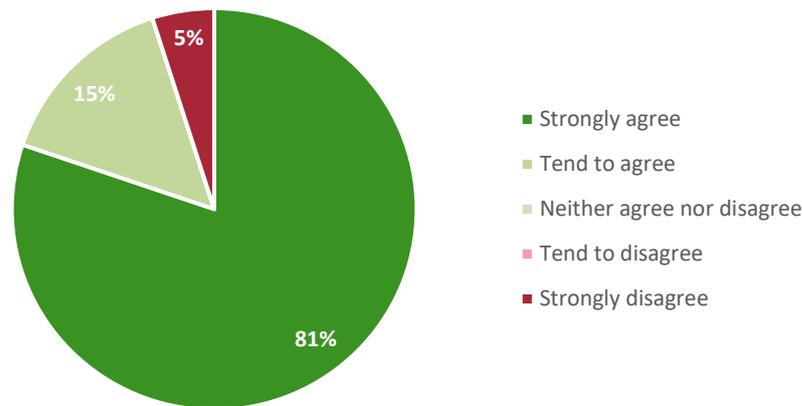
### Proposal

- HWFRS is proposing that the Service’s Attendance Performance Measure is extended to include a broader range of emergency incidents (such as fires, road traffic collisions and flooding incidents) instead of only ‘primary building fires’.

## Open questionnaire

- 3.27 Of all the proposals, the proposal to extend the Service’s Attendance Performance Measure to include a broader range of incidents instead of only ‘primary building fires’ received the highest level of support from personal respondents to the open questionnaire; the vast majority (95%) of all respondents agreed with this proposal, with around four fifths (81%) strongly agreeing (Figure 3). However, all of those who did not agree, strongly disagreed with the proposal (5%).

**Figure 3: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Service’s Attendance Performance Measure should be extended to include a broader range of incidents (such as fires, road traffic collisions, and flooding incidents) instead of only ‘primary building fires’?**



**Base: All respondents giving a personal response (62)**

- 3.28 There are no significant differences between sub-groups for this question, with a high level of agreement demonstrated across the board.
- 3.29 Of the three organisations who answered this question, two strongly agreed with the proposal to extend the Measure to include a broader range of incidents, while one neither agreed nor disagreed.
- 3.30 While the majority of open questionnaire respondents agreed that the Attendance Performance Measure should include a broader range of incidents, one respondent who provided a further comment felt that less serious or non-life-threatening incidents are not relevant to the measure and that fire should be the primary measure as it is the main risk to life.

*“The main risk to life and costly damage is fires and so this should be the primary measure. Yes, the fire brigade might attend many other types of incidents but these, unless they are serious or life threatening, are not really relevant to the main statistic that matters to people...”*

## Resident focus groups

- 3.31 Focus group participants overwhelmingly supported the proposal to measure attendance to a broader range of incidents, particularly considering only 7.2% of incidents are currently being measured. This, it was felt, would allow the Service to undertake a much more nuanced analysis of its current attendance times, and determine what resources it might need to make improvements.

*“... It makes sense. If you are going to measure something, then... if you are only doing 7.2% of what you are currently engaged in then it is a very small measure of your overall remit” (Herefordshire)*

*“... When you can record and measure things in any area, I think it really helps performance... There [are] so many things that we aren’t recording... So, I think it is a right step in the right direction” (Worcestershire)*

*“Measuring a broader and wider facet of what the organisation is involved in makes sense to me, because if you measure it, you can presumably do some analysis based on that and it might then influence the types of equipment you are going to use... We are very rural here, so looking at smaller vehicles that can get through and 4-wheel drives and that sort of thing... If you are doing a lot of other things other than just primary house fires, then looking at the equipment that you need for that” (Herefordshire)*

- 3.32 Indeed, there was some feeling that this should have been done some time ago given the much broader remit of the fire and rescue service nowadays.

*“I think it’s an excellent idea and is probably overdue... I am fully in favour of this...” (Herefordshire)*

*“I think it is logical to measure as broad a level of incidents as you can. I am just interested in why it has taken so long to reach the conclusion that that needs to happen?” (Worcestershire)*

- 3.33 When asked what types of incidents they would like or expect to see measured, participants offered mixed views. Some supported measuring attendance times to *all* incidents, resources permitting, on the basis that ‘the more information, the better the understanding’.

*“If the resources are there to measure everything or a lot of the incidents then they should be because for me, it’s a lot more beneficial to have information about everything so you understand any type of emergency” (Herefordshire)*

- 3.34 More, though, preferred a more targeted approach that measures only those incidents that threaten life, property and/or the environment.

*“If you are going to a domestic fire with lives at stake and then comparing that to a cat up a tree... They are obviously very different... I think you are quite right that the targeting should be about what the appliances are going to...” (Herefordshire)*

*“I did wonder [about] a more staged approach... Could you prioritise certain key areas with the most important factors? It seems to be that the most important factor is to do with safety and risk so could we pilot ‘x’-many areas where you target an increased number of activities and not suddenly say you are going to go from one to... absolutely everything? (Herefordshire)*

*“... You want to measure your resource-intensive things don’t you rather than every cat up a tree? Do you actually need to measure the very small, the insignificant, which are not insignificant to the person involved but not the best way to use your resources...”*  
(Worcestershire)

- 3.35 Ultimately, participants were happy to *“leave it to the Fire and Rescue Service to decide what is appropriate to measure and if they want a wider range of measurements... It should be left to the experts to know what to measure.”* (Herefordshire)

### Written submission from the FBU

- 3.36 The FBU feels that the Attendance Performance Measure should apply to all incident types where there is a foreseeable risk to the lives of the public and firefighters.

### Other issues

#### Written submission from the FBU

- 3.37 The FBU also discussed attendance times more generally in its submission, stating that *“when a 999 call is made the responding crews are already against the clock”*. For example, on arrival at a Road Traffic Collision (RTC), as a guide they will be working to a ‘Platinum 10 minutes<sup>1</sup>’ and a ‘Golden Hour<sup>2</sup>’. It is said that *“the earlier the call is made, and the sooner a call is taken, and a fire crew mobilised, the quicker they can respond and make an intervention”*, and the Union is concerned that while there has been an overall improvement in HWFRS’s attendance time in the past year, over a longer period crews are taking longer to arrive at incidents.
- 3.38 In light of this, the FBU suggests that the (should:

*“Set HWFRS a much-improved response standard and embark on a strategy to achieve it. This should include, in conjunction with the national employers, lobbying of the Home Office and central government to increase funding to HWFRS”* (FBU)

- 3.39 The FBU also references the Service’s latest HMICFRS (His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services) report which noted that while the Service is only meeting its response standards on 52% of occasions, the availability of fire engines has increased by seven percent between 2019/20 and 2020/21 and that ‘if the Service sustains this improvement, it could meet its response standards to fires and other incidents.’ As such, the FBU recommends that

*“Rather than change the response standard HWFRS need to concentrate on improving the availability of fire engines”* (FBU)

<sup>1</sup> A concept which places a time constraint on the pre-hospital care of seriously injured patients. Crews will work to gain access to a casualty, stabilise, extricate, and package them ready for transportation to definitive care within 10 minutes of arrival.

<sup>2</sup> The term “Golden Hour” dictates that the first hour after injury will largely determine a critically injured person’s chances for survival.

3.40 Other issues raised in the FBU’s submission were that:

- There is no proposed attendance measure for the second or third appliances (including special appliances) which, if fire crews are to successfully resolve an operational incident, is “vital”
- While it is not proposed to include a target for the percentage of times the Measure should be met, “It is important to have an output target for attendance so the FRS can be performance managed”
- One fire engine cannot deal with a house fire; it needs a minimum of two fire engines and nine firefighters. HWFRS’s minimum crewing level is four, whereas Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) have a minimum crewing level of five. So, in order to safely deal with a house fire HWFRS would need to mobilise a minimum of three fire engines compared to two in Shropshire. In light of this:

*“It is impossible to draw a direct comparison between the two Services given this important factor, and therefore there must be no alignment of attendance standards as they are proposed, unless all factors are equal and HWFRA increase the minimum crewing level to five” (FBU)*

## Open Questionnaire – Further Comments

3.41 Several further comments were given by respondents giving a personal response to the open questionnaire; mostly in general support of the proposals to revise the Measure.

3.42 Those in support of the changes feel they are reasonable, more realistic, sensible, and clearer to understand.

*“I think these are reasonable changes to performance measures.”*

*“Pleased to see that the original measure with its artificial target is being overhauled. It isn't needed when the fire service says it will get there as quickly as it can, and it was always going to difficult to meet anyway given the size of Herefordshire and Worcestershire.”*

*“Sounds sensible and a lot clearer to understand.”*

3.43 Some respondents had some general queries about the proposed changes or gave some general suggestions which they felt would help improve the Measure or response times generally, for example:

*“In my opinion as much information as possible should be collected and used in making policy decisions regarding all 3 policy decisions. By narrowing study fields less true information will be available regarding true attendance times.”*

*“It would have been helpful if you provided a list of all potential emergency incident types that you may report on in the future.”*

*“Have you considered changing crewing systems at selected fire stations in Herefordshire, as this seems to have an impact on the turnout and travel times?”*

*“Prompt response should be reviewed. With appliances attending a prompt response incident we are delaying time that this appliance can be back on the run and available for further incidents. Availability is everything to cut [down] on attendance times.”*

## 4. Conclusions

- 4.1 Overall, focus group participants were supportive of the proposed changes to the Attendance Performance Measure.
- 4.2 Removing the call handling time was generally supported in the focus groups, mainly on the grounds that it is often affected by issues outside the Service's control. However, it was considered essential that this element continue to be recorded, analysed, and reported separately to identify potential issues and improvements.
- 4.3 There was also widespread support for the proposal to separate the Attendance Performance Measure into 10-, 15- and 20- minute zones among focus group participants. This was considered more representative and transparent, and important in managing expectations, raising awareness of potential wait times, and highlighting the importance of implementing protective measures in rural areas.
- 4.4 The FBU, however, disagreed with both of the above proposed changes in its written submission because:

*“Discounting call handling time from the Attendance Standard and measuring to three time zones will likely mean that HWFRS are likely able to report that it is achieving the Standard. However, if implemented as proposed, the lives of the people living in, visiting, and travelling through Herefordshire and Worcestershire will not be safer, and neither will the lives of our members”*

- 4.5 It was agreed in the focus groups that HWFRS should measure attendance to a broader range of incidents given its wider remit nowadays. There were mixed opinions as to which incident types should be measured, but participants ultimately felt that the Service (as ‘the experts’) should decide on this. The FBU, in its submission, suggested that the Attendance Performance Measure should apply to all incident types where there is a foreseeable risk to the lives of the public and firefighters.
- 4.6 The open questionnaire respondents were also generally supportive of the proposed changes to the Attendance Performance Measure. There was particularly strong support for the proposal to extend the measure to include a broader range of incidents. A few respondents voiced some concerns that were similar to those given by focus group participants, but these did not represent the views of the majority.

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## Report of the Treasurer

### Budget Monitoring 2022/23 – Quarter 2

#### Purpose of report

1. To inform Members of the current position on the revenue and capital budget for 2022/23.
- 

#### Recommendation

*It is recommended that the Committee:*

- i. Approves the allocation of pay award budgets in Appendix 1 Column 3;*
- ii. Approves the revised Capital Budget allocations in Appendix 2;*
- iii. Notes the forecast Revenue Budget over spend of £0.131m; and*
- iv. Notes the potential for this to change dependent on the final pay settlement.*

#### Introduction and Background

2. This report follows the established format and, for the Revenue budget, is an out-turn projection nominally based on second quarter information, but incorporating latest information up to mid October.
3. For the Capital report, because capital projects tend to last beyond a single financial year, the report shows progress against the approved scheme totals.
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 2022 the Fire Authority set a Core Budget of £36.853m (*Appendix 1: Column 1, Row 38*), which was funded by Precept, Grants and Retained Business Rates of £37.012m (*Appendix 1: Column 1, Row 52*). After some technical adjustments to balances this allowed a small transfer of £0.208m to the Buildings Cost Reserve as approved by the Fire Authority. (*Appendix 1: Column 1, Row 56*).
6. The appendix (*Column 3*) shows proposed allocations of the budget provision for pay awards, which are discussed in more detail below. The changes do not impact on the overall, the Core or Net Budgets.

7. Column 5 of Appendix 1 shows the current out-turn projection against these revised budgets, and columns 6 and 7 identify the variation. For ease of explanation this has been split between those identified at Quarter 1 and the additional variations now identified. There are three significant additions:
- a. **+£0.574m (Line 7):** In relation to **Pay**. This is made up of a number of factors, and includes the probable Green Book (support) pay settlement and the latest employers offer to Grey Book (uniformed) at 5%.:
    - i. Green Book (+£0.242m of total). At the time of setting the budget the April 2021 award had not been settled but it was known that the likely settlement at 1.75% would exceed the budget provision made at 1.5%. The April 2022 award has now been settled at a flat rate increase of £1,925 for all staff. For the mix of grades of staff employed by the Authority this equates to a 6.73% increase in the relevant budget, considerably in excess of the 2% budget provision.
    - ii. Grey Book (+£0.402m of total). This is based on the current employers offer of 5%, and will be greater if the final settlement is any higher.
    - iii. National Insurance (-£0.070m of total). It is assumed that the reversal of the April 2022 increase is effective from 1<sup>st</sup> November, but the potential for a further change of Chancellor might impact on this decision.
    - iv. The long term impact of these factors (allowing for the full year effect of the Grey Book award) is to increase the expenditure requirement in the MTFP by £0.770m.
  - b. **-£0.200m (Line 31):** Relating to **Capital Financing** and arising from continued slippage in the capital programme. Whilst this has been a regular occurrence over the last couple of years it reflects the long-term nature of major building projects and, more recently, supply change delays. Savings cannot be permanently taken from the budget as financing will be required when expenditure is incurred in line with the approved programme.
  - c. **-£0.162m (Line 40) Fire Protection Grant.** The Authority will receive additional funding this year (and under the current Spending Review, similar sums in the next two years).
  - d. **+£0.162m (Line 11). Fire Protection.** It has not yet been fully determined how this grant will be spent so for convenience of presentation it is shown against the Protection Department budget.
8. The total impact of this would be to give a net overspend of £0.131m, and there are potentially three options to fund this:
- a. Make a draw on the Budget Reduction Reserve
  - b. Reduce the previously approved £0.208m transfer to the Building Projects inflation reserve
  - c. Meet from potential net underspending that emerge in the next two quarters.
9. Given, the relatively small size of this figure in the context of the overall budget it is recommended that option c be taken for now.

## Capital Budget

10. The current capital budget, as approved by the Fire Authority in October 2022, and subsequently amended, is detailed in Appendix 2 and summarised below.

	Vehicle Prog £m	Major Build £m	Other Major £m	Alloc Minor £m	Unalloc Minor £m	Future Builds £m	TOTAL £m
<b>Approved at Oct 2022</b>	3.800	8.092	0.590	1.829	0.775	12.772	<b>27.858</b>
Major Schemes Allocation		0.015				(0.015)	<b>0.000</b>
Minor Schemes Allocation				0.609	(0.609)		<b>0.000</b>
New (Reserve Funded)	0.026			0.115			<b>0.141</b>
<b>Approved at Sept 2022</b>	<b>3.826</b>	<b>8.107</b>	<b>0.590</b>	<b>2.553</b>	<b>0.166</b>	<b>12.757</b>	<b>27.999</b>
Less Expd. to 2021/22	1.345	7.473	0.431	0.664			<b>9.913</b>
Unspent Budget C/fwd.	<b>2.481</b>	<b>0.634</b>	<b>0.159</b>	<b>1.889</b>	<b>0.166</b>	<b>12.757</b>	<b>18.086</b>

11. The approved capital budget is divided into four blocks:

- Major Buildings – in accordance with the approved Property Strategy
- Vehicles – in accordance with the approved Vehicle Strategy
- Other Major Schemes - Fire Control and Mobile Data Terminals
- Minor Schemes - allocated by Strategic Leadership Board (SLB)

12. The Future Buildings Scheme figure (*Appendix 2: Row 73*) is provision for Hereford, Redditch and Broadway fire station replacements and the North Herefordshire Strategic Training Facility. These schemes are not disclosed separately to protect the Authority's procurement interest until contracts are actually awarded.

13. Allowing for the Schemes awaiting allocation or approval, the Budget available to be spent at the start of 2022/23 is £5.163m and is summarised below:

		£m
Total Approved Budget	<i>Column 5 Line 75</i>	27.999
Less: Future Buildings	<i>Column 5 Line 74</i>	(12.757)
Less: Unallocated Minor	<i>Column 5 Lines 71</i>	(0.166)
<b>Approved to Spend</b>		<b>15.076</b>
Incurred to 2020/21	<i>Column 6 Line 75</i>	(9.913)
<b>Balance</b>		<b>5.163</b>

14. Against this budget only £0.965m or 19% (*Column 8, Row 75*) has been incurred, with a further £ 1.322m (26%) committed by way of Orders placed.
15. The revenue costs of the financing of the capital programme are contained within the revenue budget.

## Treasury Management

16. 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.

17. 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. As the invest to improve programme progresses this cash will be used up and additional long term borrowing will be required.
18. 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.
19. 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, although the next revision of the MTFP will have to be updated for the new interest rates.
20. At 31 March 2022 long term borrowing stood at £10.411m, with £1.365m scheduled to be repaid this year, leaving an expected £9.046m at 31 March 2023.
21. 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.
22. 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.
23. The Treasurer continues to advise that investment should be focused on security and, as a consequence, surplus funds continue to generate low returns, which are factored into the revenue budget.
24. Short term investments via WCC at 30-Sep-2022 are shown in the table below. For completeness the current account balance is now also shown.

Money Market Funds	8.053
Cash Plus (liquidity fund)	2.631
Call	1.316
<b>via WCC</b>	<b>12.000</b>
Current Account	0.837
	<u>12.837</u>

## Corporate Considerations

<b>Resource Implications</b> (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	Whole Report
<b>Strategic Policy Links</b> (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	None
<b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	None
<b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	None
<b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	N/A

## Supporting Information

Appendix 1: Revenue Budget Monitoring 2022/23 Quarter 2

Appendix 2: Capital Budget Monitoring 2022/23 Quarter 2

**Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority**  
**Policy & Resources Committee: 15th November 2022**  
**Revenue Budget 2022/23: Quarter 2**

Col. Line	(2) Quarter 1 Revised Budget £	(3) Pay Award Provision £	(4) Quarter 2 Revised Budget £	(5) Quarter 1 Forecast Expenditure £	(6) Quarter 1 Forecast Variation £	(7) Quarter 2 Additional Variation £
1	14,114,900	206,500	14,321,400	14,569,300	0	247,900
2	4,180,000	61,100	4,241,100	4,320,100	0	79,000
3	922,300	13,500	935,800	955,000	0	19,200
4	4,507,200	139,900	4,647,100	4,875,000	0	227,900
5	90,000		90,000	90,000	0	0
6	1,035,000		1,035,000	1,035,000	0	0
7	<b>24,849,400</b>	<b>421,000</b>	<b>25,270,400</b>	<b>25,844,400</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>574,000</b>
8	107,600		107,600	107,600	0	0
9	55,300		55,300	55,300	0	0
10	41,100		41,100	41,100	0	0
11	47,000		47,000	209,000	0	162,000
12	289,700		289,700	289,700	0	0
13	679,800		679,800	679,800	0	0
14	1,149,300		1,149,300	1,149,300	0	0
15	575,600		575,600	575,600	0	0
16	1,939,100		1,939,100	1,939,100	0	0
17	461,500		461,500	461,500	0	0
18	(99,700)		(99,700)	(99,700)	0	0
19	2,091,900		2,091,900	2,091,900	0	0
20	81,600		81,600	81,600	0	0
21	48,200		48,200	48,200	0	0
22	513,400		513,400	513,400	0	0
23	58,500		58,500	58,500	0	0
24	700		700	700	0	0
25	39,000		39,000	39,000	0	0
26	447,100		447,100	447,100	0	0
27	140,700		140,700	170,700	30,000	0
28	88,200		88,200	88,200	0	0
29	<b>8,755,600</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8,755,600</b>	<b>8,947,600</b>	<b>30,000</b>	<b>162,000</b>
30	2,827,000		2,827,000	2,377,000	(250,000)	(200,000)
31	<b>2,827,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,827,000</b>	<b>2,377,000</b>	<b>(250,000)</b>	<b>(200,000)</b>
32	53,000	(53,000)	0	0	0	0
33	86,900	(86,900)	0	0	0	0
34	281,100	(281,100)	0	0	0	0
35	<b>421,000</b>	<b>(421,000)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
38	<b>36,853,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>36,853,000</b>	<b>37,169,000</b>	<b>(220,000)</b>	<b>536,000</b>
36	(2,144,100)		(2,144,100)	(2,144,100)	0	0
37	(3,372,300)		(3,372,300)	(3,372,300)	0	0
38	(392,100)		(392,100)	(392,100)	0	0
39	(114,500)		(114,500)	(114,500)	0	0
40	0		0	(162,000)	0	(162,000)
41	(820,000)		(820,000)	(824,176)	(4,176)	0
42	(182,000)		(182,000)	(182,000)	0	0
43	(1,568,000)		(1,568,000)	(1,568,000)	0	0
44	(344,700)		(344,700)	(344,700)	0	0
45	(25,568,100)		(25,568,100)	(25,568,100)	0	0
46	(253,500)		(253,500)	(253,500)	0	0
47	(2,315,400)		(2,315,400)	(2,315,400)	0	0
48	185,800		185,800	185,800	0	0
49	(217,600)		(217,600)	(217,600)	0	0
50	(554,500)		(554,500)	(554,500)	0	0
51	648,600		648,600	630,100	(18,500)	0
52	<b>(37,012,400)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(37,012,400)</b>	<b>(37,197,076)</b>	<b>(22,676)</b>	<b>(162,000)</b>
53	<b>(159,400)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(159,400)</b>	<b>(28,076)</b>	<b>(242,676)</b>	<b>374,000</b>
54	(14,000)		(14,000)	(14,000)	0	0
55	(35,000)		(35,000)	(35,000)	0	0
56	208,400		208,400	208,400	0	0
57	<b>159,400</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>159,400</b>	<b>159,400</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
58	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>131,324</b>	<b>(242,676)</b>	<b>374,000</b>

Quarter 1 (242,676)  
Quarter 2 374,000  
**131,324**



## Report of the Assistant Director: Prevention

### 2022-23 Performance Report: Q2 (01 July – 30 September 2022)

#### Purpose of report

1. This report summarises the Service's performance for Quarter 2, 2022-23.
- 

#### Recommendation

*It is recommended that Fire Authority note the Q2 2022-23 performance headlines set out in Section 4 of this report, with further details available in Appendix 1.*

#### Introduction and Background

2. The Service gathers performance data relating to incidents attended and activities carried out, and reports to the Policy and Resources Committee and the Strategic Leadership Board on a quarterly basis. The Q2 2022-23 Performance Report is attached as Appendix 1, and provides information on overall incident numbers, Prevention, Protection and Response activities and 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 2,475 incidents were attended in Q2 2022-23, an increase of 24% on Q2 2021-22, and close to the five year average of 2,015 incidents. More context is provided later in the report however analysis shows the following:

803 Fires attended	An increase of 72% over Q2 2021-22, this is mainly due to the vast increase in outdoor fires which we examine further on, and higher than the five-year average of 543 per Q2.
595 Special Services	A small increase of 5% over Q2 2021-22, this figure reached the same level as Q2 2019-20 (594 incidents) prior to the pandemic.
1077 False Alarms	An increase of 12% over Q2 2021-22, and slightly above the five-year average of 950 per Q2.

## **Prevention**

5. 1,328 Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV) were completed in Q2 2022-23, a 36% increase over the same period in Q2 2021-22, which reflects the commitment to increase our Prevention activity. Out of 1,328 HFSVs, 477 were delivered by Prevention technicians, 849 were delivered by Wholetime and 2 were delivered by On Call 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 Q2 2022-23, 208 inspections were completed compared to 277 in Q2 2021-22. Operational staff are also being trained to gain Level 3 Certificates in Fire Safety, which will increase capacity to carry out formal inspections from 2022-23 onwards providing recommendations as to how to reduce the risk of fire. The decrease in Q2 2022-23 RBIP figures in comparison to last year was mainly caused by Fire Safety (Protection) Department staff providing training and supervision to operational staff, enforcement activity, internal training and the temporary promotion of two Fire Safety Inspectors. Support for the RBIP has been implemented and the Fire Safety (Protection) Department remain on track to deliver their annual target of 1000 Fire Safety inspections in 2022/23.
7. All fires in commercial premises are subject to a Post Fire Audit, and the number of audits has decreased from 42 to 39 in Q2 2022-23, when compared to Q2 2021-22. Total Enforcement Activities have increased from 8 to 34 in Q2 2022-23, when compared to Q2 2021-22. This increase reflects the improved access to premises for Fire Safety inspectors due to the lifting of COVID-19 lockdown restrictions in place last year.
8. New building safety legislation has also been introduced, and the department is proactively identifying business leads to highlight their fire safety responsibilities and offer support and signposting to other assistance where needed.

## **Response**

### Fires

9. The numbers of Primary Fires attended in Q2 2022-23 were up by 26%, and Secondary Fires were up by 123% over the same period in Q2 2021-22. While the number of Primary Fires rose to 312, this was due to an increase in all three different categories of Primary Fires. During this timeframe there was unfortunately 1 life lost, due to an aircraft accident. No victims where an injury appeared serious went to hospital. 78.72% of the Primary Building Fires were classified as accidental and most of them started in the kitchen area

(35.46%). A high proportion of these fires occurred in houses of a single occupancy (15.5%) with the person over pensionable age (8.5%) and under pensionable age (7%). This information is fed back into the Prevention and Protection departments to further focus relevant activity and for trend analysis.

10. There were 20 incidents in Q2 2022-23 where more than 5 pumps attended, i.e., 16 primary fires, 2 special services and 2 false alarms.
11. There was a 123% increase to 488 Secondary Fires from 219 in comparison to Q2 2021-22. During July and August UK were subject to extreme weather conditions, reaching 34.2 °C in some areas, which had a massive impact on the number of Outdoor Fires.

#### Road Traffic Collisions

12. In terms of Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs), there were 159 incidents during the quarter, a 6% decrease compared to Q2 2021-22. Prior to the pandemic, 173 RTCs were recorded in Q2 2019-20, so there is an overall slightly downward trend over the last five years.
13. Overall, there were 5 fatalities and 20 serious injuries in the RTCs attended by the Service. This is slightly higher than Q2 2021-22. Information related to RTCs is fed into the Response and Prevention directorates for review and to inform future training and awareness activities.

#### Attendance Performance Measure

14. In Q2 2022-23 the Service attended 137 Primary Building Fires. The average attendance time increased from 10 minutes 57 seconds recorded in Q2 2021-22 to 11 minutes 51 seconds in Q2 2022-23. This was largely due to travel distance to the incidents. In addition, there was an increase of 15 seconds in call handling. There was a reduction of 39 seconds for turnout time during Q2 2022-23 from 03:29 in Q2 2021-22 to 02:50 in Q2 2022-23.
15. Out of 137 examined Primary Building Fires, 81 incidents reported that the attendance performance measure was not met. The main reasons given were travel distance (69 incidents) and turn in time (36 incidents). Attendance Performance consultation has now ceased in September 2022 and Service is currently waiting for the feedback report from the independent provider.

#### On Call Appliance Availability

16. The First On-Call appliance availability fell to 80.55% during the quarter, down from 83.66% in the same quarter of 2021-22. Availability for all On-Call appliances fell to 69.52%. However, for the first On-Call appliance 56% of fire stations (14 stations) remained at over 85% availability. Ross-on-Wye continued to have the highest availability of 100%. Since Q2 of the previous year the main differences were Hereford whose availability dropped by 32.95%, Upton upon Severn, Bromsgrove, Pebworth, Pershore and Wyre Forest stations also dropped by 10% or more. Tenbury Wells and Worcester stations increased to above 90%. The Service continues to identify

recruitment opportunities to support availability of On Call units. The recent launch of the Marketing & Recruitment project will provide a data driven targeted approach to recruitment in the hard to reach areas of the Service.

## **People**

17. In terms of workforce diversity, the proportion of female employees has stayed at 18% of the workforce, the same as Q2 2021-22. There has been a slight decrease of 1% in the ethnic minority representation in the workforce since Q2 2021-22, and it is currently at 6%. The Service continues to closely monitor equality and employment trends. The Service is currently recruiting an Inclusion & Organisational Development Manager role. This post will be key in designing and delivering strategies to address under-representation in various parts of the Service, and will work closely with departments and the Resourcing Manager to develop better diversity outcomes.
18. The most common reasons for absence this quarter were Respiratory – Other, Mental Health – Stress, and Respiratory - Cold/Cough/Influenza. This is likely due to COVID-19 related sickness absence resulting in short-term absences. These figures and trends are monitored by the Health & Safety Committee who meets on a quarterly basis to ensure the safety and wellbeing of employees.

## **Conclusion/Summary**

19. Further information on the headlines set out above is included in Appendix 1.
20. The Strategic Leadership Board 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

<p><b>Resource Implications</b> (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)</p>	<p>None at present.</p>
<p><b>Strategic Policy Links</b> (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).</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 and the People Strategy.</p>
<p><b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).</p>	<p>Relevant data is fed into the Health &amp; Safety Committee as appropriate.</p>
<p><b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)</p>	<p>None.</p>
<p><b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)</p>	<p>No, the report concerns operational activity and other areas of general performance data.</p>
<p><b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b> (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)</p>	<p>Not required – no personal data is identified.</p>

## Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Performance Report: Quarter 2 2022-23



# Incident Overview

## Q2 2022-23 (01 Jul - 30 Sep 2022)



### All Incidents

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**Total**  
**2,475**

**Change since Q2 2021-22**

**↑ 24%**

A considerable increase on Q2 2021-22, and above the 5 year average of 2,015 per Q2 over the last 5 years. Total figure shown does not include the 15 OTB incidents Service attended.



### Fires

**803**

**↑ 72%**

There is a large increase compared to last year, the number of fires are now much higher than the 5 year average of 543 for Q2 and 50% more as when compared to the pre-pandemic level of 537 fires in Q2 2019-20.



### Special Services

**595**

**↑ 5%**

While there is an increase of 5% compared to last year, this figure reached the same level as Q2 2019-20 (594 incidents) prior to the pandemic.



### False Alarms

**1077**

**↑ 12%**

A small increase on Q2 2021-22, however false alarm calls are now creeping above the average of 950 per Q2 over the last 5 years. This is an increase of 7% as when compared to Q2 2019-20 (1002 incidents) prior to the pandemic.

# District Overview

## Incidents per District Q2 2022-23



Fire



Special  
Service



False  
Alarms

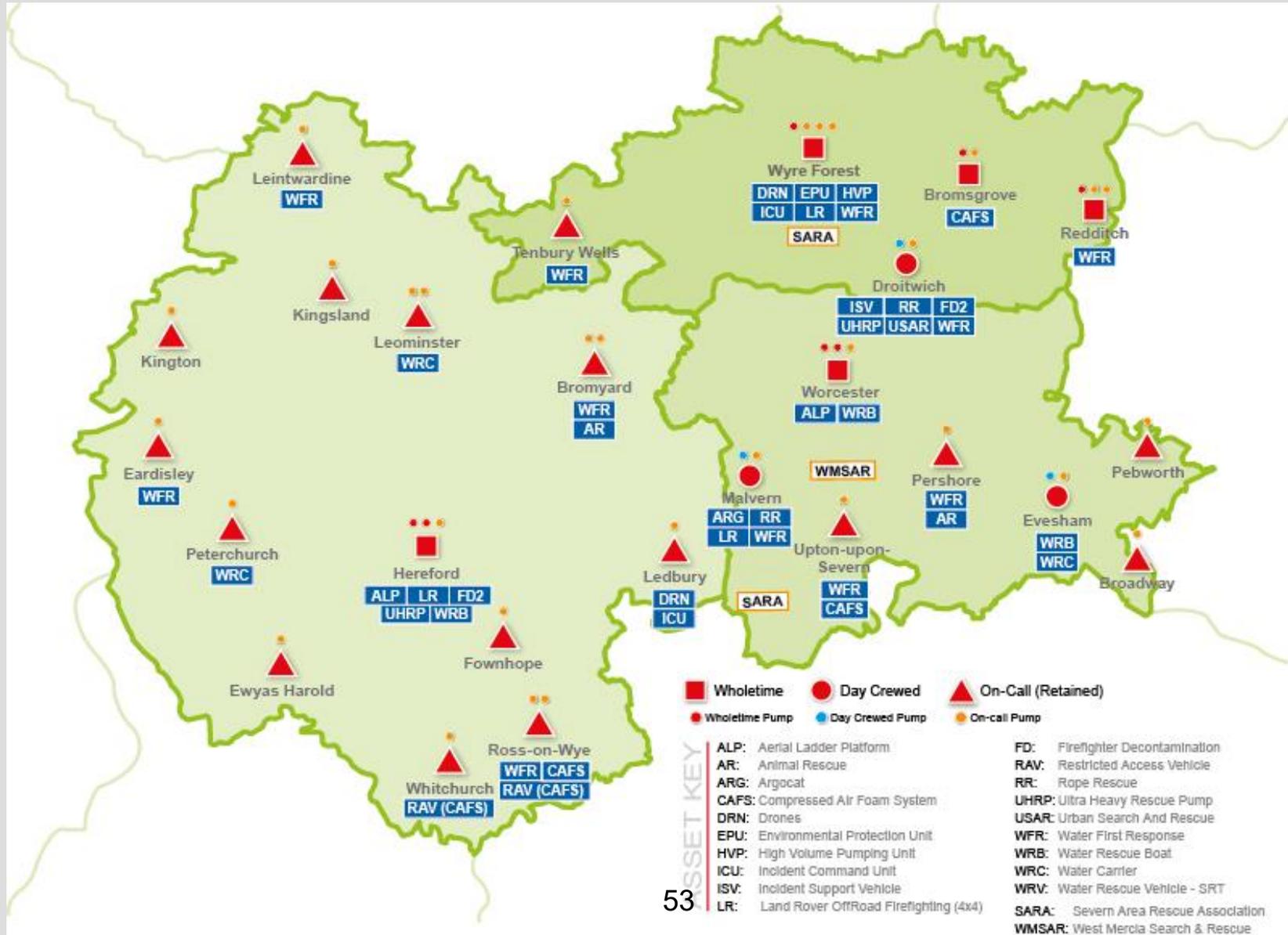


All  
Incidents

Change since  
Q2 2021-22

North District	348	239	472		1059	↑	28%
South District	262	211	368		841	↑	25%
West District	193	145	237		575	↑	17%
Total	803	595	1077		2,475	↑	24%

# Asset location



# Prevention

<b>Home Fire Safety Visits Completed</b>	<b>Q2 2022-23</b>	<b>Q2 2021-22</b>
------------------------------------------	-------------------	-------------------

<b>Home Fire Safety Checks</b>	<b>523</b>	<b>373</b>
<b>Safe and Well Checks</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>423</b>
<b>Equipment Only Checks</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>179</b>
<b>Total Checks</b>	<b>1,328</b>	<b>975</b>

<b>Home Fire Safety Visits Survey Q2 2022-23</b>	
--------------------------------------------------	--

<b>Proportion of Positive Responses</b>	<b>100%</b>
-----------------------------------------	-------------

The number of Home Fire Safety Visits have continued to increase since the easing of lockdown and the number of referrals from partner agencies gain momentum.

1,328 Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV) were carried out during Q2 2022-23, an increase of 36% compared to Q2 2021-22. In addition to the above Service also conducted 23 Doorstep Consultations and 9 Telephone Consultations.

Prevention department have increased capacity by recruiting more members of staff to undertake Home Fire Safety Visits.

# Protection

Inspections Completed	Q2 2022-23	Q2 2021-22
Risk Based Inspection Programme	208	277
.....		
Total Enforcement Activity	34	8
.....		
Post Fire Audit	39	42

## Post Fire Audit Survey Q2 2022-23

Proportion of Positive Responses **100%**

The Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP) are inspections carried out by specialist qualified Fire Safety staff. Operational staff are also being qualified to support this programme in 2022/23.

The decrease in Q2 2022-23 RBIP figures in comparison to last year was mainly caused by Fire Safety staff providing training and supervision to operational staff, enforcement activity, internal training and the temporary promotion of two Fire Safety Inspectors. The Fire Safety Department remain on target to deliver 1000 Fire Safety inspections in 2022/23.

Increased enforcement activity can be attributed to improved access to premises following lifting of the COVID-19 restrictions in place in Q2 2021/22.

# Response - Fires



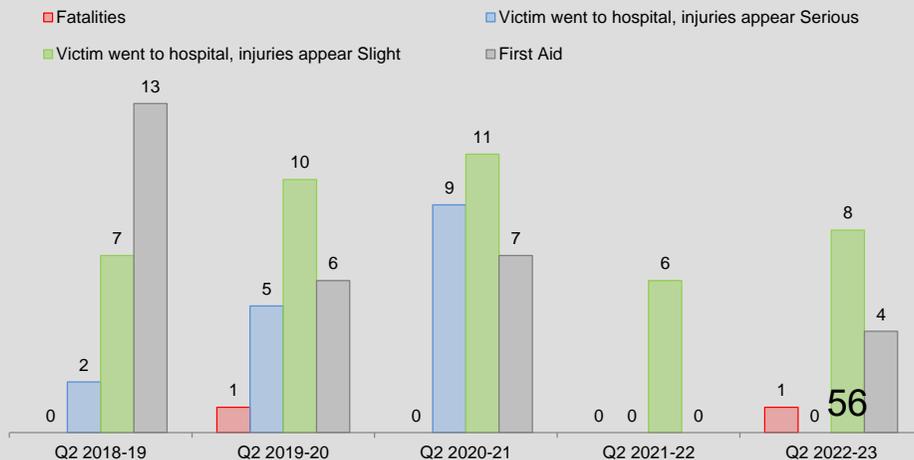
## Primary Fires 235

Primary Fires	Q2 2022-23	Q2 2021-22	Change	
Building Fires	137	130	+7	+5%
Outdoor Fires	83	42	+41	+98%
Vehicle & Transport Fires	92	75	+17	+23%
<b>Total</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>+65</b>	<b>26%</b>

The number of Primary Building Fires has slightly increased compared to Q2 2021-22. The most common causes (both contributing 18%) was “Fault in equipment or appliance” or “Cooking – Other Cooking”.

The dramatic increases in Outdoor Fires can be explained by the extreme weather conditions in August 2022.

### Primary Fire - Injuries and Fatalities



## Secondary Fires 246

Secondary Fires	Q2 2022-23	Q2 2021-22	Change	
Grassland, Woodland and Crop	292	99	+193	+195%
Other Outdoors (including land)	114	80	+34	+43%
Outdoor Structures	59	26	+33	+127%
Buildings & Transport	13	10	+3	+30%
Outdoor Equipment & Machinery	10	4	+6	+150%
<b>Total</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>+269</b>	<b>+123%</b>

There was a 123% increase in Secondary Fires compared to Q2 in 2021-22. Extreme weather reaching 34.2 °C had a massive impact on Outdoor Fires.

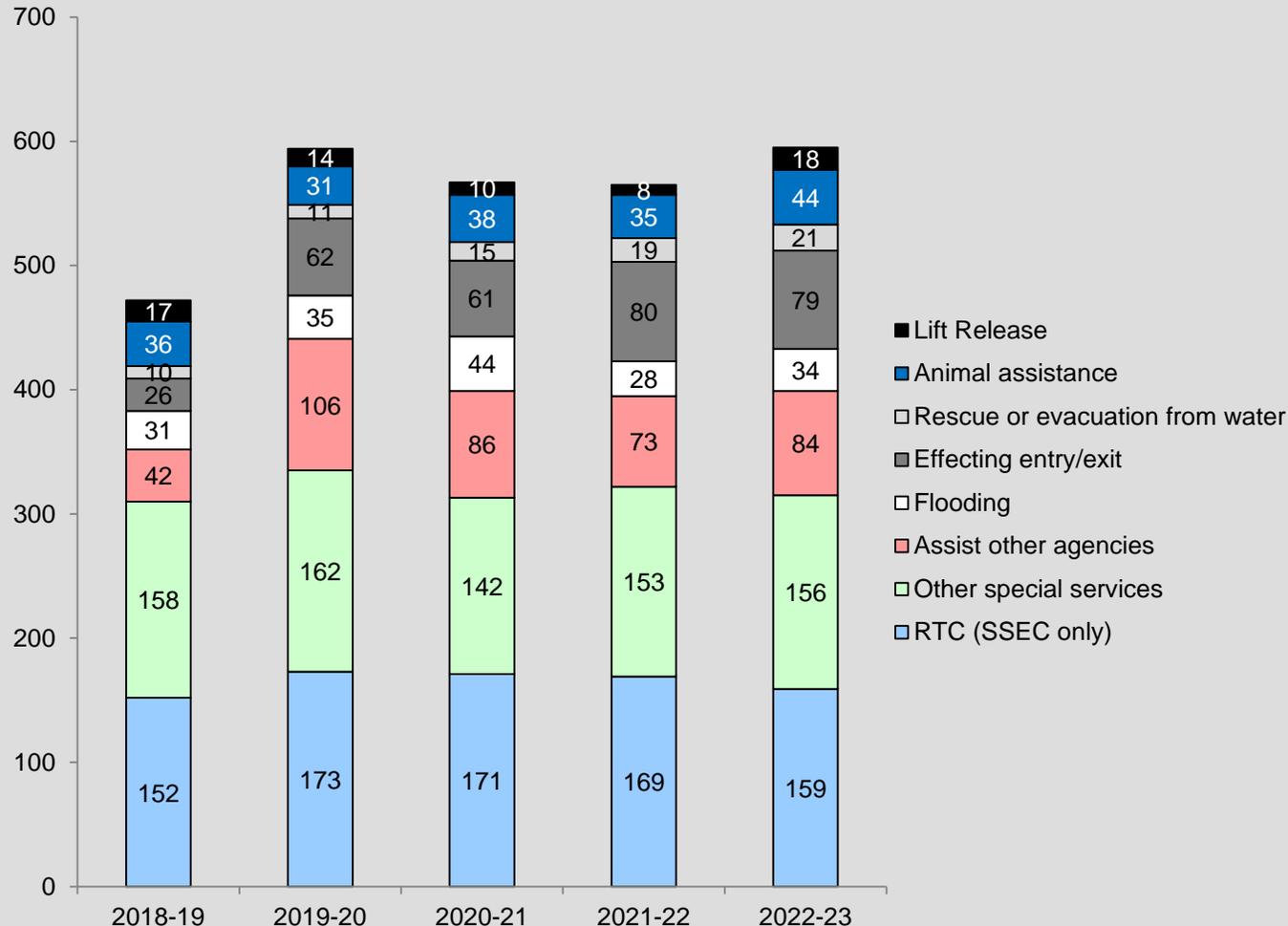
There were 20 incidents in Q2 2022-23 where more than 5 pumps attended: 16 primary fires, 2 special services and 2 false alarms.

There was a singular fatality in Primary Fires recorded in Q2 2022-23. Victim was involved in an aircraft crash at an airfield within the West District. No further casualties.

# Response – Special Services



**595**  
Special  
Service  
incidents  
in Q2  
2022-23



**RTC (SSEC only)** means that a road traffic collision was classified as a special service incident type; if a fire was associated with a road traffic collision, then the incident would be classified as a fire and not included here.

**Other special services** include following categories: No action - not false alarm (28), Other rescue/release of persons (18), Removal of objects from people (14), Suicide/attempts (17), Medical Incident - First responder (5), Removal of people from objects (7), Spills and Leaks - not RTC (14), Hazardous Materials incident (11), Other Transport incident (4), Making Safe - not RTC (13), Advice Only (7), Evacuation - no fire (1), Medical Incident - Co-responder (1), Water provision (1).

# Response – Road Traffic Collisions



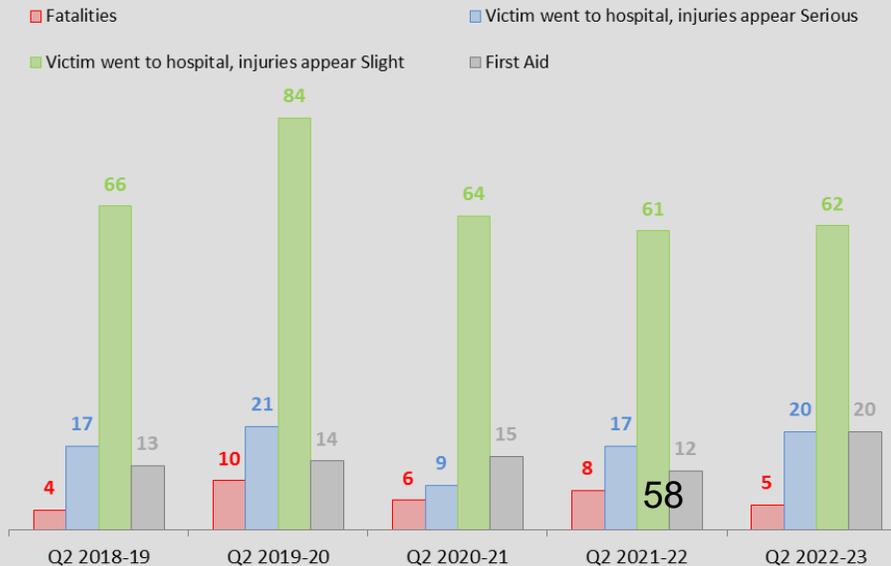
159  
RTCs

## Total RTC Incidents



The number of RTC incidents showed a decrease of 6% compared to Q2 in 2021-22. The Q2 figures for both 2021-22 and 2022-23 are below the pre Covid-19 figures for 2019-20. The trend line shows a slight downwards trajectory.

## RTC - Injuries and Fatalities



RTC fatalities have decreased by 3 compared to Q2 2021-22, slight injuries have maintained a similar level. Both serious injuries and first aid have increased compared to Q2 2021-22.

# Response — Attendance Performance Measure



	Q2 2022-23	Q2 2021-22
<b>Primary Building Fires</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>130</b>

## Attendance Performance Measure

First fire appliance attendance at Primary Building Fires within 10 minutes



<b>Attendance within 10 minutes</b>	<b>56 40.88%</b>	<b>58 44.62%</b>
<b>Attendance outside 10 minutes</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>72</b>

<b>Average Attendance time** (min:sec)</b>	<b>11:51***</b>	<b>10:57***</b>
--------------------------------------------	-----------------	-----------------

\*\*\* From time of call to arrival at scene.

Call handling time	02:00	01:45
Turnout time	02:50	03:29
Travel time	07:01	05:43

\*\*\* It should be noted that these are three independent averaged values, and therefore may not always add up.

### Top 5 reasons for attendance outside 10 minutes

<input type="checkbox"/> Travel distance to the incident	69
<input type="checkbox"/> Turn in time (On-Call and Day crew only)	36
<input type="checkbox"/> Traffic conditions causing delayed turn in time to stations	17
<input type="checkbox"/> Responding at normal road speed (AFAs)	10
<input type="checkbox"/> Simultaneous Incident	9

### No. of incidents

# Response – On-Call Appliance Availability



**First On Call Appliance**      **80.55%**

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**All On Call Appliances**      **69.52%**

**First On-Call  
Appliance  
Availability  
Q2 2021-22**      **83.66%**

## On Call Appliance Availability Q2 2022-23

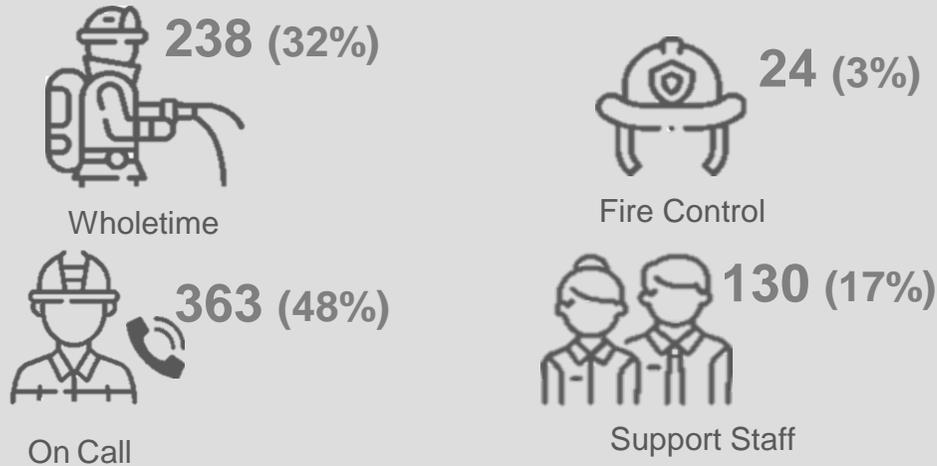
For Q2 2022-23, the first On-Call appliance availability was 80.55%.

When looking at all On-Call appliance availability for each fire station, there have been some changes compared to Q2 2021-22:

- Hereford dropped by 32.95%;
- Upton upon Severn, Bromsgrove, Pebworth, Pershore and Wyre Forest have dropped 10% or more;
- Worcester and Tenbury Wells have increased to above 90%
- Broadway continued to have the lowest availability at 31.35%;
- Ross-on-Wye continued to achieve the highest availability of 100%;

# People Q2 2022-23 (01 Jul - 30 Sep 2022)

## Overall Workforce Profile



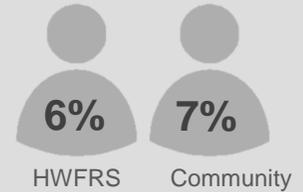
## Equalities



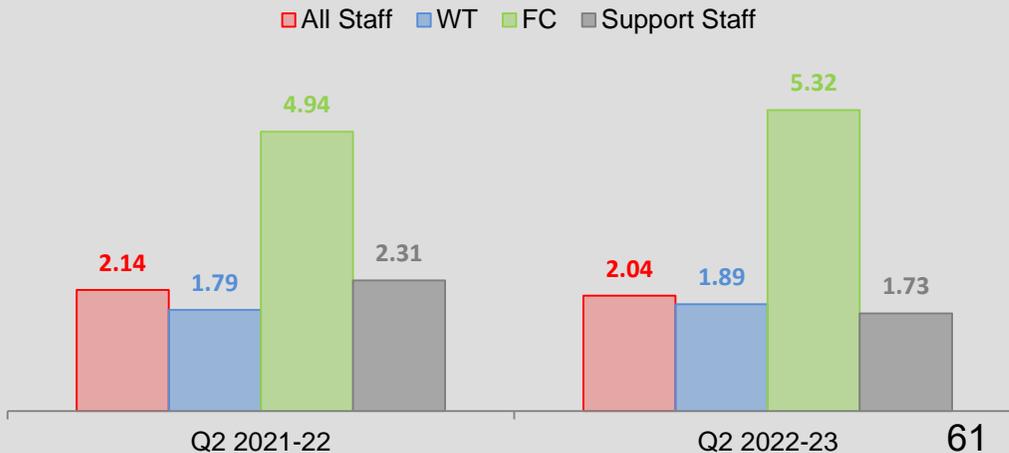
Female representation is the same as in Q2 2021-22

## Ethnicity

A decrease of 1% in ethnic minority representation since Q2 2021-22



## Days/Shifts Lost Per Person



## Total Days/Shifts Lost \*

	Wholetime	Fire Control	Support Staff
Short Term Absence	242.35 52.99%	35.50 31.42%	88.25 47.43%
Long Term Absence **	215.00 47.01%	77.50 68.58%	97.81 52.57%

## Top 3 Reasons for Absence

- Respiratory – Other
- Mental Health – Stress
- Respiratory – Cold/Cough/Influenza

\*COVID-19 is now classed as a respiratory illness for absence recording purposes and is not recorded separately \*\*Long Term Absence is 28 calendar days or more

## **Report of the Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Director of Prevention and Assets**

### **Update from the Joint Consultative Committee**

#### **Purpose of report**

1. To inform the Committee of the activities of the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) since the last update provided on 4 May 2022.
- 

#### **Recommendation**

*It is recommended that the following new and existing items currently under discussion by the Joint Consultative Committee be noted:*

- (i) Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Contracts/Policy*
- (ii) On Call Bandings*
- (iii) Fitness, Attendance Management and Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policies*
- (iv) Promotion Processes*
- (v) Industrial Action*
- (vi) Review of Three Core Strategies*
- (vii) Current Financial Position*
- (viii) Project Updates – National Operational Guidance (NOG), On-Call, Unwanted Fire Signals and Fire Investigation*

#### **Background**

2. The JCC acts as the main route for formal employee consultation. It consists of managers and employee representatives who meet every six weeks to discuss issues of mutual interest. The JCC is not a decision-making body.
3. Employees are represented on JCC by members from each of the Representative Bodies (RBs) in Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service, namely the FBU, FOA, FRSA and Unison.
4. The Committee is chaired by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer who is currently responsible for industrial relations. Other management representatives include the Assistant Directors/Area Commanders responsible for Protection, Prevention, Response and Assets, as well as the Head of HR and Development.

## Update

5. The Joint Protocol for Industrial Relations SPI provides the framework for communicating, consulting and negotiating with all Trade Unions.
6. Following a review of how the JCC operates, all new items raised at JCC meetings are now categorised under one of the following headings thus enabling a more structured flow of information between management and RBs:
  - For consultation
  - For negotiation
  - Service Policy and Instructions (SPI) undergoing formal consultation
  - Items for information / updates for TU Reps
  - Requests for information / issues raised by TU Reps
  - Other Items
7. The JCC has met on 4 occasions since the previous update delivered to the Committee on 4 May 2022 (26 May 2022, 21 July 2022, 27 September 2022 and 20 October 2022).

## New Issues under discussion since the last Update

8. USAR Contracts / Policy

The USAR contracts and policy has gone through formal consultation and been agreed. However, much of this will depend on the national review of USAR, which the Service is awaiting the outcome of.
9. Policies

The main focus over the coming months in terms of policies is currently as follows:

  - Fitness Policy - The Health & Safety Working Group have been working alongside HR on the Fitness Policy. There is a need to ensure adequate support is in place for individuals if they fail a fitness test, and additional help is being put in place to support this.
  - Attendance Management Policy - This has now been finalised and has been completely rewritten and went out for comment mid-October.
  - EDI Policy - A new EDI policy went out for consultation, which closed on 5 September and comments received as part of this process are being reviewed.
  - Driving at Work Policy - This SPI reflects legislative changes in the Fire Standard (Section 19).
  - On-Call Management Policy. This policy has been reviewed and now includes new On-Call bandings and a payment mechanism to support availability. The policy has been through the 3 week formal consultation and has been agreed at SLB.

- Day Crewing Policy. With the agreed move to introduce a revised Day Crewing model at Evesham, Droitwich and Malvern Fire Stations, the draft Day Crewing Policy is due to go out for formal consultation.
- 12hr Duty Systems Policy. Following a successful trial of a variation of the 12hr Duty system, an amendment to the existing 12hr Duty Policy to include the variation as an agreed duty system within the Service is due to go out for formal consultation.

10. Promotion Processes

Discussions have been held around having formalised Promotion Processes Boards similar to those undertaken by the police and a SWOT analysis has been undertaken. Although there is merit through this route it would slow the Service down for a number of weeks so it was agreed that this would not be a viable option at this time. However, a draft programme for processes in 2023 has been produced. An options paper for an On-Call supervisory promotion process has also been drafted due to there currently being a number of on-call temporary positions.

11. Industrial Action

Discussions have been held nationally and the issues around the current 5% pay offer to grey book staff has been discussed. FBU members are considering whether or not to accept the offer via a national ballot.

12. Review of Three Core Strategies

Following a discussion between SLB and Department Heads / Group Commanders, updates have now been made to the Three Core Strategies; Prevention, Protection, and Response.

13. Current Financial Position

A question was asked at JCC as to what HWFRS is doing to assist staff during the current financial situation. The Chair of JCC has invited the Director of Finance to the January meeting to provide members with an overview of the current MTFP position.

14. Project Updates

The main focus over the coming months in terms of projects is as follows:

- NOG Competence and Command Excellence - There will be a 'lite' launch in December and then materials rolled out over the next 12/18 months with completion by March 2024.
- Fire Investigation - Discussions have been held with West Mercia Police regarding HWFRS not completing criminal fire investigation work due to the complexity and cost of gaining ISO accreditation.
- On-Call - This project is progressing with an internal team led by a Station Commander, along with three recruitment technicians. A tender

has been agreed for a consultancy to assist in delivering station specific recruitment profiles and a rebranding exercise to target local demographics and assist with on-call recruitment.

## Conclusion

15. The Policy and Resources Committee has responsibility to monitor and review staffing matters discussed by the JCC and as such is required to receive regular reports on these matters. This report provides Members with an update on the current issues under discussion with employee representatives.

## Corporate Considerations

<b>Resource Implications</b> (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	None.
<b>Strategic Policy Links</b> (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications)	The JCC forum links to the successful discharge of the People Strategy.
<b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores)	None.
<b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Consultation has been carried out on all significant policy changes as per service procedures.
<b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	All significant policy changes are fully supported by EIAs.
<b>Data Impact Assessment Data Protection Impact Assessment</b> (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)	N/A