

# Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel

A meeting of the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel will be held in the Council Chamber, The Guildhall, St Giles Street, Northampton NN1 1DE on Thursday 9 September 2021 at 1.00pm.

## Agenda

1.	<b>Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitute Members</b>
2.	<b>Notification of requests from members of the public to address the meeting</b> Any requests to speak on an item on the agenda should be notified to the Chair (c/o the Committee Manager) by 12 noon two working days before the date of the meeting.
3.	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> Members are asked to declare any interest and the nature of that interest which they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting.
4.	<b>Chair's Announcements</b>
5.	<b>Minutes</b> (Pages 5 - 20) To confirm the minutes of the Panel meeting held on 17 <sup>th</sup> June 2021.
<b>SCRUTINY OF THE POLICE, FIRE &amp; CRIME COMMISSIONER</b>	
6.	<b>Fire &amp; Rescue Plan Delivery Update</b> (Pages 21 - 42)
7.	<b>Police &amp; Crime Plan Delivery Update</b> (Pages 43 - 72)
8.	<b>Fire &amp; Rescue Authority Budget Update</b> (Pages 73 - 80)
9.	<b>Policing Budget Update</b> (Pages 81 - 88)

<b>10.</b>	<b>Joint Independent Audit Committee Annual Report 2020/21</b> (Pages 89 - 100)
<b>PANEL OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT</b>	
<b>11.</b>	<b>Police, Fire &amp; Crime Panel Work Programme 2021/22</b> (Pages 101 - 110)
<b>12.</b>	<b>Complaints and Conduct Matters Update</b> (Pages 111 - 116)
<b>13.</b>	<b>Urgent Business</b> The Chair to advise whether they have agreed to any items of urgent business being admitted to the agenda.
<b>14.</b>	<b>Exclusion of Press and Public</b> In respect of the following items the Chair may move the resolution set out below, on the grounds that if the public were present it would be likely that exempt information (information regarded as private for the purposes of the Local Government Act 1972) would be disclosed to them: The Panel is requested to resolve: "That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that if the public were present it would be likely that exempt information under Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act of the descriptions against each item would be disclosed to them."

Catherine Whitehead  
Proper Officer  
1 September 2021

**Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel Members:**

Councillor Gill Mercer (Chair)

Councillor Andre Gonzalez De Savage  
(Deputy Chair)

Councillor Jon-Paul Carr

Councillor Dorothy Maxwell

Councillor Zoe McGhee

Councillor Russell Roberts

Councillor Anna King

Councillor Ken Pritchard

Councillor David Smith

Councillor Winston Strachan

Mrs Anita Shields

Miss Pauline Woodhouse

## **Information about this Agenda**

### **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence and the appointment of substitute Members should be notified to [democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk) prior to the start of the meeting.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Members are asked to declare interests at item 3 on the agenda or if arriving after the start of the meeting, at the start of the relevant agenda item

### **Local Government and Finance Act 1992 – Budget Setting, Contracts & Supplementary Estimates**

Members are reminded that any member who is two months in arrears with Council Tax must declare that fact and may speak but not vote on any decision which involves budget setting, extending or agreeing contracts or incurring expenditure not provided for in the agreed budget for a given year and could affect calculations on the level of Council Tax.

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### **Queries Regarding this Agenda**

If you have any queries about this agenda please contact James Edmunds, Democratic Services, via the following:

Tel: 07500 605276

Email: [democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk)

Or by writing to:

West Northamptonshire Council  
One Angel Square  
Angel Street  
Northampton  
NN1 1ED

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### Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel

Minutes of a meeting of the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel held at the Council Chamber, The Guildhall, St Giles Street, Northampton NN1 1DE on Thursday 17 June 2021 at 1.00pm.

Present           Councillor Gill Mercer (Chair)  
                       Councillor Andre Gonzalez De Savage (Deputy Chair)  
                       Councillor Jon-Paul Carr  
                       Councillor Dorothy Maxwell  
                       Councillor Zoe McGhee  
                       Councillor Russell Roberts  
                       Councillor Anna King  
                       Councillor David Smith  
                       Councillor Winston Strachan  
                       Mr Robert Mehaffy  
                       Mrs Anita Shields  
                       Miss Pauline Woodhouse

Also in            Stephen Mold, Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner  
 attendance       Councillor Muna Cali, West Northamptonshire Council  
                       Deborah Denton, Joint Head of Communications, Office of the Police,  
                       Fire & Crime Commissioner  
                       James Edmunds, Democratic Services Assistant Manager, West  
                       Northamptonshire Council  
                       Helen King, Chief Finance Officer, Office of the Police, Fire & Crime  
                       Commissioner  
                       Nicci Marzec, Director for Early Intervention, Head of Paid Service and  
                       Monitoring Officer, Office of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner  
                       Catherine Whitehead, Director of Legal & Democratic and Monitoring  
                       Officer, West Northamptonshire Council

#### 1. **Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitute Members**

Apologies for non-attendance were received from Councillor Pritchard. Apologies for lateness were received from the Director of Legal & Democratic and Monitoring Officer, West Northamptonshire Council.

#### 2. **Appointment of the Panel Chair for 2021/22**

The Democratic Services Assistant Manager invited nominations for the Chair of the Panel for 2021/22. Councillor Mercer was proposed and seconded by Councillors Gonzalez De Savage and Maxwell respectively. There were no further nominations.

**RESOLVED that: Councillor Gill Mercer be appointed as Chair of the Panel for 2021/22.**

3. **Appointment of the Panel Deputy Chair for 2021/22**

The Chair invited nominations for the Deputy Chair of the Panel for 2021/22. Councillor Gonzalez De Savage was proposed and seconded by Councillor Strachan and the Chair respectively. There were no further nominations.

**RESOLVED that: Councillor Andre Gonzalez De Savage be appointed as Deputy Chair of the Panel for 2021/22.**

4. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor McGhee declared that she worked for CSD Activity Camps, which had received funding from the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire in the past.

5. **Chair's Announcements**

The Chair welcomed new and returning Panel members to the meeting, which was the first time that the Panel had met in-person since March 2020. The Chair congratulated councillor members on their election in May 2021 and their appointment to the Panel.

The Chair highlighted that the Panel had to consider some substantial items of business at the current meeting and encouraged members to ensure that their contributions were focussed and strategic.

The Chair advised that she had participated that morning in a meeting relating to the Strategic Review of Policing in England and Wales being carried out by the Police Foundation. A report on the first part of the Review had been published; work on the second part was now underway. The Review had involved a wide range of people from across the country and was open to new ideas. Crime prevention was its top priority, which reflected the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire (PFCC)'s own view.

6. **Minutes**

The Democratic Services Assistant Manager advised that the draft minutes had been circulated after the previous Panel meeting to members who had attended.

**RESOLVED that: the minutes of the Police, Fire & Crime Panel meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2021 be agreed.**

Matters arising from the minutes

*19/21 Fire & Rescue Authority Budget Update*

The Chief Finance Officer updated the Panel that £41,000 had been charged to the East Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust for supporting activity carried out by Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service (NFRS) during the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings from the inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Policing and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) of NFRS's response to the pandemic could be

circulated to the Panel to provide information previously requested on the health and wellbeing support provided to NFRS personnel.

#### *23/21 Future use of Remote Meetings*

The Chair advised that she had written to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities & Local Government encouraging an extension of the provisions permitting Police & Crime panels to hold remote meetings. She had not received a response directly but the government had since indicated that it would not take this approach, even though potential alternatives it had suggested such as delegated decision-making were not applicable to panels.

#### *18/21 Police & Crime Plan Delivery update*

Councillor Maxwell questioned whether consideration could be given to providing personal alarms for all girls in years 12-13 in the county, in the context of the death of Sarah Everard. The PFCC advised that this suggestion could potentially be fed into a piece of focus group work on violence against women and girls due to take place in September 2021.

### **7. Introduction to the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner's priorities and challenges**

The Chair congratulated the PFCC on his re-election in May and invited him to comment on his priorities and challenges at this point.

The PFCC welcomed the opportunity to give the Panel an insight into his priorities for the next three years and made the following points:

- He would produce new Police & Crime and Fire & Rescue plans by March 2022, which he would present to the Panel before the end of 2021. The new plans would not involve a radical change of direction but would seek to build on the progress made during his first term.
- The development of his proposed precepts for 2022/23 would be another key area of work. He invited the Panel to repeat the workshop session on the precepts held in January 2021 and also offered to put on a finance workshop session in August or September 2021.
- The resources for NFRS were now at a sustainable level and the position reached was ahead of the schedule set at the time of the governance transfer. Over £4.2m of one-off grants had been secured since 2019. There remained challenges in relation to financing the NFRS Medium Term Financial Plan and a new capital programme had been drafted for discussion with the Minister.
- Potential changes relating to pension schemes could produce significant financial pressures. He would seek to make representations on this matter as the position developed.
- He would continue to make the case for changing the current policing funding formula and this issue remained the subject of discussion.
- Northamptonshire had been affected by delays in the completion of external audits. The last statement of accounts for Northamptonshire Police was due to be

signed off imminently but this was not the case for the Office of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner (OPFCC) and Voice. He considered that this was not an acceptable situation and would seek to highlight it at national level.

- He had previously sought to ensure that the Panel had access to relevant information and would continue to take this approach. He had previously offered to facilitate annual briefing sessions for the Panel with the Chief Constable and Chief Fire Officer. He also invited the Panel to visit Darby House when COVID-19 restrictions permitted this.
- He had provided significant investment in youth services during his first term and sought to build on this further in future. He believed strongly in acting to help divert young people from entering the criminal justice system.
- Prevention activity would be complemented by action to create a more hostile environment for criminals in Northamptonshire such as investment in frontline policing, Automated Number Plate Recognition systems and Interceptor vehicles.
- Local government reorganisation in Northamptonshire had created a unique opportunity to refresh and strengthen the local approach to partnership working.
- He was proud of the significant amount that had been done during his first term in office. It was now important to maintain momentum and build on this further.

The Panel considered the PFCC's comments and members made the following points during the course of discussion:

- It was questioned whether there was scope to change existing external audit arrangements in the context of local government reorganisation.
- Residents in rural areas of Northamptonshire could feel overlooked in relation to policing and there should be a more visible police presence in villages.
- Neighbourhood policing team activity in Weedon earlier that day had been well-received by residents. It would be helpful to repeat it on a Saturday.
- The priority that the PFCC gave to addressing knife-crime was welcome. Further information was sought about how detached youth workers were being deployed to respond to the recent death of a young person in Corby, the outcomes sought from their work and how local councillors could support them.
- The force and NFRS should seek to make their personnel more diverse to be more reflective of the different communities in the county.
- The force and NFRS were both organisations that had a relatively low turnover in personnel, which made it more difficult to change demographic make-up.
- Investment in additional police officers was not producing a benefit in the county. Anti-social behaviour remained a significant issue. This should be addressed by deploying police officers and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) so that they were visible to communities and could engage with them. Local taxpayers who could be in difficult circumstances had been asked to pay a higher police precept: they should see a return from this.

The PFCC made the following additional points during the course of discussion:

- Northamptonshire Police had 1,367 police officers at the last count, which was 200 more than when he had taken office. The force would reach a complement of 1,500 officers in the next two years, which would be the highest number ever. However, the force was responsible for protecting nearly 800,000 people, which represented a less favourable ratio than in an area such as London. The fact that Northamptonshire was close to London also affected crime in the county.
- The Chief Constable was responsible for the deployment of police officers. However, the force had been put in a position to double the number of officers in neighbourhood policing teams by 2022 and to have named officers for particular areas. Other initiatives such as the forthcoming launch of two 'Beat Buses' would also support visible policing around the county.
- Northamptonshire taxpayers had supported continuing improvement by the force. However, the county would benefit from valuable additional resources if it was funded at the same level as Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire or Leicestershire. The government had committed to review the police funding formula.
- NFRS now had a whole-time establishment of 254 firefighters, which included an additional 12 recruited recently. NFRS did not find it difficult to recruit full-time firefighters, although there were more challenges relating to retained crewing.
- The principal continuing challenges for NFRS related to the level of base budget funding, the age of some of its assets and the need to put in place a capital programme that was sustainable in the long term.
- He expressed his condolences to the family of the young person killed in Corby. The OPFCC had prioritised and provided funding to support detached youth work in the county. The County Schools Challenge would use a card game about knife crime invented by a local young person as part of work to address this issue.
- He remained committed to the use of PCSOs. A new intake had just been taken on by the force and there were now just under 90 PCSOs in the county. There had been around 250 several years ago but Northamptonshire County Council had funded some of these officers. As PFCC he had to make tough choices about how to use finite resources. Residents should see a benefit from investment in neighbourhood policing.
- He agreed that the force and NFRS should reflect the communities that they served and considerable effort had been put into work supporting this aim. Good progress had been made with recruiting female officers. There remained challenges in areas such as the diversity of the NFRS establishment and retention of young police officers. This was a complex area and change took time to achieve.

The Chief Finance Officer advised during discussion that Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) was responsible for contracting external auditors. PSAA was currently consulting on future contracts. Changes to existing arrangements might be possible in future but not at the current time.

The Director for Early Intervention provided additional information in response to point made by members during the course of discussion as follows:

- The Youth Service operated on a countywide basis: staff were not allocated to particular areas, which meant that resources could be deployed to work on priority issues that occurred in any part of the county.
- The Youth Service was now carrying out outreach work in Corby.
- The Youth Service would carry out follow-up work after targeted activity by the force. It was also linked in to the custody suites in the county and provided support to young people who had been arrested. The Youth Service currently had 11 members of staff, with some vacancies. It was hoped to expand provision in future.

**RESOLVED that:**

- a) The Panel requests to be provided with further information on the demographic make-up of recent intakes of recruits to Northamptonshire Police and Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service.**
- b) The Panel notes the update on the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner's priorities and challenges.**

**8. Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner's Annual Report for 2020/21**

The PFCC presented the Annual Report, outlining work done during 2020/21 and progress towards the delivery of his priorities. The PFCC highlighted the following points:

- The previous year had been dominated by the challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, which was the worst public health emergency to affect the country in 100 years. However, he had still worked to make the most of the resources available to Northamptonshire.
- Additional funding provided to Northamptonshire Police translated into the highest number of police officers since the 2000s, whilst NFRS had also been strengthened. This provided a basis for continuing improvement in both cases. The Chief Constable and Chief Fire Officer were also working together to share support services to maximise efficiency.
- He thanked the team in the OPFCC for their support and praised the dedication shown by force and NFRS staff members during the pandemic.

The Panel considered the Annual Report.

A Panel member noted that the Annual Report identified the ambition to increase the force's professional curiosity and knowledge of trauma-informed practice in support of the priority of prevention and early intervention – increase support for the most vulnerable and questioned whether the need to take this action represented a concern. The PFCC made the following points:

- This action linked back to the 2018/19 inspection of the force by HMICFRS, which had identified that it was not investigating crime effectively enough. In addition, the force had recruited nearly 500 officers in recent years. A considerable amount of work was therefore being done to ensure that the force was able to provide members of the public with an effective service at all stages from the reporting of a crime to the submission of a case to the Crown Prosecution Service.

- Overall, he was confident that the force was now in a significantly better position than it had been when he took office. He had recently met with the family of David Brickwood concerning failings in the force's investigation of his murder in 2015. He considered that these failings would not occur now.
- In 2016 the number of overdue visits to people on the Management of Sexual Offenders & Violent Offenders register in Northamptonshire had been 600-700, which compared to around 50 now. This was another reflection of the progress made by the force in this time.

The Director for Early Intervention subsequently advised that trauma-informed practice involved taking a considered view of how previous trauma might affect the parties involved in an incident to support a more effective police response. It was intended that as many personnel in the force as possible should be familiar with this approach.

A Panel member challenged the PFCC that the Annual Report did not say enough about progress towards meeting his Police & Crime Plan objectives, making the following points:

- The overall vision set out in the Police & Crime Plan was 'A Safer Northamptonshire'. Local Government Association guidance encouraged that when the Panel reviewed the Annual Report it should consider whether Northamptonshire had become more safe over the past year. However, the Annual Report did not provide a basis for reaching a conclusion on this question.
- The Annual Report produced by the West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) was one example of a PCC taking a more quantitative approach by presenting more data to back up their conclusions. The PFCC was urged to emulate this approach in future.

The PFCC made the following points:

- The presentation of performance information to the Panel was an area of previous discussion and the approach taken continued to evolve.
- In the year ahead he proposed to provide the Panel with a quarterly update on performance that would include appropriate narrative information. This reflected that performance information needed to be properly contextualised when presented in public, for example, to show that an increase in recorded crimes could reflect increased enforcement activity against that type of crime.

The Panel questioned the PFCC on matters relating to his priority of robust enforcement – modern slavery and exploitation. Members made the following points:

- The PFCC was challenged about the robustness of action being taken to address modern slavery in Northamptonshire, a member referring to a case when a perpetrator had been penalised but had then resumed activity.
- It was questioned why the 'Take a Closer Look' film commissioned by the OPFCC to raise awareness of modern slavery and exploitation was only directed at frontline professionals and not also used with members of the public.

The PFCC made the following points:

- The Annual Report was intended to be a strategic overview: he could discuss concerns about specific incidents separately with individual Panel members if they could provide details.
- He was satisfied that the force had sufficient focus on modern slavery, which had not been the case when he had first taken office. The OPFCC had also set up a countywide partnership board on modern slavery and human trafficking, which was chaired by the Director for Delivery.
- A separate film on modern slavery and exploitation designed for members of the public had just been produced.

The Panel questioned the PFCC on matters relating to his priority of robust enforcement – increased accessibility and visibility in all communities. Members made the following points:

- The force's aim to embed its services in local communities was welcome. The force needed to be a trusted source of help to members of the public. It was also important that different public sector organisations worked together as a single team to address complex issues such as knife crime. It was positive to see that this joined up approach was reflected in the Annual Report.
- More robust action should be taken in Northamptonshire in cases where travellers occupied land.
- Visible uniformed policing was backed up a range of functions that were less obvious but essential, such as criminal investigation. Reassurance was sought about the PFCC's confidence in the effectiveness of these functions in the county.
- The PFCC was urged to maximise the use of his Supporting Communities Fund to work with different community groups.
- The PFCC was challenged about whether it was planned to close Weston Favell police station and Moulton fire station. The case for this was questioned as these facilities were located in a growing area that would require some alternative provision.

The PFCC made the following points:

- He had a continuing concern about the service that the national Action Fraud function provided to Northamptonshire. He had requested information from the force about the number of cases being directed to it for investigation, as he was not certain that victims were well-served by the current national approach.
- He agreed that support functions were a crucial element in the overall response to crime. The importance of maximising their effectiveness in Northamptonshire was behind the decisions to withdraw from Multi-Force Shared Services and to introduce the enabling services approach.
- The force had undertaken considerable training on investigative capability in the last three years, which should be reflected in the outcome of its next HMICFRS inspection.

- He was keen to look at all opportunities to use the grant schemes he controlled to work with local groups to address risks to communities. It was open to all groups to bid for funding.
- The existing Weston Favell police station had been valued at approximately £1m but required remedial work on the roof that would cost more than this. There would continue to be a policing base in Weston Favell. Moulton fire station was not being closed: the adjacent headquarters and maintenance facilities were being relocated to Darby House and Earls Barton respectively. He had made these plans known before the election in the interests of openness.

The Panel questioned the PFCC on matters relating to his priority of prevention and early intervention – divert young people from crime. Members made the following points:

- It had been reported in the media that referrals to social care services had increased following the end of lockdown. It was questioned whether Youth Services were seeing similar demand.
- The development of the Youth Commission by the OPFCC was welcome and confirmation was sought about whether this was intended to be a long term project and whether it would be able to engage with young people in disadvantaged areas.

The PFCC advised that the Youth Commission was a long term project and would engage with young people from all areas in the county.

The Director for Early Intervention provided additional information in response to point made by members during the course of discussion as follows:

- The Early Intervention team was currently receiving a higher number of cases but it was not yet possible to say whether this was due to the end of lockdown or other factors, such as new operating arrangements connected with the creation of the Northamptonshire Children's Trust.
- Youth Commission members were appointed through a formal recruitment process that operated every 12 months, which helped to broaden involvement.

The Panel considered potential conclusions on the Annual Report for inclusion in its report to the PFCC. The Democratic Services Assistant Manager advised that the Annual Report was a finished document that represented the PFCC's views on the progress made towards his outcomes: when reviewing it the Panel was able to comment on the robustness of these conclusions.

Members made the following points during the course of discussion:

- The Annual Report did not provide sufficient clarity about performance against the PFCC's key outcomes.
- The report was a good one and showed examples of positive progress, such as the investment of £1.5m in local crime fighting initiatives, good joint working between the force and NFRS as part of the response to the pandemic and increased numbers of police officers.

- Differing views about the best way for the PFCC to present the Annual Report did not mean that it failed to achieve its purpose.
- The Panel's report to the PFCC on the Annual Report could make reference to comments by individual Panel members as well as setting out the Panel's overall conclusion.

The PFCC commented that the outcome of the recent election represented a judgement on his performance. He believed that the Panel would be satisfied with information on the delivery of Police & Crime Plan outcomes that could be provided to it in the year ahead.

**RESOLVED that: the Panel accepts the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner's Annual Report for 2020/21.**

**9. Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner's Fire & Rescue Statement for 2020/21**

The PFCC presented the Northamptonshire Commissioner Fire & Rescue Authority Fire & Rescue Statement for 2020/21, highlighting the following points:

- The results of previous work to improve the governance of NFRS were now embedded in standard operating arrangements.
- HMICFRS recognised improvements to performance and oversight that had been made in Northamptonshire. This represented tangible progress towards his aim as PFCC to deliver an effective, sustainable Fire & Rescue service.
- He was proud of what had been done in Northamptonshire and the progressive approach taken to achieve it.

The Panel considered the Fire & Rescue Statement and questioned the PFCC on his confidence in the level of assurance it set out, with particular reference to operational assurance. Members made the following points during the course of discussion:

- The first part of the Home Office review into the role of PCCS had led the government to propose to consult on making the PFCC model the standard national approach. This reflected positively on the work done in Northamptonshire and other areas that had already adopted this model.
- The Panel should endorse the Fire & Rescue Statement.
- Community engagement work by NFRS was particularly beneficial and the scope to carry out more activity in schools for this purpose should be considered.
- It was questioned whether smaller community-based fire stations would continue to form part of the service provided by NFRS.
- The Fire & Rescue Statement provided clear information about performance against key community outcome measures.
- A member who had received training in using a defibrillator at Thrapston fire station questioned the potential to extend this offer, for example, by delivering training in schools.
- NFRS personnel were commended on their work, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The PFCC made the following additional points during the course of discussion:

- The COVID-19 pandemic had created challenges relating to community engagement activity, although home fire safety checks had continued to be a means of providing information about fire prevention.
- There were no plans to close any existing fire stations in the near future. This position reflected that work carried out in support of the creation of the Northamptonshire Commissioner Fire & Rescue Authority had included a strategic review of future service delivery by NFRS. Ideally, he would want to consolidate the fire stations in Rothwell and Desborough and to move Kettering fire station from its current location next to a school. However, resources were not currently available to pursue this.
- The future role of firefighters was the subject of current discussion at national level, including with the relevant trade unions. Services needed to be affordable within the resources provided by the government. Consideration was being given to matters such as fire appliances carrying defibrillators and trauma packs.

The Director for Early Intervention provided additional information in response to point made by members during the course of discussion as follows:

- The OPFCC was currently working with NFRS to enhance its existing fire prevention offer, which would include working with young people.
- The Northamptonshire Emergency Services Cadets scheme still operated. The OPFCC aimed to develop the scheme but this would involve changing the current delivery model to use officers' professional expertise in a targeted way alongside contributions by general volunteers. Resources were available to support the development of the scheme once the approach was confirmed.

**RESOLVED that: the Panel accepts the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner's Fire & Rescue Statement for 2020/21.**

10. **Police, Fire & Crime Panel Work Programme 2021/22 and operating arrangements**

The Democratic Services Manager presented the report, highlighting the following points:

- The Panel should use its first meeting to consider its work programme for the year ahead. The Panel was required to carry out specific statutory tasks but should identify those other matters that it also wished to scrutinise.
- The Panel needed to resume holding its formal meetings in-person following the expiry of legislation permitting remote meetings in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Panel was asked to agree the broad approach it wished to take regarding the location of future meetings.
- The Panel was asked to agree to continue its membership of regional and national network bodies that had previously helped to inform its work.

The Panel considered the report. Panel members made the following points concerning its potential work programme:

- The workshop session on the development of the PFCC's precepts and budgets held in 2020/21 had been useful and should be repeated.
- It would be helpful for the Panel to visit the enabling services base at Darby House.
- It would assist the Panel to carry out a skills audit of its new membership.
- The PFCC was due to produce a new Police & Crime Plan later in 2021. The Panel could seek to comment on what the new Plan might include at an early stage in the development process.
- Pre-decision scrutiny of the Police & Crime Plan would need to reflect the respective remits of the Panel and the PFCC.
- The previous workshop session on the PFCC's precepts and budgets could provide a model for scrutiny of the draft Police & Crime Plan.
- The Panel should pursue the question of additional remuneration for independent co-opted members, which had been raised at the final meeting in 2020/21.
- The Home Office had recognised in 2012 the principle of a disparity between the remuneration of councillor members and independent co-opted members, which panels could need to address.

The PFCC made the following points during the course of discussion:

- He welcomed input from the Panel to the new Police & Crime Plan. However, when the Panel scrutinised the Plan it should recognise that he had been elected on the basis of commitments that he now needed to deliver.
- The Panel should consider including in its work programme the topic of how Northamptonshire was respond to the outcomes of the Kerslake Report and the Public Inquiry into the Manchester Arena terror attack.
- The OPFCC was able to arrange further opportunities for Panel members to observe force activity relating to the night time economy if desired.

The Democratic Services Assistant Manager provided additional information regarding remuneration for Panel members as follows:

- All Panel members could claim expenses for activities connected with their roles according to an agreed Member Expenses Scheme. The question of disparity related to the fact that councillor members also received a basic allowance from their local authority to support them as councillors.
- West Northamptonshire Council had adopted a Scheme of Allowances that included provision for an allowance for independent co-opted Panel members. This provision had been recommended by an Independent Review Panel. Subject to checking some details involved this situation seemed to substantially answer questions on this matter that the Panel would otherwise need to ask.

The Panel considered and confirmed potential items of business listed in the report that it wished to include in its work programme for 2021/22.

The Panel subsequently considered the location for its future formal meetings. Panel members made the following points during the course of discussion:

- The Chair noted that past Panel meetings had generally been held at County Hall and webcast live. The Panel had tried meeting in different locations around the county but the disadvantages of this outweighed the advantages. The Panel should prioritise webcasting its future meetings.
- The safety of participants should be a key factor in choosing venues for future meetings in the current situation.
- The Panel operated on behalf of Northamptonshire residents. They should have the opportunity to attend meetings. The Panel should consider rotating meetings between different locations.
- The Corby Cube offered good facilities and the Panel should consider holding a meeting there.
- It could be more difficult for Panel members to attend meetings held in locations near the edges of the county.

The Democratic Services Assistant Manager provided additional information in response to points raised by members during the course of discussion as follows:

- The current Panel meeting had not been webcast as the priority had been to secure a venue that could accommodate the meeting with social distancing measures.
- It would be necessary to investigate whether the webcasting arrangements used for Panel meetings up to March 2020 could be brought back into use. The Panel would also need to take into account the approach that the two Northamptonshire authorities might adopt regarding webcasting meetings.
- The Panel was now legally required to hold its formal meetings in-person but informal activities could still be held remotely.

The Chair invited the Panel to confirm its priorities regarding the location of future meetings.

**RESOLVED that:**

**a) The Panel agrees that its work programme for 2021/22 should include the following matters:**

- **A workshop session open to all Panel members in January 2022 on the development of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner's proposed precepts, to include separate sections on Police and Fire & Rescue.**
- **A workshop session open to all Panel members in September 2021 on the 2021/22 Police and Fire & Rescue budget positions.**
- **Two briefing sessions open to all Panel members with the Chief Constable and the Chief Fire Officer on their respective service's priorities and challenges, to take place in venues appropriate to the subject matter**
- **A visit to Darby House for all Panel members**

- **The Joint Independent Audit Committee Annual Report 2020/21**
  - **Police & Crime Plan and Fire & Rescue Plan delivery updates presented to each regular meeting of the Panel**
  - **Police and Fire & Rescue Authority budget updates presented to each regular meeting of the Panel**
  - **Scrutiny of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner's updated Police & Crime Plan and Fire & Rescue Plan**
  - **A report on action being taken in Northamptonshire to respond to the outcomes of the Kerlake Report and the Public Inquiry into the Manchester Arena terror attack.**
- b) **The Panel agrees that a skills audit of Panel members be carried out to support its operation.**
- c) **The Panel prioritises the following considerations in relation to the locations to be used for its formal meetings in 2021/22:**
- **The ability to webcast meetings**
  - **A location that is relatively central in Northamptonshire, that is accessible and that offers appropriate parking.**
- d) **The Panel requests that a proposal regarding the future location of its formal meetings be developed for consideration by the Panel.**
- e) **The Panel requests to receive confirmation that remuneration can be paid to independent co-opted Panel members under the West Northamptonshire Council Scheme of Member Allowances.**
- f) **The Panel agrees to continue its membership of the East Midlands Police, & Crime Panels Network for 2021/22.**
- g) **The Panel agrees to continue its membership of the National Association of Police, Fire & Crime Panels for 2021/22.**
11. **Appointments to the Police, Fire & Crime Panel Complaints Sub Committee for 2021/22**

The Chair introduced the report, which invited the Panel to appoint members to the Complaints Sub Committee for 2021/22. The Chair went on to raise the need to change the composition of the Sub Committee, as appointing two councillor members from each of the political groups represented on the Panel was not particularly reflective of its current overall composition.

The Democratic Services Assistant Manager provided additional information to the Panel as follows:

- The appointment of equal numbers of councillor members from different political groups to the Complaints Sub Committee had been intended to make it clear that party politics did not come into its role.
- The composition of the Sub Committee had been determined prior to changes in the make-up of the Panel resulting from local government organisation. There

were now only two Labour councillor members of the Panel compared to four in the past.

- The quorum for a Complaints Sub Committee meeting was three members, which meant that a meeting could proceed without two Labour councillor members needing to be present.

The PFCC advised that the Panel was likely to receive more complaints in future due to the greater role in the police complaints system given to PCCs. He went on to emphasise that the Panel's role concerned complaints about his conduct, whereas issues might be raised that stemmed from other matters such as dissatisfaction with the force.

The Panel considered the report. Councillor McGhee highlighted that that composition of the Complaints Sub Committee might be changed to include one Labour councillor member, with the other as a substitute member, given that two Labour councillors did not need to attend for a meeting to be quorate under the existing arrangements. The Panel went on to consider possible new arrangements for the councillor membership of the Sub Committee.

**RESOLVED that:**

- a) **The Panel agrees to revise the membership of the Complaints Sub Committee to consist of:**
- **3 councillor members from the Conservative councillors on the Panel;**
  - **1 councillor member from the Labour councillors on the Panel, who may be substituted by the other Labour councillor; and**
  - **1 independent co-opted member to be drawn from the pool of all 3 independent co-opted members on the Panel.**
- b) **All councillor members of the Panel be contacted following the current meeting in order to confirm the members who will make up the Complaints Sub Committee in 2021/22.**

The meeting closed at 4.30 pm

Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE, FIRE & CRIME PANEL

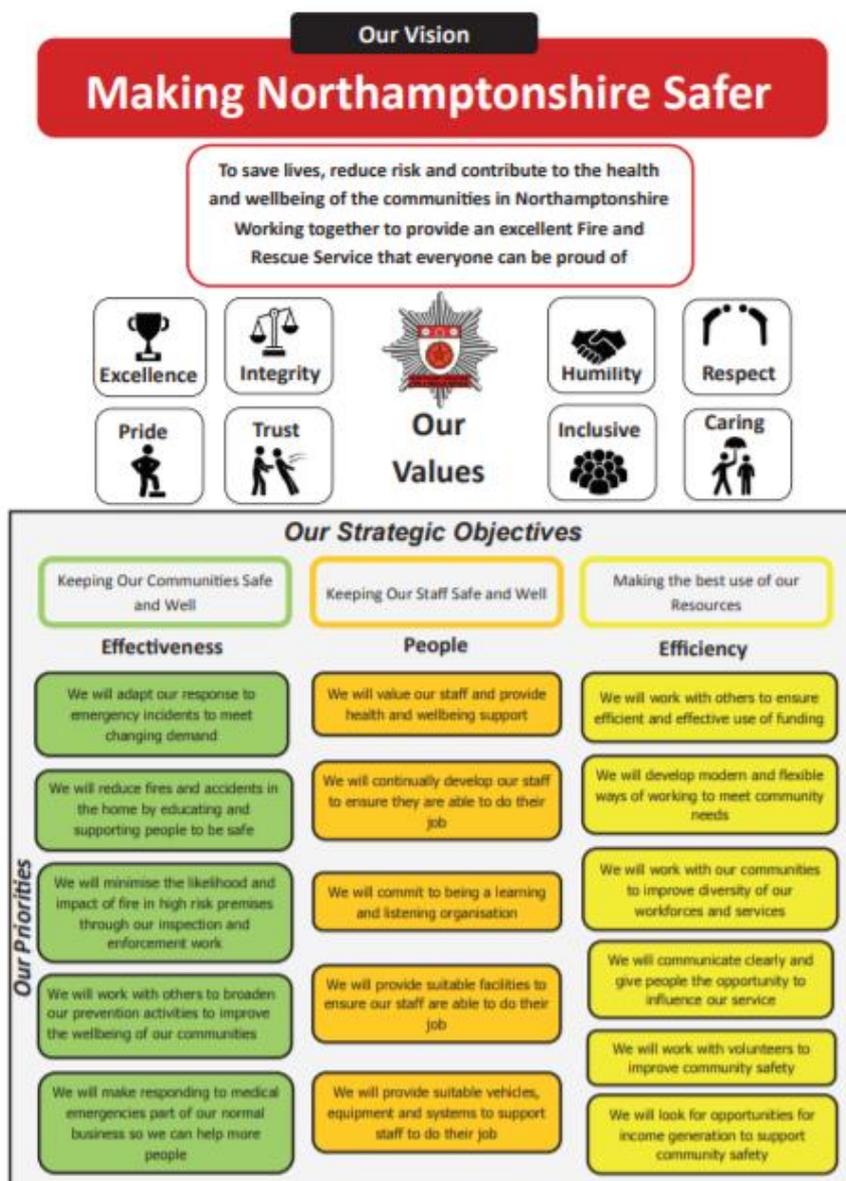
9<sup>th</sup> September 2021

### Office of The Northamptonshire Police Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire & Rescue Plan Update

#### 1. Introduction

1.1 This report updates the Panel on the work of the Northamptonshire Police and Crime Commission and the progress being made in relation to the delivery of the Fire and Rescue Plan for Northamptonshire.

#### 2. Delivering the Fire and Rescue Plan



## Our Vision

# Making Northamptonshire Safer

To save lives, reduce risk and contribute to the health and wellbeing of the communities in Northamptonshire  
Working together to provide an excellent Fire and Rescue Service that everyone can be proud of



## Our Strategic Objectives

Keeping Our Communities Safe and Well

Keeping Our Staff Safe and Well

Making the best use of our Resources

### Effectiveness

### People

### Efficiency

We will adapt our response to emergency incidents to meet changing demand.

We will value our staff and provide health and wellbeing support

We will work with others to ensure efficient and effective use of funding

We will reduce fires and accidents in the home by educating and supporting people to be safe

We will continually develop our staff to ensure they are able to do their job

We will develop modern and flexible ways of working to meet community needs

We will minimise the likelihood and impact of fire in high risk premises through our inspection and enforcement work

We will commit to being a learning and listening organisation

We will work with our communities to improve diversity of our workforces and services

We will work with others to broaden our prevention activities to improve the wellbeing of our communities

We will provide suitable facilities to ensure our staff are able to do their job

We will communicate clearly and give people the opportunity to influence our service

We will make responding to medical emergencies part of our normal business so we can help more people

We will provide suitable vehicles, equipment and systems to support staff to do their job

We will work with volunteers to improve community safety

We will look for opportunities for income generation to support community safety

Our Priorities

## 2.1 Work Delivered by NFRS

- 2.2 **Investing in the Front Line** - As the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for the county, I am proud of the work we have undertaken to invest in and improve the Fire and Rescue Service. Ten transferees have now been welcomed to the Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue family which I funded in addition to 20 recruits that were needed earlier this year to replace outgoing staff. The ten firefighters will now be working out of Daventry and Rushden fire stations, having recently completed their intensive training at the fire training centre in Chelveston.

Of the ten starters, three had served as on-call firefighters in Northamptonshire but wanted to make the role full-time – while seven have moved from other services in the country. The move also offers an alternative job path for many of them, with previous careers of the new intake including spells working in logistics, the food industry and the Royal Air Force. It's really exciting to welcome ten new recruits to Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service. We made a commitment to the people of Northamptonshire that we would make them even safer. It's really pleasing to hear these new recruits say they joined us because the fire service is on the move and is a good place to come and work.

- 2.3 **Throw Lines** - Thanks to funding I have been able to provide, throw lines have now been installed at some of Northamptonshire's nature hotspots to offer greater protection for those who find themselves struggling in the water. The throw lines have been put in place with fixed boards which offer instructions to members of the public on how they can use them to rescue people from the water. The five boards have been installed by Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service in partnership with the Canal & River Trust and have been funded through my office of and the Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue fire grant. Four of the boards are already fully operational at Stoke Bruerne canal near Blisworth Tunnel; and the reservoirs at Welford, Sulby and Naseby. The final board will be erected at Boddington Reservoir. There are some beautiful to beauty spots featuring water in our county, and we want to ensure that our residents can enjoy them while they are out and about. This was a really great initiative and I was more than happy to make the funds available so that it could happen. A further five throw line boards will be installed in the Daventry area over the coming months through the Operation Unite project – which involves the police, fire and local authorities. The throw lines will be installed as a response to the tragic death of a 37-year-old man at Drayton Reservoir in October 2020.
- 2.4 **The Arson Taskforce** - During the Anti-social behaviour awareness week, the Fire and Rescue Service highlighted how they are helping to make communities safer which included the work of the Arson Task Force. Set up in 2004, the Arson Task Force (ATF) is a joint partnership between Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service and Northamptonshire Police.

The ATF has four key objectives: prevention, education, investigation and detection. Prevention is the ATF's top focus – deliberately started fires have a significant impact on communities and can lead to local areas going into disrepair, which is why doing everything possible to stop deliberate fires being set in a dangerous or even criminal way is so important.

Through the Fire Setter programme, the ATF engage with young people who start fires and commit offences of arson. The engagement will often involve schools, social services, parents or guardians and a variety of other interested agencies. Work is undertaken to try and educate young people about the impact of their choices, and to stop early signs of fire setting escalating to arson. At times people may not understand the dangers of what they are doing, or that it could have a massive impact on their future life and job prospects. Other areas of concern include void and vacant buildings. The ATF works with partners to ensure better management of void and derelict buildings. Responsible people and landowners are contacted and advised of their obligations under the law.

The ATF is a long-standing partnership between Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service and Northamptonshire Police. This working partnership is an important one for the county. It allows the two services to understand each other's data and information and risks posed across arson and deliberate fire setting. It enables the services to jointly help protect both people and property by problem solving and preventing future incidents. The ATF also deals with instances of domestic abuse where there are risks and threats of arson, supporting victims in fire safety. The team also works with partners to combat fly-tipping, knowing that dumped materials often provide the fuel for opportunistic arsonists.

- 2.5 **Fire Safety Risk Assessments** - With the easing of lockdown, Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service continues to support licensed premises. As more businesses started to open their doors, Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) have been reminding licensed businesses and licensee holders to review their Fire Safety Risk Assessments and ensure that they are following fire safety regulations. NFRS works closely with businesses across the county, providing advice and guidance to help them comply with their legal obligations. In the year leading up to the COVID lockdown in March 2020, The Protection Team carried out around 800 fire inspections at commercial premises. Whilst the pandemic restricted access to visit these premises, the Protection Team continued to support local business by providing phone consultations and visits where necessary, along with a package of information for business owners to help themselves. To support the reopening of more businesses, NFRS launched a comprehensive video showing how to calculate occupancy limits, a key fire safety consideration. The video has help business owners and managers undertake an assessment of their venue and work out the maximum capacity based on standing and seating floor space, as well as size and number of fire exits. NFRS encouraged every business opening their doors for the first time in many months, or those extending access to indoor facilities, to review fire safety plans and procedures. NFRS have also proactively contacted key business

types across the county to arrange fire safety inspections and as restrictions lift, along with carrying out unannounced visits.

2.6 **Portable Mannequins** - I have provided funding for new portable mannequins that will help to ensure that lifesaving resuscitation skills can be taught more easily across Northamptonshire. The new mannequins will be used by the Emergency Services Cadets to teach young people how to carry out CPR and will also be available for the Prevention team at Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service to use at community organisations and events. The dolls are easily transportable as they can be fitted into a small bag and are self-inflatable. The ten CPR kits will make a 'big difference' as a realistic training aid and I was honoured to be able to support our Emergency Services Cadets with funding for this new training equipment. I do hope they never have to put it into practice, but the skill of being able to save a life is a great thing and I am proud to have been able to support their learning. The Emergency Services Cadets is open to young people aged from 13 to 18 who have an interest in any of the emergency services, whether it's police, fire or ambulance. Cadets who study in all three of the specialties are all taught resuscitation skills, including making sure that the area in which they are treating someone is safe and clear from debris. Cadets are taught to check for danger, make sure that the airways are clear and that the person they are treating is breathing.

2.7 **Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service Performance** – As part of our ongoing commitment to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the Fire and Rescue Service, we have reviewed and improved the manner in which NFRS report their performance. The reports I now receive provide an oversight of performance and demand trends over a three -year period, which enhances my ability to scrutinise the work of the Fire and Rescue Service and hold the Chief Fire Officer to account on behalf of the residents of Northamptonshire. I have attached a copy of the most recent performance report at Appendix A.

### **3. Holding the Chief Fire Officer to account**

3.1 The purpose of the Fire Accountability Board is to support the PFCC in exercising the statutory duties of holding the Chief Fire Officer to account and forms part of a wider ranging programme of assurance across the breadth of Fire and Rescue activities.

3.2 The business of the Board covers areas of concern in performance and service delivery at a strategic level, strategic budget setting, medium term financial planning and other matters requiring ongoing levels of assurance.

### **3.3 Fire Accountability Board 9 February 2021**

3.4 **Budget conditions letter update** - As part of the budget setting process for 2020/2021, the Commissioner and Chief Fire Officer agreed a budget conditions letter outlining areas that were to be delivered in this financial year. The Commissioner requires a paper which demonstrates the progress made to date on

the delivery of the agreed outcomes and measures. The Commissioner was largely assured that NFRS either had or were on track to deliver the conditions as set out and agreed between him and Chief Fire Officer for the financial year 202/21. He was assured that many of the conditions and already been met and particularly in relation to more effective financial management. Some areas still required improvements and these, as such might be reflected again in the forthcoming 2021/22 letter.

**3.5 Road Safety** - A key part of the Commissioners Police and Crime Plan and Fire and Rescue Plan relates to road safety. The Commissioner requests a report that outlines the activity the NFRS undertake in relation to road safety delivery and interventions. The Commissioner was satisfied and assured with the approach taken by NFRS in relation to the delivery of road safety, in particular their partnership approaches via NSRA. He accepted that there had been some decline in certain activity in the past months as a result of the Covid pandemic, meaning that face to face activity had reduced but was assured that plans existed to restart this at an appropriate time in the future.

### **3.6 Fire Accountability Board 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

**3.7 Performance update** - The Commissioner requires a report of the performance against the measures and metrics contained within the IRMP. The Commissioner was assured that good progress continued to be made by NFRS in achieving the metrics relating to delivery of the IRMP and Fire and Rescue Plan. He stated that for future reports he was looking to move to presentation of the performance data and metrics on a rolling three-year trend as opposed to a quarter by quarter comparison. He raised with the Chief Fire Officer the sustainability of the improvements in appliance response times, now that some of the increased availability of RDS seen in the earlier days of the Covid pandemic were returning to normality. The Chief Fire Officer provided reassurance that he was confident that he and his team had in place plans to continue maintaining the positive results and trajectory seen in this regard over the past 18 months.

**3.8 Covid 19 Response** - During 2020 HMICFRS undertook an inspection in 44 Fire and Rescue Services across England and Wales. This inspection was to assess their response to the Covid 19 pandemic. These reports were published on 22nd January 2021. The Commissioner request a formal presentation of the finding of the report relating to NFRS, with if required, plans to respond to any recommendations and to highlight positive practice. The sector wide inspections were carried out between September and December 2020 and were largely positive. The Commissioner thanked all staff in NFRS that had contributed to the positive response to the pandemic. He welcomed the positive HMICFRS inspection report on the local response by the service and was assured by the positivity of the report. There were three areas for consideration from the inspection report. These were subject to discussion and the Commissioner was provided with assurances from the Chief Fire Officer that effective processes were in place to continue to progress against these observations.

### **3.9 Fire Accountability Board 13<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

**3.10 Budget conditions letter update** - As part of the budget setting process for 2020/21, the Commissioner and Chief Fire Officer agreed a Budget conditions letter outlining areas that were to be delivered in this financial year. The Commissioner requires a paper which demonstrates the delivery against the agreed outcomes and measures. The Commissioner recognised the work that had been undertaken to meet most of the conditions in the budget letter. He specifically recognised the early progress in respect of Interoperability between Police and Fire and the enabling services work in ICT. However, the Commissioner was clear in his expectation that there is still more work to do, particularly in regard to ICT and ensuring a savings plan is identified by Fire to balance the medium-term plan. The Commissioner was assured in relation to increased pump availability and response times but made the point that response times need continuous management oversight to ensure the improvements are maintained.

**3.11 Grenfell Enquiry** - The Commissioner requires a quarterly update on the action plans and recommendations from the Grenfell Inquiry along with any resource or investment requirements arising from this. The Commissioner remains assured that NFRS have in place an effective response plan for actions arising from the Grenfell phase 1 inquiry. He sought the commitment of the Chief Fire Officer to ensure that progress continued on the same trajectory and the completion of remaining actions.

### **3.12 Fire Accountability Board 11<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

**3.13 Internal audits** - The Commissioner requested a report relating to the internal audits which have taken place relating to NFRS in the financial year 2020/2021. The report provided an overview of the internal audit programme, outlined all the findings in relation to levels of assurance for each audit, whether they are acceptable or not, progress against those recommendations and timescales for completion of all of them. The Commissioner was assured that the NFRS internal audit programme was examining the correct areas of the business post the 2019 governance change and that progress was being made in relation to the recommendations and the activity required as a result. He noted that several actions following recommendations had slipped and was clear that he preferred realistic timescales for required changes to be implemented, rather than identifying potentially unrealistic early completion dates that then needed to be adjusted. Whilst articulating that further progress needed to be made in a few areas, such as asset management and in regard to some financial controls he was overall assured that positive progress was being made.

### **3.14 Fire Accountability Board 8<sup>th</sup> June 2021**

**3.15 Capital Investment and Savings Plan** - The Commissioner requested a paper that outlines and presents the revised Capital Investment Plan for 2021/2022, alongside a proposed Savings Plan. Assistant Chief Officer Paul Bullen provided an overview of the Capital Investment Plan which was last presented to the Commissioner in April 2021. The paper contains a narrative with appendices and a separate spreadsheet

covering Fleet, Estates, ICT, Operational equipment and Financing. The Commissioner was assured that good progress has been made in preparing the savings plan, some savings can be immediately taken forward and other options for which further work will take place. Reserves are now sufficient to meet both unforeseen risks and to smooth the impact on timing of savings plans or funding receipts. The Commissioner was assured by the further work on the Capital programme which he has approved with a review in the Autumn to include ESN and any other unspecified areas.

**3.16 HMICFRS Inspection** - The Commissioner requested a paper that outlines evidenced progress against all recommendations from the HMICFRS Effectiveness, Efficiency and People Inspection 2018/19, as well as articulating preparations for the next planned round of inspections. Following the November 2018 inspection, the Service was informed by HMICFRS of two areas of concern. As a result, it was required to submit an action plan setting out how they would address them. The Commissioner recognised the good progress made by NFRS to issues identified in the 2018 HMICFRS inspection, particularly in relation to the identified causes for concern. The Commissioner sought reassurance that the service was properly prepared, and able to evidence, all the positive work it has undertaken in readiness for the next HMICFRS reinspection. Whilst the Commissioner was assured that progress has been made, he suggested that the Service was better able to articulate and evidence the areas where improvements had been completed. Where improvements were ongoing, they should also be able to clearly articulate why this was the case.

**3.17 NFRS performance update** - The Commissioner requires a report on the performance against the measures and metrics contained within the IRMP. The Commissioner recognised the work undertaken by the service in order to revise the quarterly performance report. The report was clear and articulated the key performance areas for NFRS and the delivery of the IRMP. The Commissioner was assured that progress was continuing in relation to pump availability and response times. The Commissioner discussed falling demand, a trend that can be seen year and urged the Chief Fire Officer to consider the opportunities that this provided for reform.

### **3.18 Fire Accountability Board 13<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

**3.19 Fire and Rescue Service Code of Ethics** The NFCC, APCC and LGA have recently agreed a national Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services. The Commissioner requested a paper that highlighted and outlined the key elements to this code and informed him as to how the Chief Fire Officer intends to incorporate this into existing service values, internal performance and misconduct processes and future promotion and development processes. The Commissioner welcomed the report from the Chief Fire Officer and was assured that the Chief Fire Officer and his team had responded positively to this recently agreed national code of ethics. He was grateful for the fact that they had already started work to properly embed this across the organisation, including into development, selection and recruitment, discipline and promotion processes. He indicated that he would be looking to raise

this at accountability board again in 9 months' time to seek examples of where this had made a difference.

**3.20 Internal Audit Update** The Commissioner requested a paper, following the Internal Audit paper from May 2021, which provides an overview of all internal audits, not reported in May 2021, to include all recommendations made from audits undertaken in 2020/2021, whether these recommendations have been accepted, progress against their completion and where not completed outlines the timescales for their completion. The Commissioner was assured that Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service had governance processes in place to receive, action and monitor internal audit recommendations and that the overall audit report position was more positive than last year. The Commissioner made the point that those areas where audit had reported less than satisfactory levels of compliance this year were broadly the same as those the previous year and he set a clear expectation that these areas would demonstrate at least a satisfactory level of compliance next year.

### **3.21 Fire Accountability Board 11<sup>th</sup> August 2021**

**3.22 Budget outturn position and Treasury Management Outturn 2020/2021** - The Commissioner considered a report which provided details of the final outturn position for Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service for the financial year 2020/2021. The report included the return relating to Treasury Management. Having reflected on the report, the Commissioner was pleased with the progress that has been made whilst acknowledging there is still some way to go. This was also acknowledged by the external auditors who recognised the significant progress that has been made, despite the fragile state of NCFRA reserves at the time of the governance transfer. In terms of the Budget Outturn report, The Commissioner was assured that he had seen further improvement in the budget and financial management from staff at NFRS. However, some areas require robust financial management and both Chief Fire Officer and Chief Finance Officer assured him that there was a plan in place to tackle these remaining areas. The Commissioner agreed three carry forward proposals that were articulated in the paper presented to him. With regard to the Treasury Management Outturn report, the Commissioner noted the paper presented to him. He was assured that there were effective processes in place, that complied with CIPFA guidelines relating to Treasury Management. The Commissioner noted the low level of income generated from investments but recognised that this was as a result of the current economic climate and the need to be prudent with public money.

**3.23 Call handling and command and despatch system update** - NFRS currently use call handling and command and despatch systems that will reach end of life and be unsupported in January and March 2023, respectively. Current arrangements for these services are in place for joint operation with Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service and NFRS are during July 2021 issuing an invitation to tender for replacements with WFRS. The capital replacement programme has a sum allocated for this and the Commissioner has agreed to this RFQ process on the basis that the Chief Fire Officer will need to identify savings to pay for any product that he wishes

to procure over this amount where no option exists to deliver it for the amount set aside. The Commissioner requested a report that demonstrated the progress being made to identify where additional savings will be made if this is a course that the CFO intends to take and described the business continuity plan relating to the loss of either of these systems and how this would work if there was a permanent loss of these system ahead of any new system going live. The Commissioner was pleased to see that progress was being made on the tender for a replacement system. He reminded the Chief Fire Officer that there was an agreed financial envelope for the procurement of a new system and that in the event that the Chief Fire Officer wished to procure a product beyond this envelope, he would not sign an order until he was assured that the appropriate savings had been identified to meet this gap.

#### **4. Summary of PFCC Decisions (Fire and Rescue Authority) taken**

- [NFRS Decision Record 46 – Fire Budget and Precept 2021 and 2122](#)
- [NFRS Decision Record 47 – NFRS Insurance Variation](#)
- [NFRS Decision Record 48 – NFRS Pension Administration](#)
- [NFRS Decision Record 49 – Units 1-5 Baron Avenue](#)
- [NFRS Decision Record 50 – Type B Contract Variation](#)
- [NFRS Decision Record – 51 Belinda Ferrison House](#)
- [NFRS Decision Record 52 Occupational Health and Wellbeing](#)
- [NFRS Decision Record 53 Basic Occupational Health services](#)
- [NFRS Decision Record 54 Mobile Device Terminals](#)
- [NFRS Decision Record 55 Aerial Appliances](#)
- [NFRS Decision Record 56 PPE Contract variation](#)
- [NFRS Decision Record 57 Aerial Turntable Ladder Appliance Contract](#)
- [NFRS Decision Record 58 Smoke Alarms](#)
- [NFRS Decision Record 59 Digital Radios](#)
- [NFRS Decision Record 60 Joint IT Team](#)
- [NFRS Decision Record 61 B type appliances variation](#)
- [NFRS Decision Record 62 NFRS Youth Engagement Officer](#)
- [NFRS Decision Record 63 Compressor Replacement](#)
- [NFRS Decision Record 64 NFRS Cleaning Contract](#)
- [NFRS Decision Record 65 NFRS Pay Awards](#)

#### **5. Recommendations**

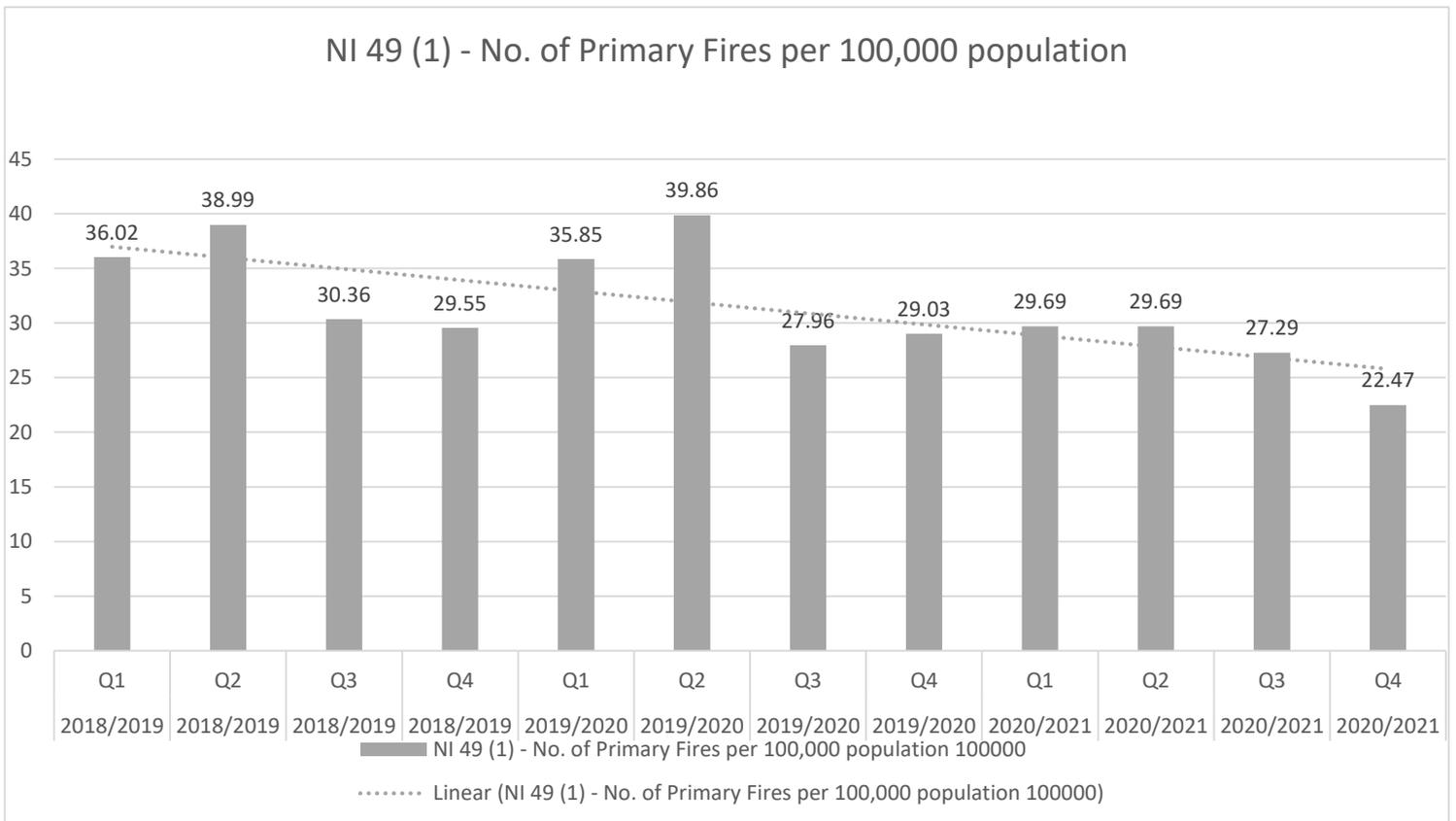
- 5.1 That the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel considers the content of the report and its appendix.

**Stephen Mold**  
Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

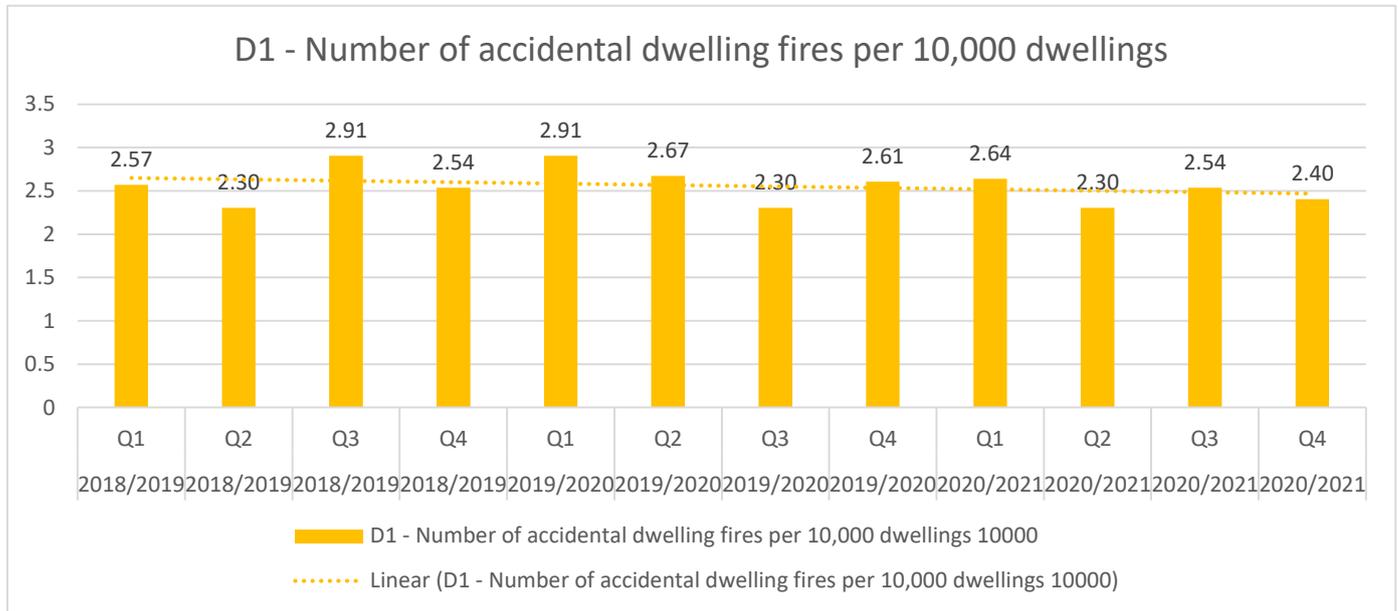
**Community outcome Measures:**

The graphs below reflect the IRMP Community Outcome Measures against the national indicators. As requested by the accountability board, the Service have supplied the information over the current and previous 3 year period to provide a longer term view of performance and progress.

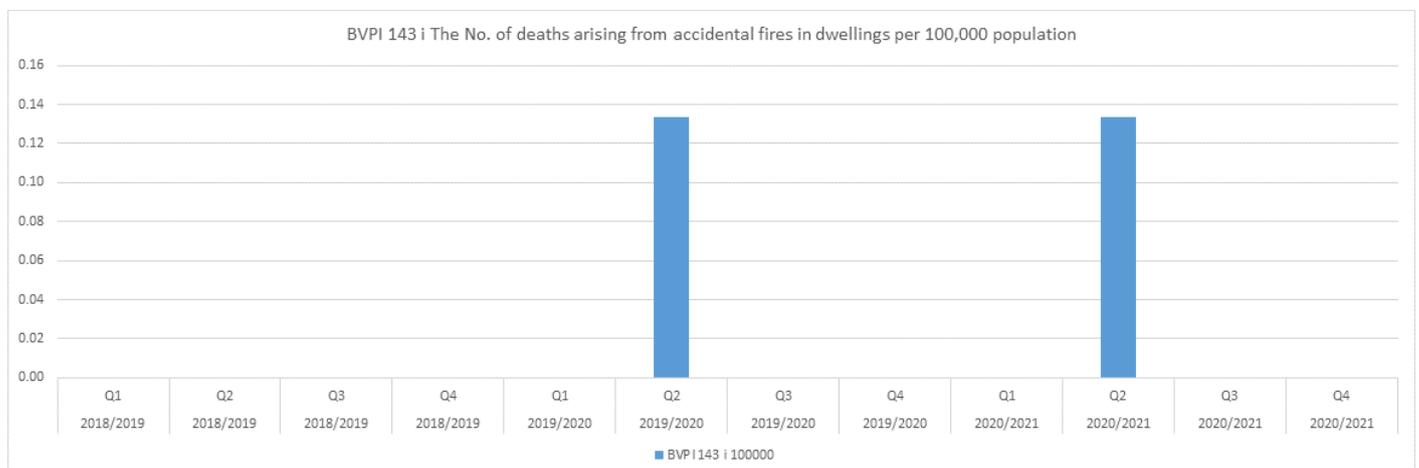
The graph below details the number of primary fires per 100,000 population. Since Quarter 2 2019/20 there has been a continual decrease in all overall primary fire numbers.

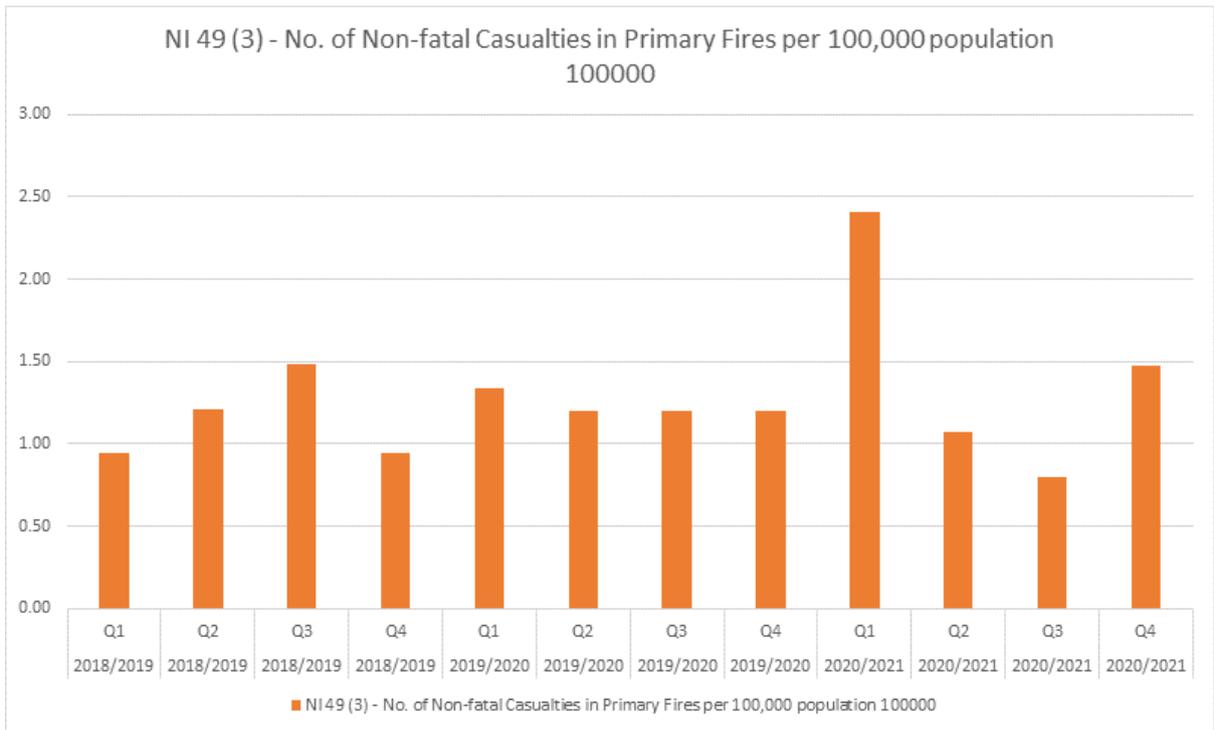
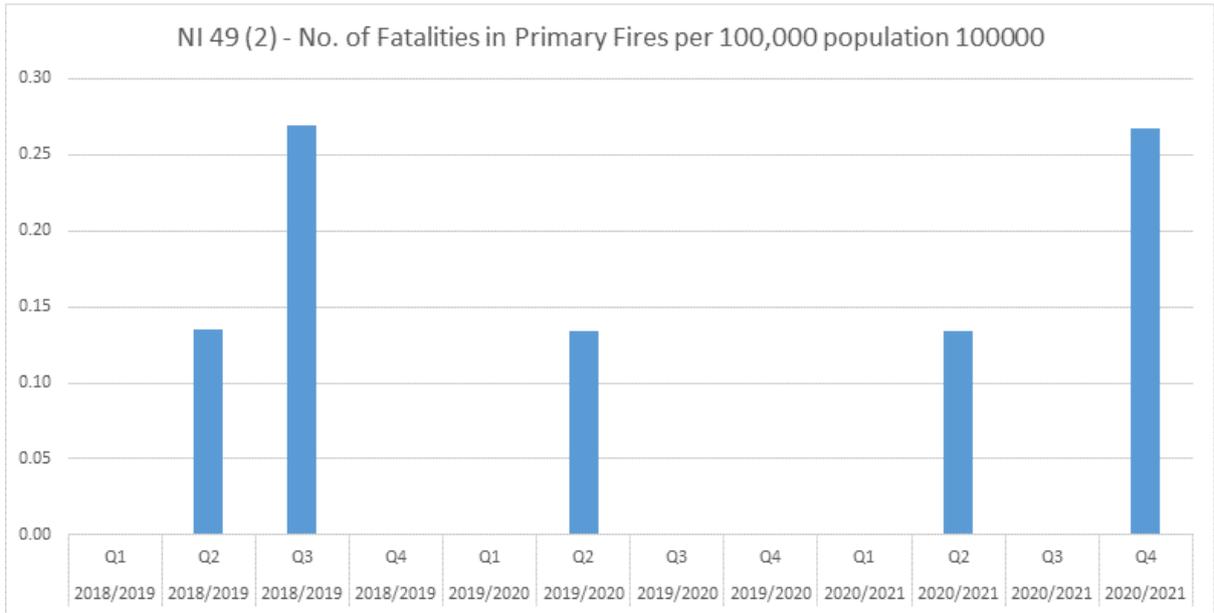


The graph below, Number of accidental dwelling fires per 10,000 dwellings shows that accidental dwelling fires appear stable. They don't appear to have decreased during Lockdown, where more people have been home during the day. This could be argued that fires are being detected without requiring fire service intervention.

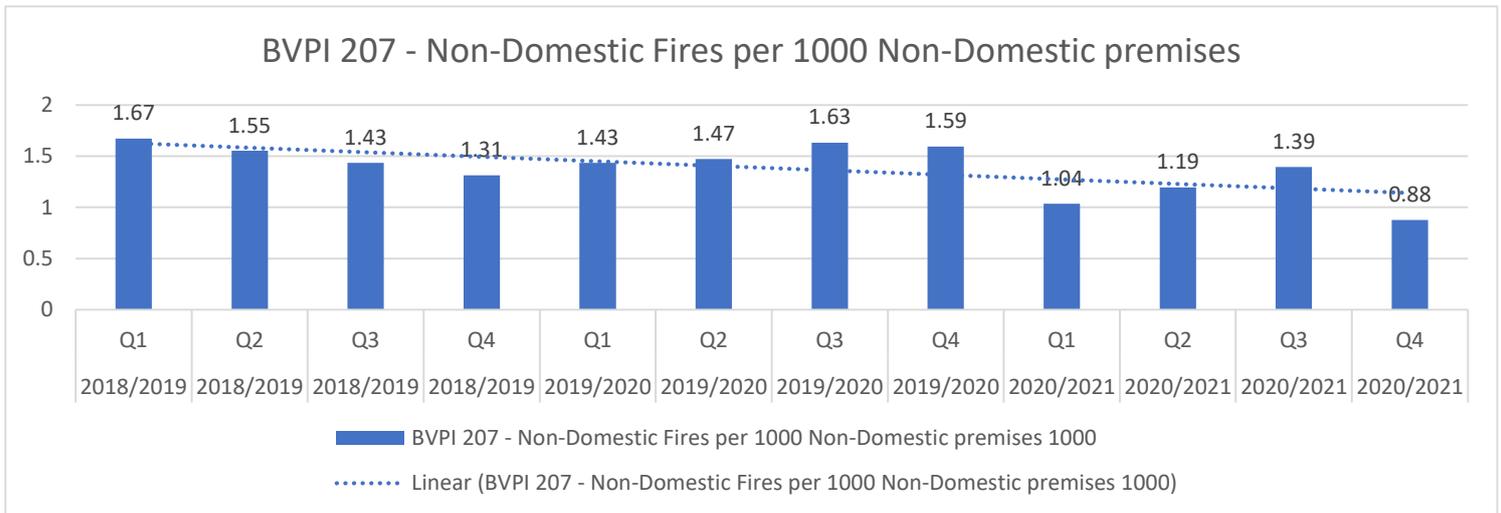


The number of deaths arising from accidental fires in dwellings increased in Quarter 2, 2020/21 due to 1 fire fatal.



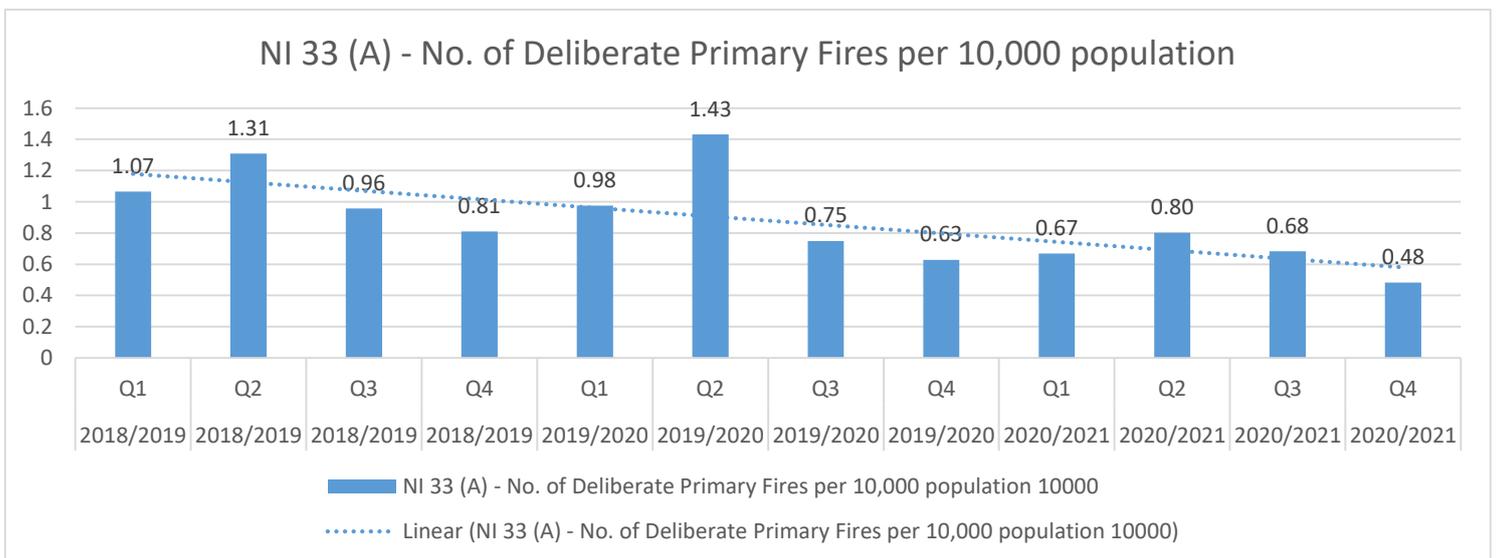


There has been significant reductions in the recent quarters regarding non-domestic fires. This may be also linked to recent lockdowns, however this would require further investigative work to understand reasons why.

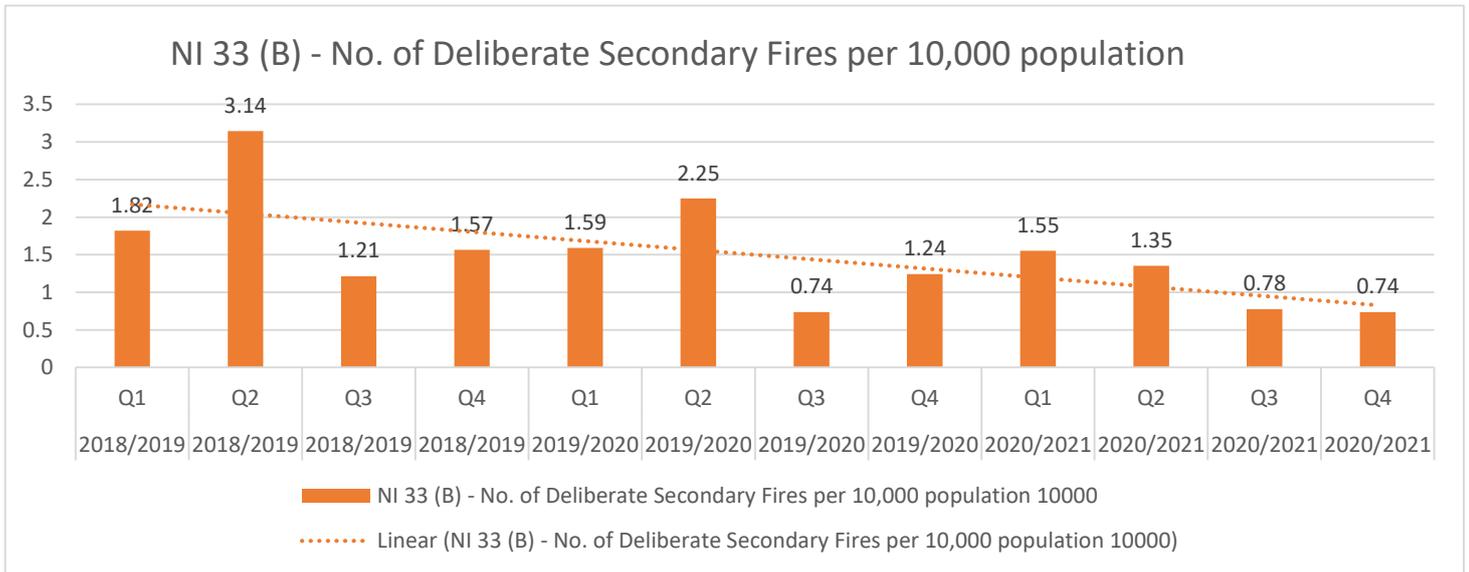


This also remains the case with regards to the following two graphs regarding deliberate primary and secondary fires. Deliberate Primary Fires have reduced generally throughout the lockdown period.

The Service saw a rise in deliberate secondary fires during Quarter 1 of 2020/21. Some of these fires relate to Fires in the Open Small and there was a rise in deliberately set fires of household and domestic waste, which could be attributed to the closure of refuse centres.



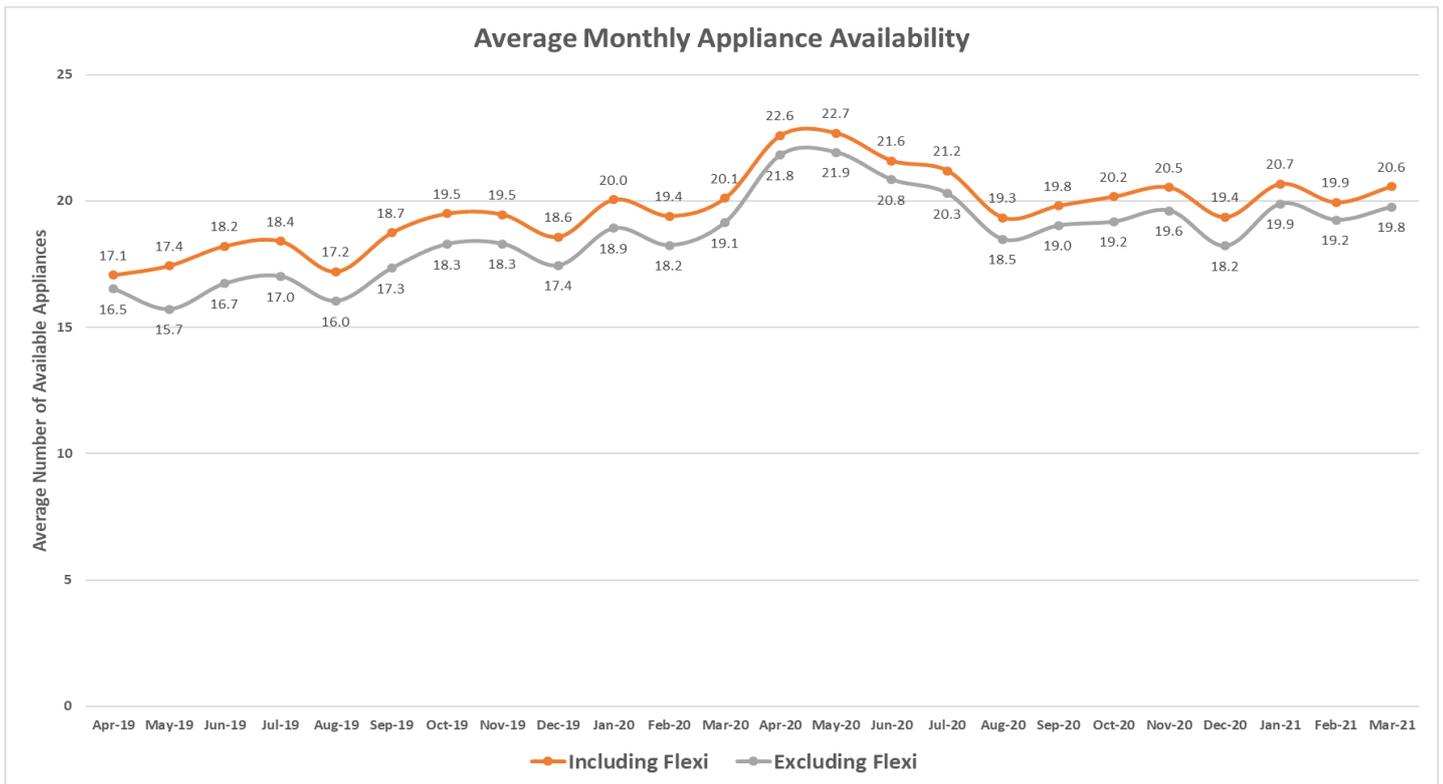
With regards to both categories, it is still too early to tell if this drop will be sustained. Quarter 3 and Quarter 4 of the previous year (2019/20) was showing a marked decline compared to “normal levels”.



## Appliance Availability

**IRMP 2019-2022:** We will maintain a minimum of 14 fire appliances to support our strategic response capability.

The Service remains under 0% for percentage of time under 14 appliances (with and without flexi). As of March 2021, the Service availability is consistently at 18 pumps or over **81.18%** (93.15% with flexi).

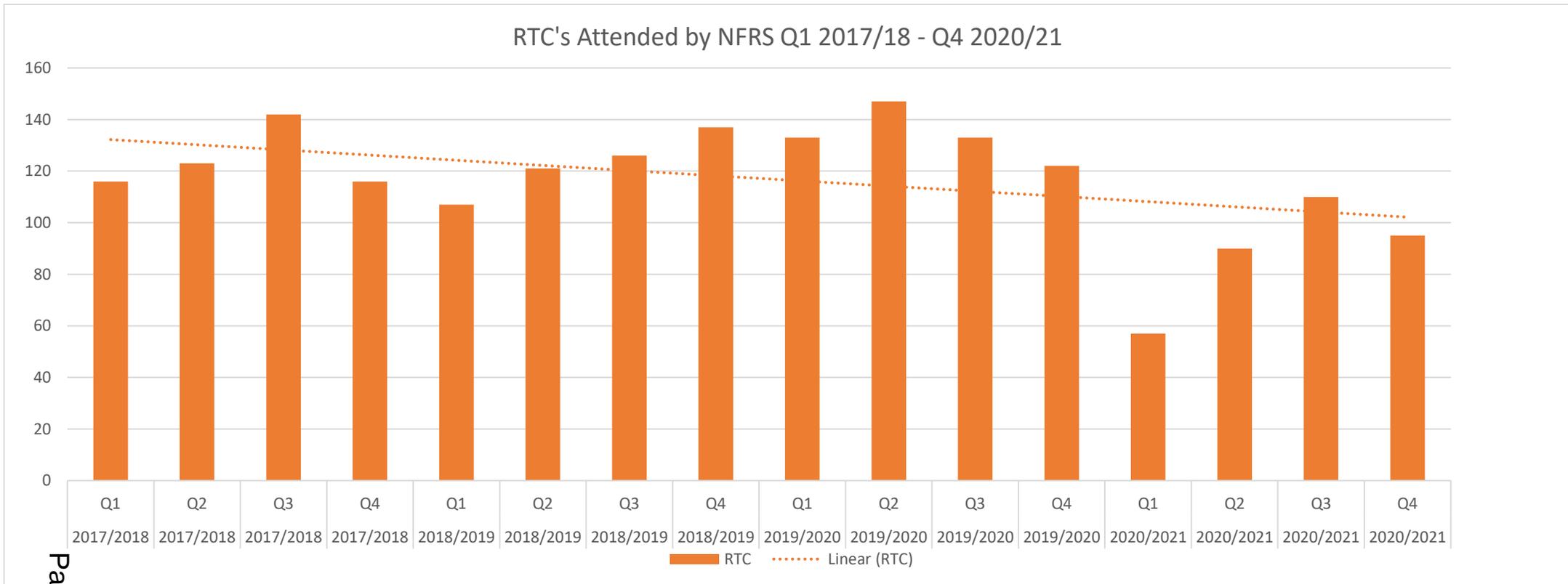


## Killed or Seriously Injured

Organisational RTC Performance Data:

RTC totals, fatalities, injuries and rescues are monitored monthly and recorded on the Organisational Scorecard. The table above shows the Quarters 1, 2, 3 and 4 comparisons for 2017/18 up to 2020/21, YTD data.

In Quarter one 2020/21 there was an overall reduction RTC's which can be attributed to the lockdown period. RTC's have reduced significantly during 2020/21 with the lowest recorded RTC fatalities at Quarter 4 compared with previous years.



The graph below shows the Extrication and Release of persons from RTC's. Again it is too early to show if this drop will continue or increase as people start to commute as lockdown releases.

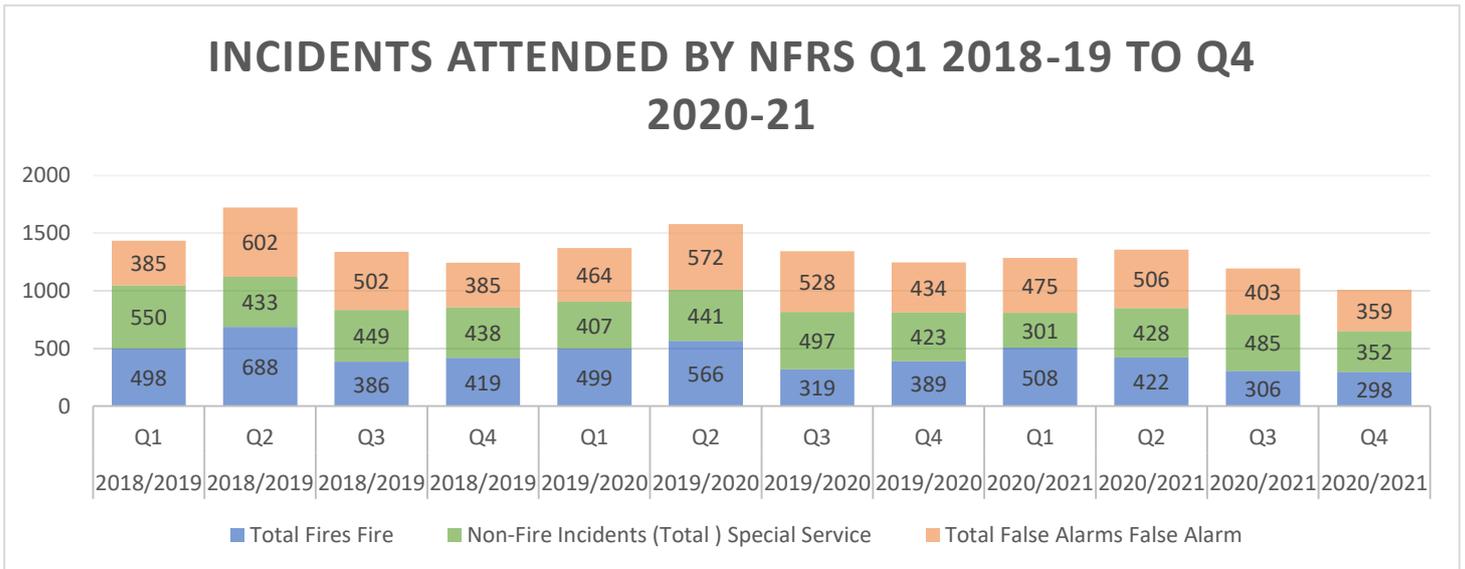


## Incident Data.

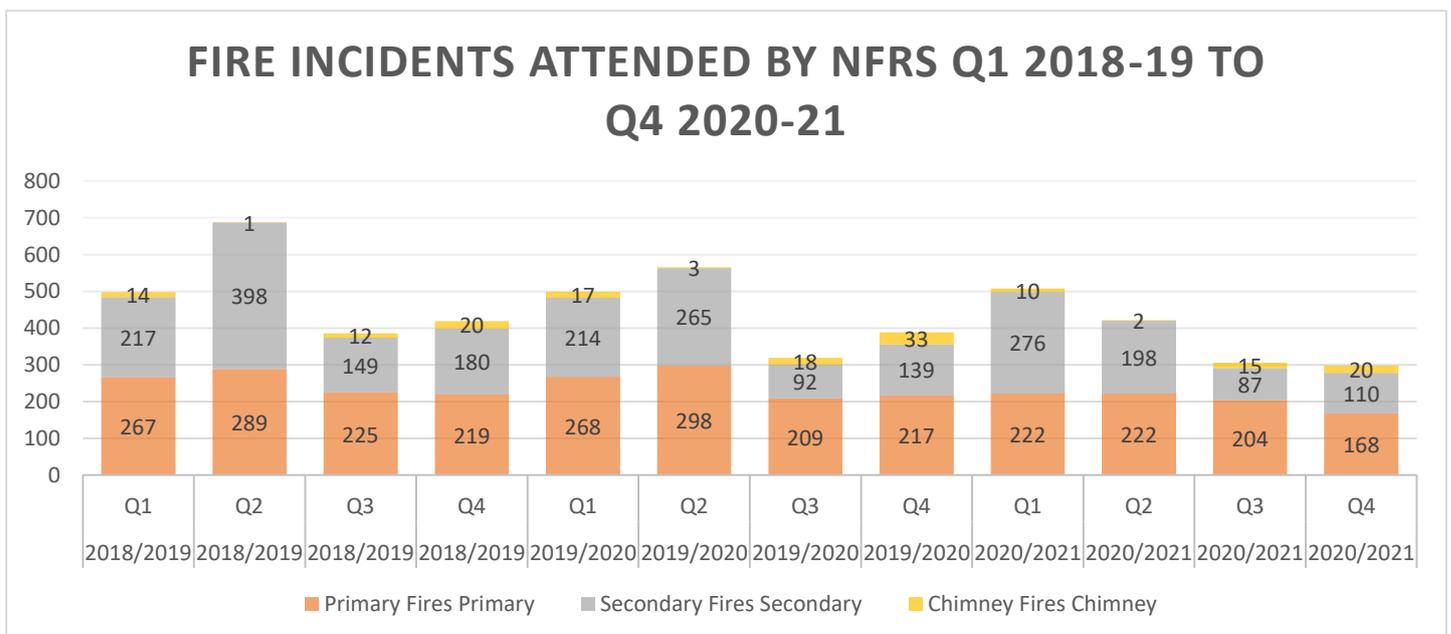
All data from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

The table below provides a breakdown of the number of incidents of the current year and over a previous 3 year period.

The graph below shows the total incidents per Quarter from Quarter 1 2018/19 – Quarter 4 2020/21. Fire related incidents continue to decrease year on year, with spikes in Quarter 2 (over all years) which is concurrent with the summer period.



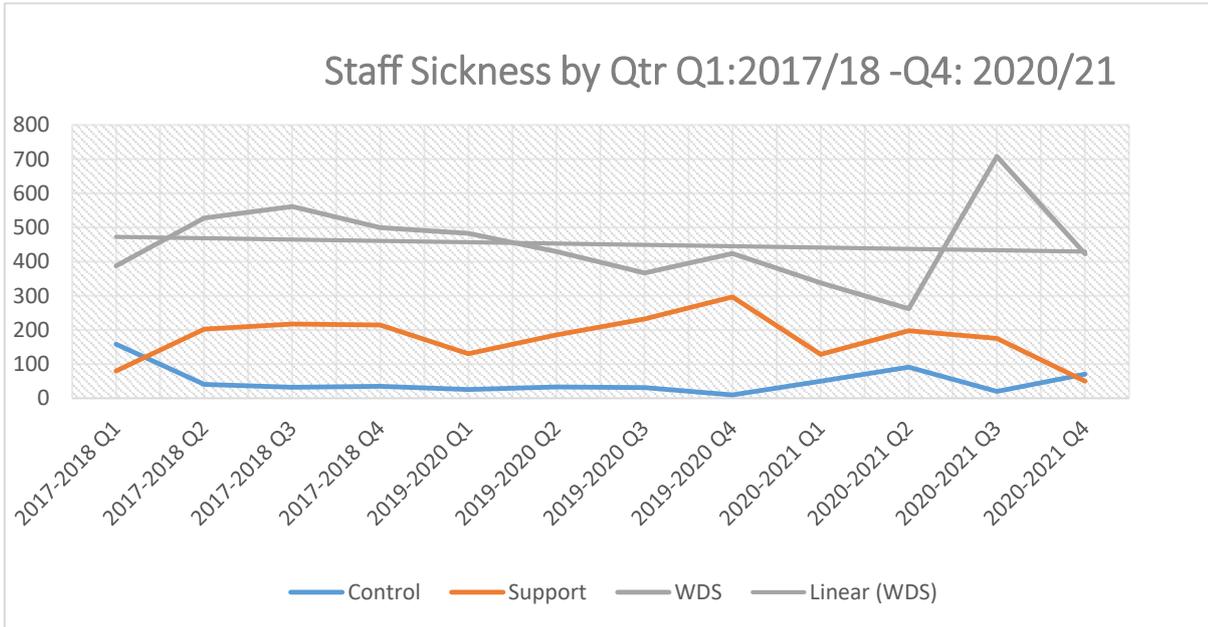
The graph below breaks down the type of fires attended. The spike in Quarter 1 2020/21 refers to the increase in secondary fires which can be attributed to a rise in deliberate secondary fires.



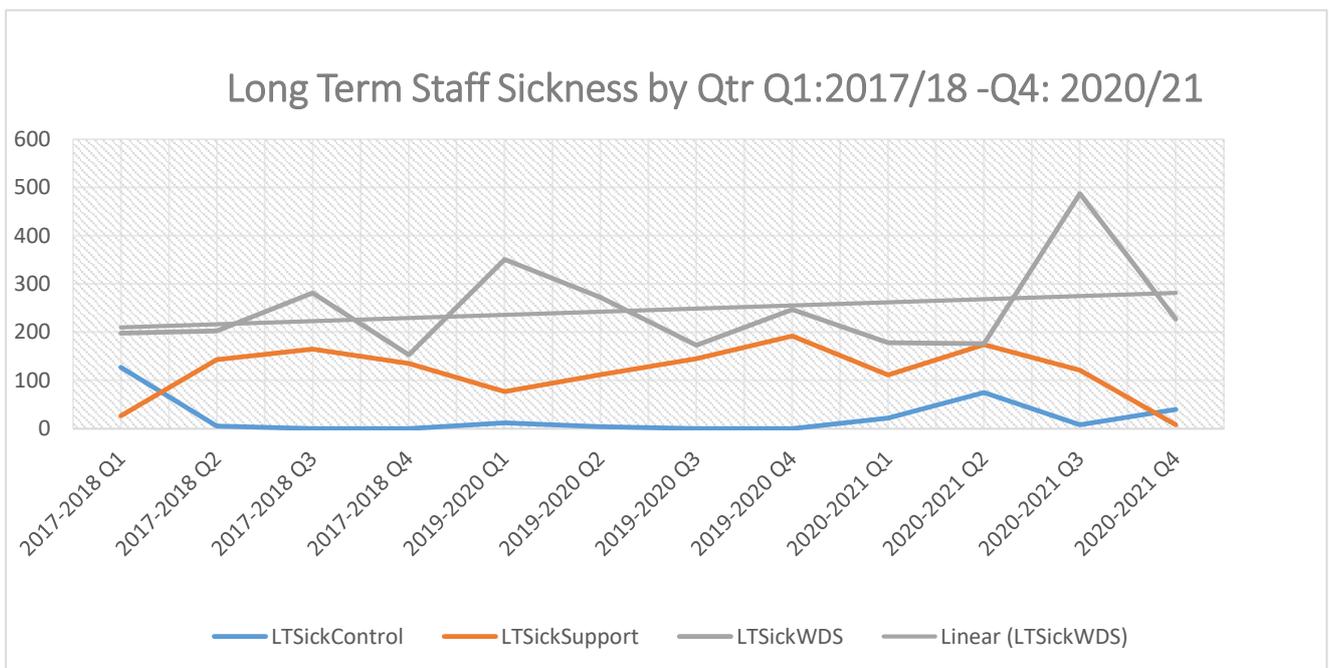
False Alarms covers both Domestic and Commercial alarms. Work is being carried out to identify and address false alarm calls.

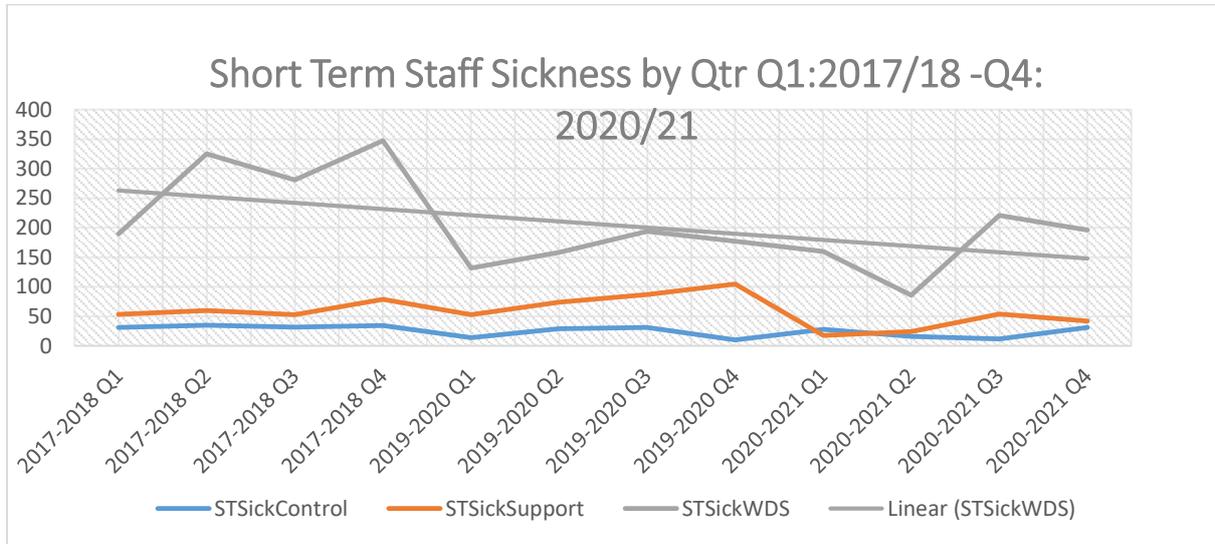
## Sickness Data

The graph below shows all staff sickness over the previous 3 year period. There was a spike in WDS sickness during Quarter 3 2020/21 which is concurrent with the national spike in Covid-19 cases.



The graphs below shows the breakdown of long term and short term sickness across all staffing groups. The rise in long term and short term sickness peaks, as previously advised, was during the rise in Covid-19 cases.

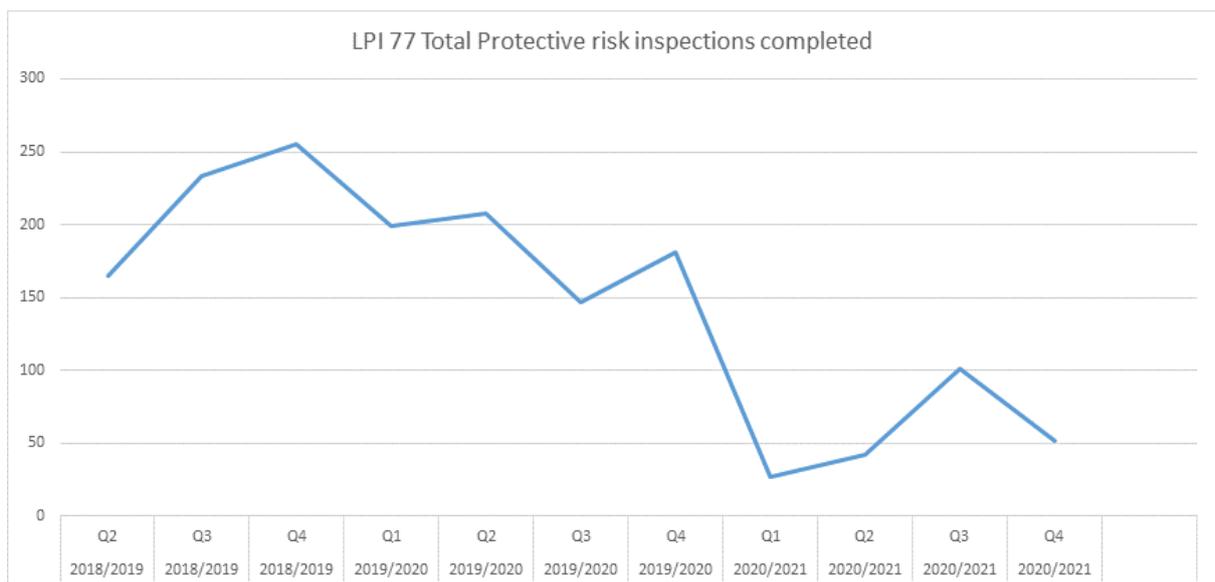


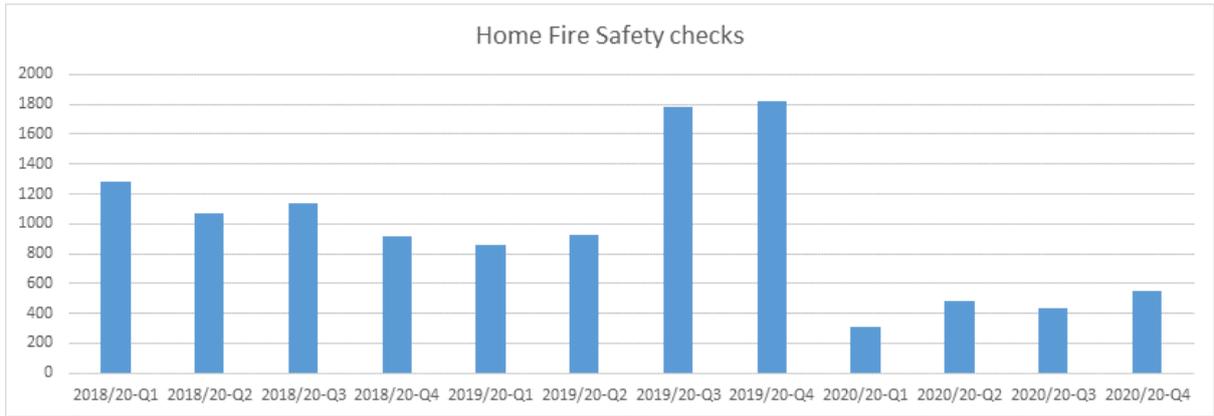


## Protection and Prevention

Throughout the Covid period the Service has had to respond to the lockdown by delivering its services differently due to the live risk of Covid-19 transmission through face to face activity.

For this reason, there is an impact on the metrics for home fire safety checks (Prevention) and the risk based inspection programme (Protection). In this period (although 'very high risk' inspections for both have continued throughout), the way services were delivered during this period were adapted to ensure Prevention activities and fire safety audits continued.







**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE, FIRE & CRIME PANEL**

9<sup>th</sup> September 2021

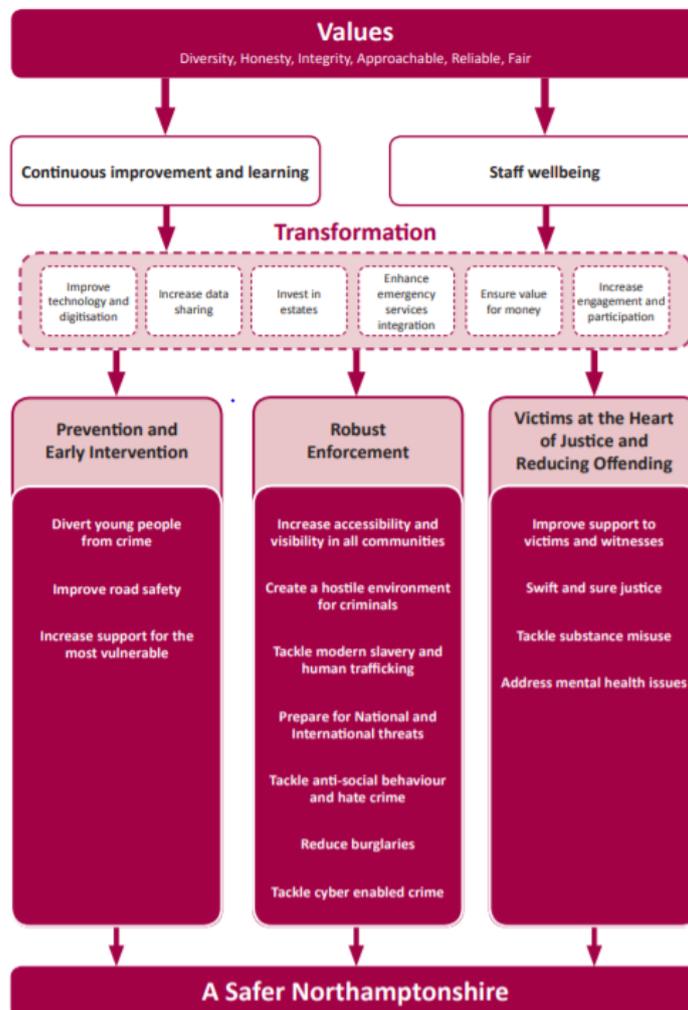
**OFFICE OF THE NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE FIRE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER  
POLICE AND CRIME PLAN UPDATE**

**1. Introduction**

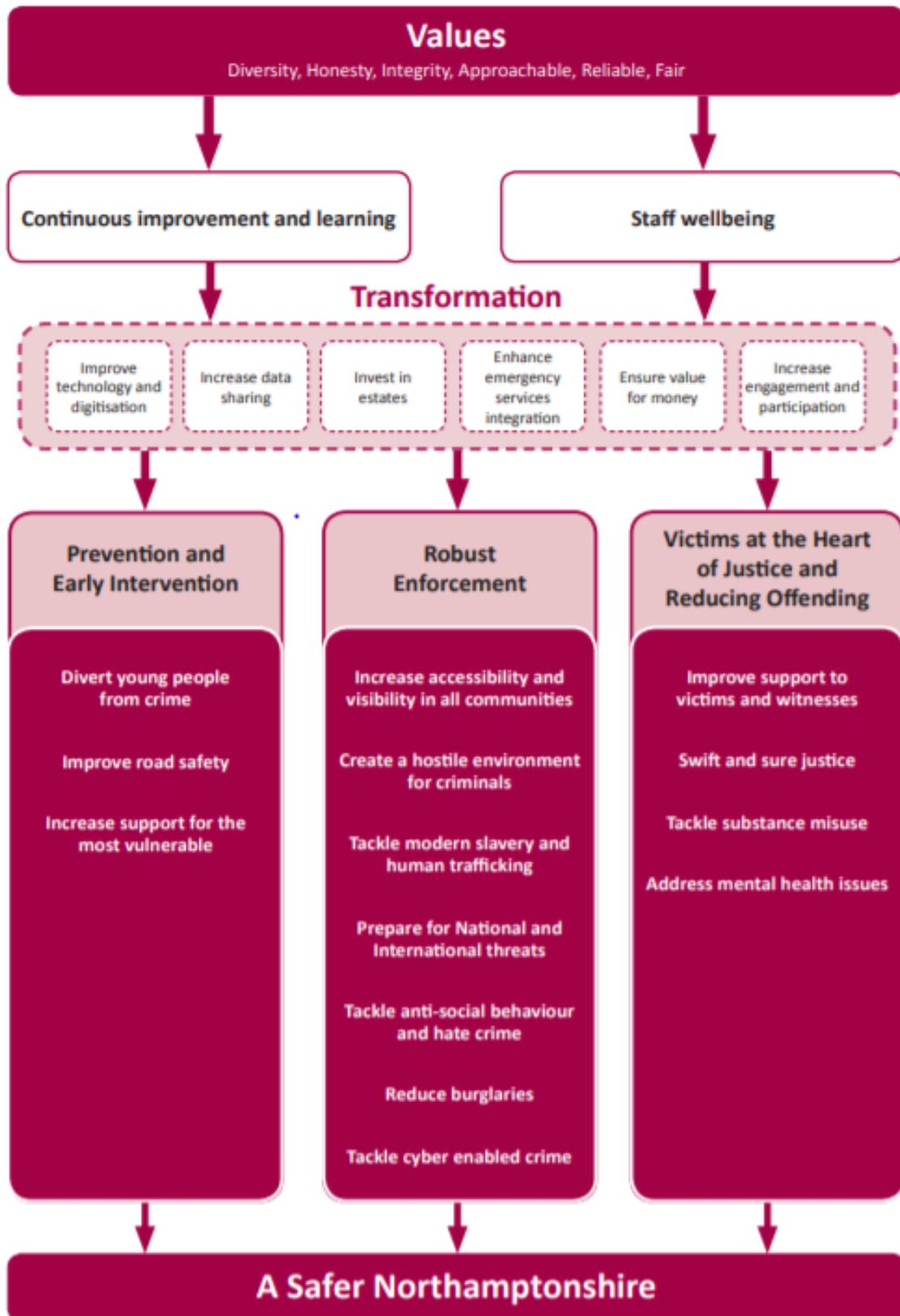
1.1 This report updates the Panel on the work of the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commission and the progress being made in relation to the delivery of the new Police and Crime Plan for Northamptonshire which is set out in detail in appendix A.

**2. Delivering the Police and Crime Plan**

**Plan on a Page**



# Plan on a Page



## **2.1 Transformation**

### **2.2 Meeting with the Prime Minister**

Last month, I joined fellow Commissioners from around the country at a meeting with The Prime Minister Boris Johnson at Downing Street. The briefing focussed on the Government's new Beating Crime Plan, which sets out its strategic approach to cutting serious violence and neighbourhood crime, including burglary and anti-social behaviour. A panel discussion that included Home Secretary Priti Patel and Policing Minister Kit Malthouse, covered the wider criminal justice system, early intervention and work with young people, and police pay. During this meeting, I was able to explain the success of Northamptonshire Police's approach to burglary: the Force already visits all victims of domestic burglary and gives the crime a focus that has significantly reduced the number of incidents in the county. I also took the opportunity to talk about our focus on young people and early intervention to improve life chances and prevent crime from happening in the first place.

I was pleased to hear the Government's commitment to ensuring that every element of the criminal justice system needs to work together to ensure swift and speedy justice for victims and for people accused of crime. The Government's Beating Crime Plan puts such a focus on PCCs working with partners to prevent reoffending and to stop crime from happening in the first place, and I welcome that. In Northamptonshire, we are already working hard to create safer communities and to focus on preventing young people from becoming involved in crime, with other projects including the Youth Team and the tri-service Emergency Services Cadets. It was great to hear the Prime Minister restate his commitment to policing and to tackling crime and I look forward to getting on and working with partners, to make that happen.

### **2.3 Prevention and Early Intervention**

- **Divert young people from crime**
- **Improve road safety**
- **Increase support for the most vulnerable**

#### **Early Intervention**

A key priority in my Police and Crime Plan has been early intervention which helps to keep people out of the criminal justice system and provides support. More than 900 families across the county have received support from the ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) Team, a project set up to provide early intervention in domestic or family related incidents. The ACE Team was set up in February 2019 and over the past two years, has helped 934 families, with a total of 1,736 children and young people.

The Team works with families in situations where police have been called to domestic incidents that are unlikely to result in prosecutions, or when they are referred by a school if a young person is at risk of exclusion, for example. Workers from the ACE team work with families to offer support to prevent issues from escalating further, including giving guidance on issues like domestic abuse, relationships, parenting, online safety, mental health and substance abuse. Their work is complemented by four specialist Domestic Abuse Support Officers, whose role is to help people in incidents where the police have been called specifically to a domestic incident regarded as low level. Since the appointment in January of two officers and a further two in June, the Domestic Abuse officers have dealt with 594 incidents, supporting 1034 children.

This team is providing a really valuable service, meeting the needs of families who, without some support, are likely to come into contact with Northamptonshire Police and ultimately, may enter the criminal justice system. This work ultimately enhances the life chances of children and young people and I believe, prevents them being involved with or a victim of crime later in life.

The information above provides an overall viewpoint of what the ACE team have achieved since their inception over 2 years ago. I have provided a latest overview of the most up to date figures for the team's performance within Appendix A detailed further below in the report. This commentary forms part of my current Performance Framework in ensuring that delivery of services is being provided in an effective manner.

## **2.4 Robust Enforcement**

- **Increase accessibility and visibility in all communities**
- **Create a hostile environment for criminals**
- **Tackle modern slavery and human trafficking**
- **Prepare for National and International threats**
- **Tackle anti-social behaviour and hate crime**
- **Reduce burglaries**
- **Tackle cyber enabled crime**

### **Neighbourhood Policing**

We now have more police officers than ever before, and I am committed to making sure that they provide high quality services that keep Northamptonshire safe and make its residents feel safer than ever.

Working in partnership with the Chief Constable, there is an increased focus on neighbourhood policing, with named officers in all rural and urban communities and a greater focus on community safety activity. As part of this work, I also want to see

work to reduce the harm from domestic abuse and on early intervention to protect children and prevent crime.

The renewed focus on neighbourhood policing has taken a further step further as we now have 94 Police Constables, 83 PCSOs, almost 20 Sergeants and 4 Inspectors on our Neighbourhood policing teams as at the end of August. In addition to this, new livered vehicles have been introduced to help teams become more visible and accessible in their local communities. The additional officers and new vehicles are part of the changes to local policing I announced earlier in the year, which will see the number of neighbourhood constables increase from 50 to 100 by mid-2022, with the ambition for a further 60 by 2023. The increase in officer numbers means, for the first time, a cohort of new recruits will begin their policing career in a neighbourhood team.

I know how important it is to people that their police are truly local – visible, accessible and focussing on the crime that matters to them where they live and work. We have the benefit of more than 200 extra officers in the past four years, with more than 100 still to be recruited by 2023 and I am determined that we now make the most of this and get more police out on the beat and into the heart of the community. I am delighted to see the new recruits begin their policing career in such a vital role.

Neighbourhood policing teams across Northamptonshire have also received a welcome boost after eight new Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) completed their initial training. The recruits successfully completed seven weeks in the classroom and have now joined their neighbourhood policing team colleagues on patrol across the county. The training covered an understanding of the law and legislation, the role of the neighbourhood policing team, the use of police IT systems and first aid, as well as information on specialist policing areas and external partners and agencies. People tell me time and again how much they value the work that PCSOs do in their communities. They are also valued members of our local neighbourhood policing teams and play an important role as they're our eyes and ears within our local communities. PCSOs are a vital part of the new focus on neighbourhood policing that I want to see across Northamptonshire, and I was delighted to meet these new recruits and see at first hand their enthusiasm to get stuck into their new roles.

### **Safer Streets fund**

The OPFCC has been successful in a bid to the Home Office and awarded £432,000 to fund crime fighting projects in Wellingborough after a successful bid to round two of the Safer Streets initiative. The funding will be used in a major scheme to make hundreds of homes on the Hemmingwell estate in Wellingborough more secure. Working with the local housing provider Greatwell Homes, the Hemmingwell Safer Streets scheme will enhance CCTV on the estate, as well as providing new front doors to make properties less vulnerable. The project will begin during the summer and will be completed by the end of March 2022.

The Home Office Safer Streets fund enables Police and Crime Commissioners and local authorities to bid for funding to support crime prevention initiatives in areas particularly affected by acquisitive crime such as burglary, vehicle crime and robbery. The funding must go towards measures that are proven to cut crime, including changes to the street scene such as locked alley gates and better lighting, and the installation of CCTV.

The OPFCC was awarded the maximum amount available for any one bid and I have pledged additional funding from my budget, as well as funding from our partners North Northamptonshire Council and Greatwell Homes, to ensure that further enhancements to community safety on the Hemmingwell estate can be carried out. This funding award is the second time that Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner has been successful in the Safer Streets Fund. Last July, funding was awarded for three schemes that have just been successfully completed:

- Security improvements to car parks, and new, safe bike parking facilities and safety enhancements to hundreds of homes on the Bouverie estate and Portland Place in Northampton. The town's CCTV system was also enhanced with the addition of 13 new state-of-the-art cameras.
- The gating of alleyways behind homes in Wellingborough, with 74 gates making properties in the Victoria area more secure from crime and a significant extension of the town centre CCTV system with the addition of seven new cameras.
- 18 alley gates to secure the rear of homes in Kettering, where the town's CCTV system was extended, with 15 new cameras to cover the All Saints area.

I am very pleased that we have been successful, yet again, in securing additional funding to make people in Northamptonshire safer. The three projects we have already carried out using Safer Streets funding made real improvements that made people in Kettering, Wellingborough and Northampton safer in their homes. Residents in those areas have told me that the schemes have made such a difference to them and I know that these crime fighting measures have a lasting impact on people's lives.

### **Uplift in ANPR ring of steel**

The doubling of Northamptonshire's ANPR network has resulted in 340 arrests, serious criminals thwarted, and a clear message that this county is a hostile place for criminals. ANPR – Automatic Number Plate Recognition – reads the registration of passing vehicles and checks them across several databases, raising the alert if a vehicle is stolen or linked to crime. In December 2020, we, announced that 150 new camera sites would be installed across Northamptonshire to increase coverage across rural areas and major towns as well as on the county borders. The £1.3 million investment has achieved significant results in the past eight months with 340 arrests made, 627 vehicle seizures, 310 intelligence-led searches, and 1026 traffic offences identified.

Some highlights included:

- In February 2021, intelligence led to a taxi being stopped in Northampton. Officers searched the vehicle and the occupants, discovering a large amount of both Class A and B drugs. In total 108 wraps of Class A drugs with an estimated street value of £6,000 and £1,300 in cash was seized and taken off the streets of Northamptonshire. Two men were arrested following the stop.
- In April, 2021, six males entered a property in Kettering armed with machetes and forced the victim to hand over nearly £2000 in cash and other high value items. Enquiries by officers identified a vehicle believed to be involved in the offence. The vehicle activated ANPR and subsequently failed to stop for officers. Officers pursued the vehicle and a male decamped. A containment was put on the area and with help from the police dog handler the male was found and arrested.
- In May 2021, a property was burgled, and several firearms, items of jewellery and a quantity of cash were stolen. A male was identified through police inquiries and his vehicle added to ANPR systems. The vehicle was subsequently stopped by officers and the suspect arrested for burglary.
- In May 2021, a vehicle linked to multiple thefts of purses from elderly victims in the Lincolnshire area activated a camera entering Northamptonshire. Officers responded to the ANPR hit and managed to stop it in Welford Road, Northampton. Three men were arrested and taken into custody, undoubtedly preventing further offences.
- In June 2021, police received reports of an altercation in Northampton. Officers attended and found a male with multiple stab wounds. Quick actions by officers at the scene identified a vehicle that had been used in the offence. The vehicle's registration was added to the ANPR system which was then subsequently stopped by armed officers. One male in the vehicle was arrested for grievous bodily harm.
- In July 2021, one of the new ANPR Intel Officers identified a vehicle containing a missing 15-year-old girl at risk of CSE which we stopped and found her to be in company with a man in his 60s. He was promptly arrested for child abduction.

The results that have been achieved through our investment in additional ANPR capacity speak for themselves. These additional ANPR cameras and staff members are a fantastic resource, supporting Northamptonshire Police officers and staff in their work to target people who come to the county to commit crime and cause harm. These success stories show how the appropriate use of technology is helping Northamptonshire Police to deny criminals the use of our county's roads. Good work is taking place across the county to prevent crime and support victims, and I am pleased to see that our investment in ANPR is playing an important part in making Northamptonshire safer.

## Extra security for rural Northamptonshire businesses

Rural businesses are being given a helping hand to combat crime thanks to a trial funded by the OPFCC. The scheme allows businesses to be loaned VideoGuard 360 cameras – which are being rented from security firm PID Systems. The machines boast three HD cameras and give out warning messages against committing criminal behaviour should a sensor be triggered. They are also fully mobile, meaning they can be placed in any area that could be determined vulnerable. Footage captured by the VideoGuard 360, should it be triggered, is then sent to a PID Systems control room where staff will assess the footage and see if it's a genuine security threat. If this is deemed the case then PID Systems will liaise with the Northamptonshire Police control room, who will designate it as an emergency incident. As well as setting aside £5,000 to rent the VideoGuard 360s for affected businesses, the OPFCC will also fund signage warning potential criminals that their every step is now being watched where the cameras are in place. Working with PID and using their VideoGuard 360 acts as a deterrent against criminal behaviour. If anyone goes near it then it will inform the police and it will act as a powerful tool in helping us to prevent crime, which is a major priority for us. It also marks our continued investment in making rural areas even safer. Northamptonshire is a largely rural county and we want to make sure that businesses in rural areas are given as much help as they can be to remain safe and successful.

## 2.5 Victims at the Heart of Justice and Reducing Reoffending

- **Improve support to victims and witnesses**
- **Swift and sure justice**
- **Tackle substance misuse**
- **Address mental health issues**

### Improve support to victims and witnesses

Organisations working with victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence applied, with the assistance of this office, for another tranche of funding made available by the Ministry of Justice this year. I am pleased to say that all local bids were successful and our total MOJ grant funding for 2021 to 2022 is outlined in the table below.

<b>Funding Core Victim Services and Child Sexual Abuse</b>	
Victim Services	£813,336
CSA Uplift	£60,592
<b>Additional Needs Based Funding</b>	
Sexual Violence Uplift	£54,901
Domestic Abuse Uplift	£116,971
<b>Additional Funding Expression of Interest</b>	
Existing ISVA Award	£48,500
New ISVA Award	£0

New IDVA Award	£107,956
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£1,202,256</b>

### **Swift and sure justice**

Since March 2020, the Local Criminal Justice Board which I established, and chair continues to draw key criminal justice agencies together to draw up a coordinated response to the COVID pandemic which has had a significant impact on the operation of the local Criminal Justice System. I have continued to both support and challenge Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service (HMCTS) to work differently in order to reduce the backlog of court cases which has been exacerbated by the pandemic. Although the situation is easing the backlog is still impacting upon victims and witnesses who are facing long waiting times for their cases to be heard.

This year I am making a substantial investment in refreshing the Integrated Offender Management scheme in Northampton. This is a multi-agency project involving the Force, Probation, The Third Sector, and both Local Authorities. The aim of this scheme is to offer support to those prolific offenders who wish to change whilst tightly monitoring and 'gripping' those who do not.

I and my team are engaging with the Director and other senior staff at HMP Five Wells, the soon to be opened local prison in Wellingborough.

### **Tackle substance misuse**

A further £240,000 was allocated towards Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Services this year. These funds are pooled with the Local Authority treatment budget which is administered by North Northamptonshire council on behalf of the whole county. In addition, Northamptonshire has been awarded additional Home Office Grant funding to tackle substance misuse amongst our local homeless population. The OPFCC has been instrumental in commissioning a range of out of court disposals for low level offenders, ensuring that appropriate offenders can be conditionally cautioned to attend a rehabilitative programme, for example for domestic abuse offending, drug or alcohol offending and a special programme for female offenders. COVID has meant that some providers of these programmes have had to change their delivery model, to online rather than face to face courses; but these are now returning to normal.

### **Address mental health issues**

Northants is a test bed site for Mental Health Treatment Requirements, and the work undertaken here has gone on to shape national thinking on how best to deliver mental health (and subsequently other) treatment as part of a court order. I have provided additional funding for this scheme and early evaluations of this work have identified very significant positive outcomes.

I have provided additional investment this year in Op Alloy which will see mental health nurses working closely with the Force, providing advice and support both in

the Force Control Room and in Response vehicles. This doubles the capacity and extends the service to 3am which improves the quality and appropriateness of our response to those with mental health needs

### **3. Holding the Chief Constable to account**

3.1 The Police Accountability Board supports the PFCC in exercising his statutory duties of holding the Chief Constable to account for the performance of Northamptonshire Police and forms part of a wider ranging programme of assurance across the breadth of policing activities.

3.2 The Board scrutinises areas of concern in relation to performance and service delivery at a strategic level and allows for open and constructive discussions between the Force and the OPFCC in respect of strategic budget setting, medium term financial planning and other matters requiring ongoing levels of assurance.

#### **3.3 Accountability Board Meeting 9th February 2021**

3.4 Force Strategic Priorities Performance log – The Commissioner requested a presentation/report that shows performance against these measures and targets. The Commissioner acknowledged the difference that the current Chief Constables' leadership and vision had brought to the Force.

3.5 The Commissioner expressed his support and was assured that the leadership now shown in the Force by the Chief Constable and his team was much improved from previous years, providing greater clarity, vision and focus. He recognised that there were clear green shoots of success in a number of areas that included burglary reduction, quality of investigations and victim satisfaction but there was still progress to be made in a number of higher harm areas, such as knife crime, vulnerability and Rape and Serious Sexual Offence numbers. The Commissioner welcomed the fact that the Force had set some stretching targets in this year for things that mattered for the public but noted that a number were not being met and he expressed his desire for the Chief Constable to be clear in what the target setting process would be for the forthcoming financial year period. The Commissioner welcomed the suggestion from the Chief Constable that policing will need to be delivered differently in some areas in the future to address issues such as knife crime.

**3.6 Budget conditions letter update** - The Commissioner agreed a budget conditions letter with the Chief Constable as part of the budget setting process for 2020/2021. He required a report outlining progress, to this point in implementation and progress of the matters agreed in the letter. The Commissioner thanked the Force for the comprehensive response in relation to the conditions set for this current year's budget. He was assured that a better understanding existed in relation to what was expected in return for the delegated budget to the Chief Constable. He saw that while this report

only deals with the first three quarters of the financial year some of the conditions would potentially not be met and as such these might well appear in the budget conditions letter for 2021/2022.

**3.7 - Missing Persons update** - The Commissioner was aware of the demand placed upon Northamptonshire Police as a result of missing person investigations. He requested a report relating to missing persons in the County. The report included reference to the numbers of missing persons per year and any notable trends relating to this over recent years, as well as a breakdown in terms of demographic, including gender, age and ethnicity. Where relevant the paper also highlighted contributory factors associated with missing persons such as mental health. The Commissioner was reassured that the Chief Constable and team were able to demonstrate good internal processes, that were much improved over the past 12 months relating to missing persons, especially those deemed to be at high risk. He was also reassured that it seems that this will be commented on favourably by HMICFRS following a recent inspection. The Commissioner was pleased that the evidence demonstrates that the Force is identifying risk better, providing faster responses to these types of incident and locating missing persons more quickly. The Commissioner offered his support through Nicci Marzec to the Chief Constable in addressing future or ongoing issues that might be supported by partners in relation to missing persons especially for looked after children.

### **3.8 Accountability Board Notes 9th March 2021**

**3.9 Update on victim satisfaction and VCOP compliance** - In August 2020 the accountability board received a paper relating to rates of compliance with VCOP and satisfaction levels with victims of crime. It was agreed there would be an update provided between 6 and 9 months. The Commissioner congratulated the Force on the improvements they had made in relation to the provision of 28-day updates to crime victims, since the previous review of this at an accountability board. He was assured that this was as a result of an improvement in processes and leadership. This is particularly relevant as it is well evidenced that being kept informed is one of the key drivers in overall victim satisfaction. The Commissioner was satisfied at this time with the processes in place to ensure victims were aware that a crime had been recorded and assured that audits demonstrate a very high compliance level with this. This is particularly pertinent as the requirement to send every victim a letter was resource intensive and will disappear later this year when the new enhanced victims code commences. The Commissioner stressed the importance to him of proper dialogue with and support for victims. He questioned the Chief Constable on the readiness of the Force to rollout the newly enhanced VCOP later this year and was assured that there was in place an effective plan to do so.

**3.10 Response times and visibility** - The Chief Constable set several Force priority areas for 2020/2021. These included priorities and targets relating to

response times for attendance at Grade 1 and 2 incidents, as well as visibility outside police stations for Neighbourhood Policing Teams. The Force had reported in the performance update in November 2020 that these were not being met and a plan was being developed to rectify this situation. The Commissioner therefore requested a report that demonstrates what the causal factors for this were, articulates the agreed plan to resolve this and shows the current position and improvements that have been made since that time. The Commissioner received a detailed briefing on the deep dive work that had been undertaken by the Force to better understand the reasons why response times and visibility have reduced in the previous briefing from late 2020. The Commissioner was assured by the level of understanding that the Force had now on these issues and complemented the Force on this work. The Commissioner was further reassured in relation to the positive improvements relating to response times and visibility of neighbourhood and response officers. The Commissioner requested consideration to be given by the Chief Constable as to what might be required to achieve a visibility level of 70% for these staff.

**3.11 Complaints update** – The 1st February 2021 saw the first anniversary of the implementation of the new Police Complaints regime, following the Policing and Crime Act 2017. As well as providing Police and Crime Commissioners with additional mandatory and optional responsibilities relating to the Police complaints system, this legislation delivered a strong focus on the learning opportunities that the complaints system provided to improve personal and professional behaviour and service delivery. An additional mandatory requirement under the legislation was PCCs to have a specific responsibility for holding the Chief Constable to account for the handling of complaints. The Commissioner requests a report from the Chief Constable that covers the following areas; Reflective Practice and learning, Review and Timeliness. The Commissioner was pleased with the progress made in the first 12 months of the new complaints’ procedures. The Commissioner and Chief Constable discussed whether there was any evidence of disproportionality in timeliness of management of complaints dependent upon ethnicity, the DCC was to examine this further. The Commissioner while assured overall requested that improvements were sought to be made in timeliness of complaint investigation.

**3.12 Accountability Board Meeting 13<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

**3.13 Budget conditions letter update** - The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner agreed a budget conditions letter with the Chief Constable as part of the budget setting process for 2020/2021. The Commissioner requires an end of year highlight report outlining delivery against the matters agreed in this letter. The Commissioner thanked the Chief Constable for the work progressed over the past 12 months. He was assured that a large number of the areas agreed in the budget conditions letter for 2020/21 had been progressed, despite the challenges faced by the Force in policing the County during the Covid 19 pandemic. The Commissioner discussed with the Chief

Constable the desire this year to have produced a more cohesive and joined up approach to crime prevention and a greater focus on wider customer service approaches.

3.14 **Capital Programme** - As part of the 2021/2022 budget setting programme there was a requirement to review the current capital programme to ensure affordability and deliverability. The Commissioner therefore required the revised programme to be presented for review and approval. The Commissioner was assured that the paper described a healthy position, that appears affordable in relation to the police capital programme. The Commissioner recognised that the programme contained areas where choices in relation to investment could be made as well as areas where it was completely necessary, and these elements of the programme would need to be kept under ongoing review. The Commissioner commended the work that had been undertaken to complete this.

### 3.15 **Accountability Board Notes 11<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

3.16 **Force strategic priorities performance update** - The Chief Constable adopted a suite of performance measures and targets relating to Force Strategic priorities for the performance year 2020/2021. The Commissioner requests a paper outlining the end of financial year performance against these targets and measures. The Commissioner agreed with the direction of intended travel on the Chief Constables agreed 4 Strategic Priorities for 2021/2022. These covered many of the areas of concern that have been previously highlighted in local consultations. He made the point there were areas that were not defined priorities this year, but where he still expected performance to be maintained or improved, such as residential burglary. The Commissioner was assured by the Chief Constable that this would be the case. Reflecting on last year's performance the Commissioner noted that there had been some notable measures of success but that there was still improvement to be made in certain areas, notably relating to personal crime and positive actions and outcomes. The Commissioner was pleased to see that many of these were covered in the Force internal targets for the year and made the point that he was looking for a wider range of these internal targets to be met this year, in comparison with last year.

3.17 **Hate Crime** - The Commissioner requested a report in relation to Hate Crime. This report should outline the reported rate of Hate Crimes or Hate incidents over a three-year period, to include total numbers as well as a breakdown by incident and victim type, outcome rates and victim satisfaction levels. The report should identify any trends over this period. It should also provide a description of the approach taken by the Force to the supporting of victims of this type of crime/incident. The Commissioner welcomed the level of understanding and focus that the Force could demonstrate on this agenda. He noted the increase in offences over the last three years but was assured that the crime recording was ethical. Overall the Commissioner was assured on the activity of the Force on this subject.

### **3.18 Accountability Board Notes 8th June 2021**

**3.19 Health and Safety** - The Commissioner requested a presentation of the annual Northamptonshire Police Health and Safety Report and progress on the internal Mazars audit of Health and Safety from March 2021. The Force has a legal and moral duty to safeguard and improve the health and safety of Police Officers, Police staff, Special Constables, volunteers and those affected by their activities. A report was provided which examined the Forces health and safety policies, any health and safety issues and the Forces achievements against its performance objectives. The Commissioner welcomed the paper and the assurance it provided in relation to compliance with legal frameworks and requirements. The Commissioner was pleased that the Force was making good use of the data at its disposal, particularly in relation to assaults on officers. The Commissioner looked forward to seeing the results of the further analysis that had been commissioned

### **3.20 Accountability Board Notes 13<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

**3.21 Stalking and Harassment** - The Commissioner was concerned about the increase in reported cases of stalking and harassment across Northamptonshire and was aware from previous updates that many of these might be in relation to the recording of secondary crimes associated with domestic abuse victims. The Commissioner requested a report that outlines the levels of recorded stalking and harassment crime over the last three years, demonstrating any trends in numbers and victimology and the understanding the Force has in relation to what proportion of this relates to domestic incidents or otherwise. He also requested that the report articulate the understanding that the Force has in relation to the subject that would allow for earlier interventions to reduce the opportunities for escalation to additional or more serious offences. The Commissioner was assured from the report that the force had a sense of understanding of these issues and that the recording of these matters showed high levels of integrity. He asked what actions the force were undertaking to identify the causes of the potential over recording of these offences, and to tackle the risks associated with threats being carried out in a domestic setting by those who commit stalking and harassment type offences that audit had potentially identified and was assured that there were actions in place to try to address this. He thanked the Chief Constable for the conciseness and clarity that the paper offered.

**3.22 Internal Audits** - The Commissioner requested a report that outlines the received internal audit reports from the internal audit inspection regime for 2020/2021. The report should outline all recommendations made in these audits, whether these have been accepted or not, provide an update on any actions or recommendations that have been completed and where not completed, outline the timescales for their completion. The Commissioner was assured that Northamptonshire Police had in place effective processes and systems to manage and monitor recommendations made following

internal audits. He expressed some concerns in relation to the effectiveness of the monitoring processes relating to performance for collaborative units across the region and agreed with the Chief Constable to raise this at a forthcoming regional meeting to seek improvement.

### **3.23 Accountability Board Notes 10<sup>th</sup> August 2021**

- 3.24 **Budget outturn 2020/21** - The Commissioner requested a report on the Northamptonshire Police financial outturn position for 2020/2021 which provided a breakdown of all departments and an underspend by the year end of £583k.

Carry forwards have been transferred from specific budget lines as agreed separately with the Chief Constable and will be held in earmarked reserves for use in 2021/22 as appropriate. The Commissioner thanked the Chief Constable for the ongoing improvements made since his appointment in financial management. He noted that there had been as planned a reduction in overtime spend but asked whether this was in line with agreed targets and requested further details on this. He questioned whether there was any opportunity to look to invest to save by bringing in temporary staff to assist in delivery of parts of the capital investment plan, in areas that might make the Force more efficient or effective. He was assured that the management and oversight of the budget provided to the Force was working effectively.

- 3.25 **Force Strategic priorities** - The Chief Constable has adopted a suite of performance measures and targets relating to Force Strategic priorities. The Commissioner requested a presentation/report that shows performance against these measures and targets from 1st April 2021. From the presentation provided, the Commissioner recognised and was assured that there were signs of continued improvement in the performance of the Force. He was particularly assured by the high and continually improving levels of satisfaction with victims of crime. The Commissioner expressed some concerns in relation to a recent decline in relation to response times. There was a discussion relating to this and he was assured by the Chief Constables explanation for the reasons for the decline and his plans to improve them. There was an acknowledgement that there was a renewed focus on the quality of service provided upon attendance at an incident, as opposed to just the speed of response. The Commissioner was assured in relation to the increased focus on quality of life issues such as Anti-Social Behaviour. Overall the Commissioner was assured that the Force continues to move in the right direction, concerning its performance, however he expressed the view, agreed by the Chief Constable that this was not universal across all areas and there was still significant improvement to be made.

#### **4. Summary of PFCC Decisions taken**

[Decision Record 198- Policing Budget and Precept 2021and 2122](#)  
[Decision Record 199- IT Contract variation](#)  
[Decision Record 200- S22 RIPA agreement](#)  
[Decision Record 201- Cleaning Services](#)  
[Decision Record 202- HR solution](#)  
[Decision Record 203- Darby House Variation](#)  
[Decision Record 204- Video Conferencing System](#)  
[Decision Record 205- NCT Desk Spaces at the CJC](#)  
[Decision Record 206- contract extension for language services](#)  
[Decision Record 207- replacement recruitment system](#)  
[Decision Record 208 Pump Priming Joint Enabling Services](#)  
[Decision Record 209 OP Nova](#)  
[Decision Record 210- Additional Witness Care Officer](#)  
[Decision Record 211- Digital Leadership Exec Programme Membership](#)  
[Decision Record 212- Telephone Interpreting contract extension](#)  
[Decision Record 213- Criminal Justice Healthcare Services](#)  
[Decision Record 214- FHQ Re-roofing contract](#)  
[Decision Record 215- Lenovo ThinkPad Laptops](#)  
[Decision Record 216- Language Services](#)  
[Decision Record 217- Darby House refit variation](#)  
[Decision Record 218- Chorus licences](#)  
[Decision Record 219- Firewall Project](#)  
[Decision Record 220- Self Drive Vehicle Hire contract extension](#)  
[Decision Record 221- Additional IDVA posts at Voice](#)  
[Decision Record 222- Duty management module](#)  
[Decision Record 223- Ridgecrest cleaning contract extension](#)  
[Decision Record 224- Software Licences](#)  
[Decision Record 225- Tranman Upgrade](#)  
[Decision Record 226- Deed of Variation for Corby Police Station](#)  
[Decision Record 227- HyperConvergence](#)  
[Decision Record 228- duty planning module](#)  
[Decision Record 229- SPS agreement with SCL](#)  
[Decision Record 230- SPS agreement with UoN](#)  
[Decision Record 231- Special Services Charges](#)  
[Decision Record 232- Op Alloy](#)  
[Decision Record 233- Digital Delivery Team 2021 resourcing](#)

#### **5. Recommendations**

- 5.1 That the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel considers the content of the report and its appendix.

**Stephen Mold**

**Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner**

The table below provides a latest assessment on some of the key priority areas which form part of the Police and Crime Plan. The Performance Framework allows for a robust, wide ranging assurance to take place. Ensuring that outcomes are on track and to articulate whether the delivery of services is being providing in an efficient and effective manner.

Measures are being reviewed on a continual basis and latest commentaries on each priority area will be provided within this report on a quarterly/annual basis.

### Police and Crime Plan Performance Framework Q1 21/22 Update

Intervening Early & Preventing Crime		
Plan Priority	Key Outcome	Commentary & Assessment
Road Safety	Reduce KSI	<p>The number of KSIs remain low with 4 fatalities during the quarter (3 during the same period last year) and fatal KSIs have seen a 58.5% reduction over a 12m comparison. Over a 12m period, KSIs have dropped by 38.5%. There is a risk of rising numbers as more vehicles return to the roads following further COVID 19 restrictions being lifted after 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021.</p> <p>Despite fewer vehicles on the roads during the pandemic, arrests for offenders being disqualified from driving have seen a 38.3% increase over a 12m period. Current levels have reached a 2-year high and have been on a sharp upward trajectory since December 2020.</p> <p>Following the launch of a new seatbelt operation by the force in July 2020, as of June 2021, there has been a 96% increase in the number of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) issued as a result of failing to wear a seat belt on the county's roads. The campaign involved educating car occupants on the dangers of not wearing a seatbelt as well as passenger safety and enforcement. Anyone caught not wearing a seat belt can take an online education course or receive an FPN of £100.</p>
Domestic Abuse	Respond effectively to domestic abuse	Q1 21/22 saw demand continuing to stabilise despite the emergence from lockdown restrictions and lower than the expected seasonal increase demand. All domestic abuse volumes are 7% lower than the same period last year.

		<p>The 12-month rolling Grade 1 Urban (G1U) DA response time at the end of June 2021 was 00:12:33, which is 18 seconds slower than the force's baseline target of 00:12:15.</p> <p>The forces target of increasing the arrest rate for DA crimes to at least 30% is continues to be met on a monthly basis with June 2021 achieving 31.4%. Based on a 12-month rolling the force are currently below the target (28.8%), however this should continue to increase if monthly rates continue to achieve above 30%. The Force have produced data that demonstrates the arrest rate for higher risk incidents where the harm is greatest remains high.</p> <p>As a target, the force aims to obtain a positive outcome ratio of 10.7% for domestic abuse. As of June 2021, the latest 12-month period shows the resolution rate currently achieving 11.3% and on an upward trend. I continue to apply pressure to the Chief Constable to deliver better positive outcome rates, not only for DA but across all crime types.</p>
<p>Children's Safety</p>	<p>More children are safeguarded</p>	<p>In Q1 21/22, the volume of crimes flagged having a CSAE element has continued to remain relatively stable and is currently below forecasted levels. The force has confirmed that they are in line with regional peers and with the country since restrictions started to be removed during the quarter. It is expected that CSAE offences will remain relatively stable until the start of the next academic year.</p> <p>Child concern PPNs however continue to increase with 2,006 recorded in June 2021 and Q1 21/22 saw the most recorded over the past 12 months (6,023). Child concern PPNs are raised by officers when they believe a child to be "at risk" OR has been a victim of a crime and/or abuse. Examples of abuse which require a PPN are physical and emotional abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, significant harm or if a child is in immediate danger or otherwise "at risk". Once PPNs are submitted, all reports received are then reviewed, disseminated and allocated with partner agencies via the MASH.</p> <p>The positive outcome rate for child sexual offences remains on an upward trajectory with 9.7% reported in June 2021 and 8% over the current 12-month period.</p> <p>In June 2021, missing children were in exception with highest levels since the pandemic began (nationwide issue). Of these, there have been continued high volumes which are linked to CSE risk. The rolling 12 months of all missing children reports being from frequent missing children was at 42%. This remains very high but at a stable position over the past 3-4 months. It is worthy of note that an HMICFRS inspection into vulnerability earlier this year made</p>

		<p>positive comments of how the Force now recognise these high-risk issues and respond effectively to them. It does however continue to place a drain on resources.</p>
Youth Service	Reduction in the number of young people who are not in education, training or employment (NEET)	<p>Groupwork &amp; 1:1 interventions resumed in Q1 21/22 after being halted for a number of months due to the pandemic. Following the reopening of schools, the team received 99 referrals in during the quarter, of which 80% (79) were received from schools.</p> <p>The team are currently working with 3 individuals who are either not in education, training or employment (NEET) or at risk of being so. This equates to 2% of all youth service referrals to date. During the quarter, 2 of the individuals achieved their final progress review point and saw an improvement score at their final progress point and are no longer considered to be 'at risk'. This assessment was made using the evidence-based tool (Outcome STARS) This tool evidences &amp; measures individuals progress.</p> <p>NEET referrals are expected to increase moving forward from September onwards with the youth team able to offer tailored one to one support for those individuals. Designated Safeguarding Leads in each school, within Northamptonshire have been made aware of the NEET strategy offered by our service and this continues to develop into additional areas.</p>
Youth Service	Improvement in behaviour and capabilities of vulnerable young people	<p>Since the inception of the Youth service (January 2020), the team have supported young people, having 4,430 interactions (3,500 in Q4 20/21) through detached work and have delivered 565 individuals detached sessions to date. 16% of these sessions have related to emotional wellbeing &amp; 14% with regards to positive relationships.</p> <p>In Q1 21/22 the team delivered a session to the whole of year 6 (58 young people) at Earls Barton Primary school. The day was focused around keeping young people safe and the session resulted in receiving additional one to one group work requests for young people for targeted work. Within the quarter, the team supported 53 individuals through groupwork &amp; 1:1 interventions. 40% of these were for supporting individuals relating to self-identity and exploitation awareness.</p> <p>To enable and monitor progress, the team use an assessment tool co-produced between the young person and the practitioner. This is a strength-based assessment which captures progress midway and at the end of the intervention. Groupwork &amp; 1:1 interventions resumed in Q1 21/22 and as a result, over 50 individuals have currently reached their final progress points with 69% (11 of 16) registering an improvement to their physical</p>

		health and 50% (21 of 42) felt more confident & noticed an improvement with their self-esteem following the positive actions they've taken.
ACE Team	Reduce & influence the need for higher cost services	<p>Q1 21/22 saw 82% (81 cases) of all referrals from the local authorities accepted by the ACE team, this is significantly above the team's overall average of 68%. For the second quarter in a row, this is the highest acceptance rate since the inception of the team and acceptance levels generally continue to increase each quarter.</p> <p>An upward trajectory continues in terms of the number of referrals which the ACE team directly supported. In Q1 21/22, the ACE team directly supported 94% (65 cases) of all referrals, this is above the team's overall average of providing direct support (81%). The remaining 6% (4 cases) were initially supported by the team but were escalated to higher need services following new needs being identified.</p> <p>The 2-domestic abuse (DA) ACE support officers continue to make inroads in supporting families who have received a police officer call out for an incident as "standard" low level domestic/family conflict. Since January 2021, 430 incidents have been assessed as suitable and allocated to be supported by the DA ACE team, 52% of which occurred in Q1 21/22. To date, 748 children have been supported, of which 58% of cases were offered advice &amp; assessed as not needing further support. 8% were provided direct support by the ACE team and 20% were referred to specialist services for further support.</p>
ACE Team	Reduce the likelihood or impact of adverse childhood experience	<p>To date, 484 accepted referrals have been closed by the ACE team. 81% (484) were closed with all presenting needs having been met following ACE team support. In Q1 21/22, 94% of accepted referrals which started during the quarter had their needs met. This is the highest since the inception of the ACE team and the 4th upward performing quarter in a row.</p> <p>17% (81) of supported cases closed by the ACE team had domestic abuse as the main presenting issue.</p> <p>14% (69) of cases receiving ACE support had new needs identified and the family were referred to higher need services.</p>

ACE Team	Improve families in their situation and/or ability to deal with it	<p>The ACE team initiated a family feedback project which ran from January to March 2021. The pilot aimed to provide qualitative feedback about the service and most importantly if the families felt they were in a better place. The pilot returned positive results where 83% of families who provided feedback confirmed that their families were in a better place and 75% have had no further police call outs since direct support from the ACE team.</p> <p>Due to the success of this pilot, the ACE team have now included obtaining the families permission to be contacted initially and 6 months after completion of ACE support. To date, Initial feedback has been collated from July 2021 with results showing that out of the 10 families who have currently provided feedback, 80% felt their family were in a better place, 10% felt some improvement has been made and 10% felt there has been no improvement made.</p> <p>Initial feedback will continue to be collated on a monthly basis and key measures such as further police call outs and improved school attendance will be captured at the six-month feedback review, allowing more time to have elapsed and evidence longer term outcomes. The first 6-month review will take place in December 2021.</p>
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<b>Fight Crime &amp; Protect People</b>		
<b>Plan Priority</b>	<b>Key Outcome</b>	<b>Commentary &amp; Assessment</b>
Officers on the Frontline	Public feel that police are more visible	<p>Neighbourhood Officers time spent outside of stations continues to hover just below 60%. Q1 saw officers spend 57.5% of their time outside of stations and 56.7% over the 12-month period which currently falls some way short of the forces target of 65% in 21/22.</p> <p>At the end of June 2021, the median time for all Grade 1 Urban incidents was 11:44. This is 5.8% slower than the same period last year (11:05). The 12-month rolling average was 11:35, this is currently above the local target of 11:17 but significantly below the national average of 15 minutes. At the end of June, the 12-month rolling average for Grade 1 Rural incidents is currently at 14:54 which is 20 seconds over the local target set by the force of 14:34.</p>
Officers on the Frontline	Public feel that police are more accessible	<p>87.8% of all 999 calls were answered within 10's in the quarter and the rolling 12-month average is currently at 88.8%. The average answer time for 999 calls during the last 12 months is 2 seconds. The average answer time for 101 (triage) calls for the quarter was 4 seconds; this remains stable.</p>

		<p>Q1 21/22 saw 27 leavers which is in line for the quarters predicted levels. The Force is currently just below quarterly targets agreed between CC and PFCC for the recruitment of new officers. At the end of the quarter, FTE stood at 1,420 (Q1 target of 1,452). However, the force continues to be on track to recruit over 1,500 Police Officers in the county by March 2023 where some flexibility has been built into their attrition predictions. This target continues to be reviewed. The reason for being slightly behind the predicted target numbers for officers remains a larger than predicted number of leavers at the end of last year. This is monitored and the Force has a plan in place to recover this position during this year.</p>
Neighbourhood Watch	Public feel supported with interventions available	<p>Currently 1,100 registered schemes in Northamptonshire, which continues to cover approx. 40,000 households and the scheme continues with aspirations to grow further in the county. My office continues to support NHW with funds to attempt to increase its footprint in higher crime locations. This includes providing 35 'Love Your Neighbourhood' signs as part of the Safer Streets initiative and 500 Neighbourhood Watch signs which are to be displayed in Kettering. My office continues to work with NHW to increase the footprint of schemes in the Safer Streets areas across the County.</p>
Neighbourhood Alert	Public feel informed	<p>At the end of June 2021, membership currently stands at 22,968 and has increased slightly by 3.5% over the quarter. During the quarter, 408 alerts were sent across the county, 32% of which were concerning the areas of Daventry &amp; South Northants which is the highest in the county.</p>
Victim Satisfaction	Confidence of victims in the system	<p>Analysis on the latest Crime Survey for England &amp; Wales (CSEW) for public perception and confidence of the local police suggest that Northamptonshire Police are better than the national average at understanding local concerns. The survey also recorded that 77% of those who took part in the survey had overall confidence in Northamptonshire Police. This is 4% higher than the forces Most Similar Group (MSG) and 3% above the national average.</p> <p>53% of those who took part in the survey however said that Northamptonshire Police were doing an excellent or good job in the local area. This was 2% lower than the national and MSG averages. It is worth noting that the CSEW is based on small sample sizes &amp; therefore estimates from the CSEW are less robust than national level estimates. Northamptonshire survey results were based on a sample size of around 560 adults.</p>
Victim Satisfaction	Increased victim satisfaction	<p>Survey reporting still currently behind schedule due to the pandemic. The latest victim satisfaction report is up to February 2021. In February 2021, 81.1% of burglary victims states they were satisfied with overall service and above the force's 80% target. The 12-month rolling up to February 2021 for domestic abuse satisfaction remains at</p>

		<p>around 89% and has done so over the past 3 years. Overall satisfaction for all crime is 76.6% (12m rolling), which is an improvement of 2.7% in comparison to the same period last year (74.6%).</p>
Serious Sexual Offence	Respond effectively to serious sexual offences	<p>Recorded levels of rape in Q4 20/21 highest since Q2 20/21 (16% than Q4 20/21) and 22% higher than the same period last year (+46). This is similarly the case with serious sexual offences which has seen the highest levels recorded in over 12 months and 52% higher than the same period last year.</p> <p>The force remains a significant outlier against its peers and for the 4th quarter in a row, ranking 8th in MSG for recorded offences for rape and serious sexual offences. Historical cases continue to contribute towards the increase and is likely to remain until August 2021.</p> <p>Despite an increase in crimes, the force has improved their RASO positive outcome rate by 0.9% over the past 12 months and as of June 21, the overall rate was at 7.6% and currently ranked 3rd in the forces MSG. As a county we are however below the national rate of 10.8% and are currently ranked 20/43 nationally. I have agreed with the Chief Constable that this will be a matter of priority for the Force this year.</p>
Violent Crime	Reduction in levels of violent crime	<p>Outcome currently not on track. With the main lockdown conditions coming to an end during the quarter, recorded levels of violence without injury saw a 16% increase in comparison to the previous quarter and an 11% increase to the same period last year. Similarly, violence with injury after a reduction in Q4 20/21, offences returned to similar levels seen in Q2 &amp; Q3 20/21 with 1,898 crimes recorded. Lockdown conditions may possibly be a contributing factor towards the reduction seen in Q4 20/21 however with conditions now easing volumes are seemingly returning to levels seen over the past 18 months.</p> <p>Detection rates for violence without injury the highest it has been for 12 months at 15% during Q1 21/22 (11% during the same period last year). During the current quarter, detection rates for violence was at 16.7% (14.9% same period last year) and continues to improve quarter on quarter.</p>
Alcohol Fuelled Crime	Reductions in alcohol linked violent offences in night-time economy	<p>The pandemic continues to have a significant impact on the night time economy where it was closed for much of the past 16 months and outcomes continues to be difficult to accurately reflect to alcohol linked offences. Some lockdown stipulations remained for the majority of Q1 21/22 for restaurants and pubs and the volume of alcohol affected crimes saw a 21% reduction in Q1 21/22 compared to the previous quarter, however below expected levels prior to the pandemic.</p> <p>With most lockdown conditions to be relaxed in Q2 21/22, there is likely to be an increase in alcohol consumption.</p>

<p>Drug Dealing</p>	<p>Positive activities in reducing street level drug supply</p>	<p>Outcome on track. Drug trafficking demand is steadily increasing however the force have confirmed that this is in response to sustained levels of proactive policing. Examples of this include a County Lines Intensification Week (w/c 17/05/21) which resulted in significant number of arrests of county /local drug lines. The county are currently 5/8 within their MSG however are currently 11% above the MSG average.</p> <p>Drug related Stop Searches equated for 67.6% of all stop searches over the past 12 months, this is slightly above the previous 12 months of 67.2%. in over the past 12 months 20/21 have seen a large 33.55% increase in comparison to the same period last year. The number of stop searches which resulted in no further action over the past 12 months had a rate of 74.1%, this is a slight increase on the previous 12 months (73.7%). At the end of June 2021, drug related stop search arrest rates from the past 12 months was at 9.2% which is slightly below the previous 12 months which saw an arrest rate of 10.2%.</p> <p>Q1 21/22, saw 390 drug possession offences committed which is a 21% reduction in comparison to the same period last year.</p>
<p>Modern Slavery &amp; Human Trafficking</p>	<p>Reduce all forms of modern slavery &amp; human trafficking</p>	<p>In liaison with Northampton Partnership Homes, the force has noticed an increase in vulnerable adults being housed independently in council housing and are at risk of cuckooing. The force are utilising serious and organised crime resources to support and protect these individuals.</p> <p>The Countywide MSHT group, chaired by an OPFCC representative continues to raise awareness of Modern Slavery &amp; Human Trafficking (MSHT) crimes in the County, undertook an OPFCC funded campaign where from March 2021, the Force, supported by funding secured from the National MSHT Network undertake specific awareness raising campaign in the local logistics sector and identifying what the early signs of MSHT are. This includes the "it's probably nothing but..." awareness campaign which was launched during Q1 21/22 and encourages people to look beyond a seemingly 'normal' situation to see the real person and their potential predicament.</p>
<p>Burglary</p>	<p>Reduction in residential burglaries</p>	<p>Outcome on target. At the end of Q1 21/22 residential burglary reduced by 10.8% over a 12-month period and the quarter saw the lowest volumes recorded over the 12-month period for both residential burglary (410) &amp; home invasion burglaries (282). Home invasion (HI) burglary volumes over the past 12-month period has seen a 12% reduction.</p> <p>Similarly, business and community burglaries saw a quarterly reduction of 15% in Q1 and volumes are only 6% higher than they were during the same quarter last year.</p>

		Despite the positive reductions seen, as of May 2021, the force remain 7/8 in their MSG, which suggests similar reductions were experienced nationally.
Burglary	Improved service for victim of burglary	As of June 2021, the force maintained their burglary overall satisfaction rolling 12-month average of over 80% (81.4%) and has not fallen below 80% for 6 months. This is on an upward trajectory where the force achieved 82.8% during the month of April 2021. Burglary overall satisfaction has exceeded the force target of 80% for 5 consecutive months. Being kept informed has also seen a 10% rise in the past 12 months for burglary. These are good signs that the service provision in the event of someone becoming a victim has improved and is better meeting their needs.
Cyber Crimes	Reduction in cyber crime	<p>Outcome not on target with a 11.6% increase in cyber flagged crime over the past 12 months and continues to follow in an upward trajectory. There were however signs in Q1 21/22 of cybercrime volumes returning to normal levels. This is one area we will be monitoring as lockdown conditions continue to ease over the summer period. In Q1 21/22, volumes of 'fraud' cybercrimes have increased by 9% in comparison to same period last year.</p> <p>The force are to undertake hypothesis testing to better understand why levels are as high as they are, in order to deliver a more targeted approach to this. OPFCC intends this year to launch an education and awareness programme to reduce the vulnerabilities of those susceptible to this type of offending.</p>
Anti-Social Behaviour	Deal with ASB more effectively	<p>The number of ASB incidents in Q1 21/22 decreased by 56% in comparison to the same period of last year, however it is worth noting that the vast majority of recorded ASB incidents in Q1 20/21 were COVID-19 related. As an example, in Q1 21/22, rowdy or inconsiderate behaviour saw a 64% reduction in comparison to the same period last year and Neighbour disputes has also seen a sizeable reduction (-61%).</p> <p>As of June 2021, the force achieved a rolling 12-month average of 65.8% for ASB victims stating that they were satisfied with the overall service and achieved 60.7% for the month of May 2021. ASB satisfactory levels remain the lowest of the crime types and reduced from 70.5% last year to 65.8% in 2021.</p>
Hate Crime	Deal with hate crime more effectively	Hate crimes over the past 12 months have increased by 27% in comparison to the previous 12-month period. Racial hate crime has seen a 17.5% increase over the past 12 months and sexual orientation related hate crime has increased by 26.4%. Reasons for this could be due to the lockdown periods over the past 12 months prompting a rise in intimidating behaviour from neighbours and the Black Lives Matter movement encouraging the public to come forward and report hate crimes.

		As of June 2021, the force achieved a rolling 12-month average of 76.1% for hate victims which is in line with the previous year and will continue to be monitored.
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Victims at the Heart of Justice		
Plan Priority	Key Outcome	Commentary & Assessment
VOICE: Victims & Witnesses	Better recovery from victimisation	<p>Referral volumes in Q1 21/22 at their lowest over the 12-month period, however referrals remain high in comparison to pre-COVID and are 11% higher than the same period last year. 92% of referral volumes were from police referrals and 1% self-referrals.</p> <p>23% of all referrals relate to victims of domestic abuse which has been consistent over the past 9-month period. Referrals relating to violence against the person accounts for 17.2% of all referral types and has seen a 35% increase in comparison to the previous quarter. A main contributing factor for this could be due to the easing of lockdown restrictions, with more people out in public spaces and with the Euros being held during the period</p> <p>The service level agreement lowest recorded over the past 12 months but still remains high. Q1 21/22 saw 95.5% of victim referrals contacted within 72hrs. 5.2% of all valid victim referrals accepted a level of support in Q1. This is the second highest recorded over the past 12 months and the same level recorded during the same period last year.</p> <p>During Q1 21/22 85.7% of individuals who provided a closing assessment reported that they were better to cope with aspects of everyday life, this is a slight improvement on the previous quarter which recorded 85.2%. 78.6% also saw an improvement to their health and wellbeing; this is in line with scores achieved during the previous month.</p>
VOICE: Road Harm	Increased support and satisfaction	<p>With lockdown restrictions easing during Q1 21/22 and traffic levels rising back to near normal levels, referral volumes into the VOICE Roadharm service increased by 83% in comparison to the same period last year (1st lockdown) and 21% from the previous quarter.</p> <p>The increase in referral volumes has resulted in 36% of all referrals accepted support from the Roadharm service. This is the highest rate over the past 12 months and significantly above the 12-month average of 17.6%.</p>

		51 Hours of counselling & therapy sessions were held in Q1 21/22, for the second quarter in a row, this is a sizeable improvement compared to the previous quarter (36 hours Q4 20/21), however still significantly below the same period last year where 64 hours were held. One of the main contributing factors for this decline can be attributed to the pandemic restrictions, however the team continue to be flexible in supporting all clients virtually and through other methods.
VOICE: Witness Care	Increased support and satisfaction	Outcome remains on track. May 2021 saw witness attendance rates achieve 98% which is the highest monthly rate recorded to date. Attendance rates for the quarter however were Q1 21/22 recorded 85% overall which is the lowest recorded over the past 12 months, this is due to June only achieving a monthly rate of 79%. Unsuccessful cases in Q1 due to victims failing to give evidence (27) remains consistent with an average of 26 over the past 12 months. The PFCC has provided additional funding to increase Witness Care Unit staffing.
VOICE: Restorative Justice	Better recovery from victimisation	2 Referrals during the quarter. The restorative justice process was on hold during Q4 20/21 nationally due to Covid-19 and this has seemingly had a knock-on effect throughout Q1 21/22. As mentioned previously, RJ has been recognised by the Chief Constable of being an effective method of achieving a positive outcome and is one of the focuses for the Neighbourhood Policing teams. With the implementation of the new Victim Code of Practice we expect restorative justice referrals to increase for the remainder of the financial year.
VOICE: Children & Young People (Child Psychology Service)	Better recovery from victimisation	Throughout the pandemic, Children & Young People's services have generally seen referral volumes dip, however Q1 21/22 saw volumes increase by 35.6% (1,287) in comparison to the same period last year and 4.4% above the 12-month average. The speed of service continues to perform well with 98.99% of individuals during the quarter being contacted within 48hrs of a referral.  The accepted levels of support during Q1 21/22 was at 2.2% which is lower than the levels recorded last quarter (3.5%), however in line with the 12-month average.  50 Hours of counselling & therapy sessions were held during the quarter, this is a positive increase compared to the previous quarter where only 20 hours were provided due to the constraints of the latest lockdown imposed during Q4 20/21, however still significantly below the levels recorded pre-COVID-19.
Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (Sunflower)	Better recovery from victimisation	Q1 21/22 for the second quarter in a row, Sunflower recorded the highest number of referrals received to date (886), this is a 6.2% increase compared to the previous quarter and 25.3% increase compared to the same period last year. The speed of service remains high, with 93% of individuals being contacted within 24hrs. Additional MOJ funding has been awarded to increase IDVA provision.

		<p>During the past 15 months, Sunflower continue has seen a big increase in the number of victims accepting support. On average 37% of all referrals accepted support during the past 12 months (32% in Q1 21/22), this is a significant increase compared to 19/20 financial year where only 18% received support.</p> <p>Referrals into the MARAC service has seen a decrease of 24% compared with the same period last year. 363 referrals received during the quarter of which 99% of cases (361) were heard at MARAC hearings, this is a notable improvement where in comparison, 89% of cases were heard at MARAC hearings during the same quarter last year. Additional meetings were implemented to ensure referrals were being heard in a timelier fashion.</p>
<p>Swift &amp; Sure Justice</p>	<p>More efficient &amp; effective system</p>	<p>Not on track, however similar pattern across the country. Northampton Crown Court outstanding workload continues to increase on a monthly basis. At the end of May 2021, the county had a backlog of 632 cases, which is an increase of 24.9% over the last 12 months and has followed a very similar trend both regionally and nationally over the period. This is below the national average which has seen a 35% increase over the same period.</p> <p>At the end of May 2021, the county had a backlog of 5.326 cases. Over the last 12 months however, the caseload backlog has reduced by 1.8%. This is at a slower rate than the national average (11% reduction), however there are signs that the county is starting to close the gap, with the county seeing a 5.5% reduction in 2021 (Jan - May) which greater than the region (-4.3%) and nationally (-3.5%).</p> <p>As of August 2021, CPS consultations in the county are taking 24.7 days to complete, this is around 5 days longer than the national average of 19.6 days. The county is currently ranked 3/5 in the East Midlands in terms of the speed of CPS consultations being completed and is slightly quicker than the regional average (24.9 days).</p>
<p>Substance Misuse</p>	<p>Fund an effective referral treatment service from the Criminal Justice system.</p>	<p>Current reporting arrangements provided by Change Grow Live (CGL) are not adequate and frequent enough. Clearer contract outcomes and arrangements required and to be reviewed with provider. The PFCC funding currently provides for daily coverage at Northampton Magistrates &amp; Crown courts to access the sustainability and carry out assessments for Alcohol Treatment Requirements (ATR) and/or Drug Rehabilitation Requirements (DRR). This is work that will continue to better establish the value being achieved from this investment. A new framework for the delivery of treatment and recovery services is due in 2022 and with it will come a more robust performance management framework.</p>

<p>Mental Health</p>	<p>To provide a more appropriate service for service users and help to reduce police time spent on mental health related incidents.</p>	<p>Mental Health flagged incident demand appears to be showing signs of stabilising and in June 2021 accounted for 6% of all incidents recorded. This is reflective of national trends with all forces seeing stable levels comparable to demand seen in 2020. The complexities of this demand is escalating however with the force confirming that officers are spending more time at mental health incidents (3,000 hours in June for example).</p> <p>The use of S136 in Q1 remains high and was used 53 times in June, which is the highest seen since the summer of 2020. All forces nationally however, reported a significant increasing trend in the use of S136 over the past 3 months and with the removal of the remaining social restrictions and the furlough scheme in the coming months, it is possible that there will be further heightened demand coming from mental health issues.</p> <p>Q1 21/22 has seen a positive increase in the percentage of S136 detentions contacting Op Alloy for advice to 81%. Despite there being a reduction in overall demand pushed to Op Alloy over the past quarter, the service is seeing the most important incidents being pushed to them for advice. The Commissioner has funded for an uplift to the existing service, which is due to start in the coming months, as a result of this, there will be a suite of metrics to understand how the force is effectively utilising the service and diverting nominals to the most appropriate services. Results of these metrics will be reported moving forward.</p>
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**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE, FIRE & CRIME PANEL**

**9 SEPTEMBER 2021**

**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COMMISSIONER FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**FIRE - FINANCIAL UPDATE AND 2021/22 FORECAST OUTTURN**

**AS AT JUNE 2021**

**REPORT BY THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER**

**1. Purpose and Context**

- 1.1 This report sets out at a high level, a financial update on the 2020/21 provisional outturn, the forecast financial outturn for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 and future challenges.
- 1.2 2021/22 is the third full year operating as Northamptonshire Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority (NCFRA) following the governance transfer on the 1 January 2019.

**2. 2020/21 Provisional Outturn and Assurance**

- 2.1 The NCFRA 2019/20 statement of accounts were certified as unqualified on 31 March 2021 and the 2020/21 draft statement of accounts were published in July 2021 in line with statutory timescales. Both are available on the OPFCC website.
- 2.2 The 2020/21 external audit had originally been notified to take place in early 2022. Following representation by the PFCC this is now anticipated in October/November 2021.
- 2.3 As set out in the February 2021 precept report, NCFRA had anticipated and planned for a challenging financial settlement for 2021/22. Some short term government grants

were provided and changing expenditure patterns helped mitigate financial pressures in 2020/21 and 2021/22. These challenges remain over the medium term.

- 2.4 In recognition of the tight financial climate, the PFCC had determined that where appropriate, underspends in the 2020/21 financial year would be set aside to help mitigate the future financial position.
- 2.5 Towards 2020/21 year end, NCFRA received a range of unbudgeted grants to mitigate lower than anticipated funding levels and/or additional pressures. As a result, the year-end underspend equated to £673K; of which, £99K is ring fenced for expenditure commitments in 2021/22 and the balance transferred to reserves.
- 2.6 The Home Secretary approved the transfer of NCFRA governance based on PFCC plans to build reserves to a sufficient level within three years. This level has been achieved through the delivery of robust plans and Home Office support. As at 31/3/21, NCFRA held:
  - £3m in a general reserve which reduces to £2m from 2021/22; and
  - £2.472m in revenue and capital reserves.
- 2.7 Reserves are now sufficient in the short term to meet unbudgeted risks, planned expenditure and to mitigate unforeseen pressures. However, they are not sufficient to meet the future financial shortfalls identified in the medium term financial plan to 2025/26.
- 2.8 NCFRA transferred without a capital programme and significant work has been undertaken with the Chief Fire Officer to develop a capital programme which balances operational need with affordability and deliverability. In 2020/21, £4.239m was spent on capital expenditure. With the exception of the joint fleet workshop with police, which was funded from borrowing, the balance was funded from revenue contributions, capital receipts, S106 and grants.
- 2.9 The service continued to review internal controls and assurances over the year and the Internal Audit Programme was delivered in full. At the year end, as with 2019/20, the Chief Internal Auditor's overall audit opinion for the year was "Satisfactory" and he recognised the positive direction of travel in establishing and embedding the internal control framework. The Chief Internal Auditor's Report is published in the Joint Independent Audit Committee (JIAC) July 2021 meeting papers on the OPFCC website.

2.10 The PFCC and his team continue to work with the service to highlight areas where internal controls need review, development, and to embed improvements and minimise the budget volatility which is still being experienced in some departmental areas.

### 3. Forecast Summary Revenue Outturn as at 31 March 2022

3.1 The forecast outturn is based on nine months of estimated data and, therefore is subject to change. It will be updated and refined to reflect latest information as the year progresses.

3.2 At this early stage in the year, there is a forecast overspend of £27K and in the current situation the outturn is subject to change as the year progresses. The forecast outturn is as follows:

Budget Group	Original Budget	As at 31 June (P3)		
		Expenditure to Date	Forecast Outturn	Variance
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Response Control	699	196	747	48
Response Wholetime	13,092	3,293	13,125	33
Response Retained	2,103	508	2,179	76
Business Planning & Perf	203	47	203	0
Joint Operations Team	97	18	97	0
Commercial Training	44	(17)	24	(20)
Community Prevention	517	122	517	0
Community Protection	527	130	545	18
Corporate Budgets	2,291	441	2,177	(114)
Engineering Services & Stores	1,493	446	1,523	30
ICT and Communications	1,332	408	1,417	85
Occupational Health	140	26	140	0
Estates & Facilities	1,538	239	1,538	0
Securing Water Supplies	62	15	62	0
Strategic Leadership Team	693	228	693	0
Training	744	153	744	0
Service Information Team	273	59	264	(9)
Contribution to/(from) Reserves	(950)	0	(950)	0
Contingency	120	0	0	(120)
Strategic Finance	249	0	249	0
Investment Interest	(7)	0	(7)	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,260</b>	<b>6,312</b>	<b>25,287</b>	<b>27</b>

### 3.3 Key highlights:

- I. In line with government direction, no funding was provided for pay awards in the funding settlement and as such was not budgeted for. However, a national pay award of 1.5% for Firefighters was approved by the National Joint Council (NJC) and has

been implemented. The forecast includes a financial pressure of £131K in the year for wholetime and retained firefighters.

- II. To mitigate the impact of any unforeseen pressures, the budget included a £120K contingency. As such, the PFCC has authorised this be applied to the costs of the pay award with the balance to be met from within the Fire revenue budget. Future years costs of over £200K have now been built into the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). The contingency is now fully utilised and any further unbudgeted pressures will need to be met from either the Fire revenue budget or reserves.
  - III. The Control overspend is due to additional strength being added in 2020/21 to add resilience as there were several staffing changes taking place. Due to the pandemic, not all of these changes came to fruition.
  - IV. Staff turnover is lower than budgeted in the Protection team which has resulted in a small forecast overspend.
  - V. ICT pressures relate to contractual commitments for the revenue costs of essential ICT software. Whilst some additional costs had been included within the budget for 2021/22, work continues with the budget manager to minimise the volatility in this area moving forwards.
  - VI. The Corporate budget is anticipated to underspend due to some third party charges being less than budgeted such as reduced charges for posts with Police and Pension Administration charges.
  - VII. Small variations are forecast in engineering and stores, the service information team and commercial training.
  - VIII. At this point in time the estates and facilities budget is forecast to come in on budget. However, this area has historically been volatile and the joint finance team continue to work closely with the budget manager to minimise this.
  - IX. The PFCC has commissioned a review of all Fire Business Rates and it is anticipated that this will result in some reduced costs for 2021/22 and future years.
- 3.4 At this early stage in the year, funding receipts are assumed to be in line with that budgeted. However, variations often arise on business rates and government grants and these will continue to be reviewed as the year progresses.

- 3.5 Whilst an overspend is currently forecast, it is important to highlight that this is based on prudent estimates and assumptions and nine months of estimated data. It is, therefore, likely to change during the year. The Fire budget is delegated to the Chief Fire Officer and the conditions of this delegation are set out in a formal budget letter from the PFCC to the Chief Fire Officer each year.
- 3.6 This letter sets out a number of requirements and expectations, including that the Chief Fire Officer will manage the resources within his delegated budget and that any overspends would be discussed with the PFCC and could be taken from the following year's budget allocation.
- 3.7 The PFCC scrutinises the budget monitoring throughout the year and receives regular updates at the Accountability Board.

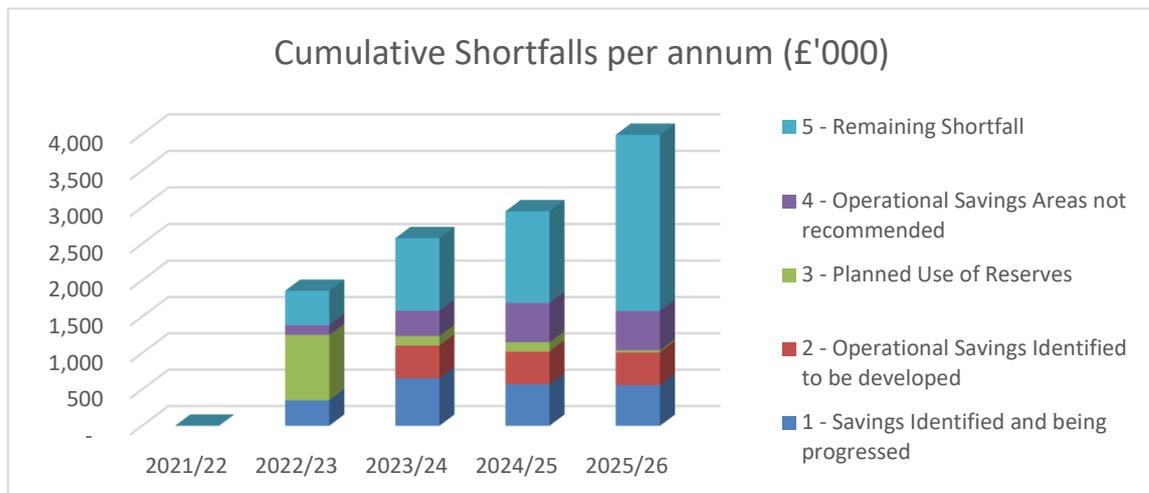
#### **4. Capital Programme**

- 4.1 As the PFCC set out in the precept report, the Chief Fire Officer has undertaken two further reviews of the capital programme in order to balance operational requirements, deliverability and affordability.
- 4.2 Due to the historic under investment in the Fire capital programme, there are a lot of essential operational requirements which need to be addressed and the revenue costs of financing the updated programme will be almost £800K per annum by 2025/26.
- 4.3 This is a significant pressure on the NCFRA annual budget and at the "Home Office" visit in June 2021. the PFCC raised this with the Home Office and is seeking financial support to address the funding of the legacy capital programme.

#### **5. Future Financial Challenges**

- 5.1 The PFCC is cognisant of the tight financial environment that NCFRA operate in and as such has been successful in obtaining a number of grants to mitigate financial challenges. Since 1/1/19, he has secured almost £4.3m in additional funding to support both revenue and capital pressures.
- 5.2 These grants have been welcomed and have been utilised to both supplement reserves and meet unbudgeted costs. However, one off grants do not support base funding requirements and the base budget funding challenge remains.
- 5.3 The February 2021 precept report set out the future MTFP position which highlighted shortfalls which needed to be met and the PFCC tasked the Chief Fire Officer to develop a savings plan. The Chief Fire Officer has worked closely with the PFCC and S151 Officer to identify a prioritised savings plan for the service.

5.4 The plan was considered at the Accountability Board in June 2021 and the MTFP has been updated as follows:



5.5 As seen in the chart in paragraph 5.4, whilst some savings have been identified there is a planned use of reserves until such time as the savings can be fully realised; the savings identified still do not meet the forecast shortfall over the MTFP.

5.6 Furthermore, the MTFP does not include the potential impact of additional pension contributions which are assumed from the next treasury review. This affects both Fire and Policing unfunded pension schemes. Conservative estimates for Fire at a 5% increase would result in a financial pressure of £0.5m per annum increasing to £1.1m per annum at 10% from 2024/25. However, national discussions indicate that potential increases could be even higher.

5.7 It remains the view of the PFCC that NCFRA do not receive fair funding when compared to other Fire Authorities and balancing the budget over the Medium Term is a challenge.

5.8 Mindful of the position, at their visit in June, the PFCC asked the Home Office to consider and support the following:

1. A permanent increase to the annual Fire budget;
2. Additional one off funding to meet essential capital expenditure; and
3. Central Home Office Support to address the potential pension pressures

5.9 Although the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review in the autumn and the impact on public finances of COVID-19 is still unknown at this time, the PFCC will continue to lobby and seek support for Northamptonshire Fire as set out within this report.

## **6. Recommendation**

- 6.1 That the Police, Fire and Crime Panel considers the financial update and forecast outturn.

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**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE, FIRE & CRIME PANEL**

**9 SEPTEMBER 2021**

**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COMMISSIONER FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**POLICE - FINANCIAL UPDATE AND 2021/22 FORECAST OUTTURN**

**AS AT JUNE 2021**

**REPORT BY THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER**

**1. Purpose and Context**

1.1 This report sets out at a high level, a financial update on the 2020/21 provisional outturn, the forecast financial outturn for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 and future challenges.

**2. 2020/21 Provisional Outturn**

2.1 The PFCC and CC 2019/20 statement of accounts were certified as unqualified in June 2021 and the 2020/21 draft statement of accounts were published in July 2021 in line with statutory timescales. Both are available on the OPFCC website. With the exception of Northamptonshire Fire, in line with other Regional Policing and Fire organisations, the PFCC and CC 2020/21 external audits are scheduled for early 2022.

2.2 In 2020/21 the PFCC and Force budgets underspent by year end by £2.339m. An underspend had been forecast throughout the year mainly due to savings arising from recruitment delays, expenditure lower in some areas due to the impact of COVID, together with additional central funding provided to meet COVID pressures.

2.3 Throughout the year, the PFCC had advised that any underspends during the year would be used to support the Medium Term Financial Plan by increasing revenue contributions to capital and reduce future revenue costs of financing the capital programme. As such an additional £1.5m was used for this purpose and the balance transferred to reserves, as follows:

<b>Budget Heading</b>	<b>Budget £'000</b>	<b>Outturn £'000</b>	<b>Variance £'000</b>
Budgets Managed by the Chief Constable	136,162	135,579	(583)
Budgets Managed by the PFCC	6,773	5,017	(1,756)
Capital Financing Costs	3,736	5,189	1,453
Transfer to Reserves	100	986	886
	<b>146,771</b>	<b>146,771</b>	<b>0</b>

2.4 Since his election in office, the PFCC has worked towards creating a stable financial position for Policing; investing in additional police officers and other operational and delivery areas, and establishing affordable plans over the period of the MTFP, together with holding a sufficient level of reserves.

2.5 The PFCC is of the view that Policing reserves are now at a sufficient level and there are plans to utilise some of the earmarked reserves in line with the Reserves Strategy.

2.6 As at 31 March 2021, the PFCC held the following usable Policing reserves:

- £5m in General Reserves held to meet risk and unforeseen events
- £11.967m in Earmarked Revenue, Regional and Capital Reserves to support targeted investment, planned initiatives and the Capital Programme

### **3. Forecast Summary Revenue Outturn as at 31 March 2022**

3.1 The forecast outturn is based on nine months of estimated data and, therefore is subject to change during the year. It will be updated and refined to reflect latest information as the year progresses.

3.2 At this early stage in the year, there is a forecast overspend of £146K. This is made up of a forecast £96K underspend on PFCC managed budgets and a forecast overspend of £242K for the Force.

3.3 The forecast outturn is attached in detail as an Appendix and summarised over the page as follows:

<b>Budget Heading</b>	<b>Budget £'000</b>	<b>Outturn £'000</b>	<b>Variance £'000</b>
Budgets Consented to the Chief Constable	142,671	142,913	242
Managed by the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner			
- PFCC Staff and Office Costs	1,120	1,067	(53)
- Commissioning and Delivery Services	4,749	4,706	(43)
Capital Financing Costs	4,133	4,133	0
Budgeted Transfer to Reserves	(141)	(141)	0
Investment Ring Fenced	1,000	1,000	0
<b>Total Policing Outturn</b>	<b>153,532</b>	<b>153,678</b>	<b>146</b>

3.4 Key highlights:

- i. The forecast overspend on Police pay and oncosts is based on latest attrition forecasts offset by additional pressures in unsocial hours, national insurance and overtime.
- ii. The underspend in PCSOs reflects current forecast attrition levels.
- iii. After anticipated transfers from reserves to support Office 365 implementation and funding of the future systems project to replace current MFSS services in 2022/23, Enabling Services Budgets are forecast to overspend £362K mainly from ICT pressures and the impact of the new structure. Contributions from reserves may mitigate this further over the year as the PFCC has agreed to meet the additional initial costs from the joint Fire/Police Digital Team restructure.
- iv. Collaboration Budgets are anticipated to underspend mainly due to the underspend in the regional Emergency Services network (ESN) team.
- v. The Control Room is currently forecast to overspend mainly due to lower than anticipated attrition levels.

- vi. There is a vacancy in the OPFCC office which is being covered by agency staff supporting the Safer Streets initiative.
  - vii. The OPFCC delivery budgets are underspent in the areas of early intervention, youth team and reducing reoffending, due to staff vacancies.
  - viii. It is anticipated that the PFCC delivery underspend will increase in these areas over the year due to timing of recruitment and investment in reducing reoffending areas, some of which are being funded from other government funding streams.
  - vix. The PFCC has tasked the Chief Constable to provide investment proposals in areas to support prevention and/or investment in technology that can sustainably reduce demand in the long term.
- 3.5 Whilst an overspend is currently forecast for the Force (Chief Constable) budgets, it is important to highlight that this is based on prudent estimates and assumptions and nine months of estimated data. It is, therefore, likely to change during the year. The Force budget is consented to the Chief Constable to manage and the conditions of this are set out in a formal budget letter from the PFCC to the Chief Constable each year.
- 3.6 This letter sets out a number of requirements and expectations, including that the Chief Constable will manage the resources within his delegated budget and that any overspends would be discussed with the PFCC and could be taken from the following year's budget allocation.
- 3.7 The PFCC scrutinises the budget monitoring throughout the year and receives regular updates at the Accountability Board.

#### **4. Future Financial Challenges and Funding Formula Review**

- 4.1 The February 2021 precept report set out the future MTFP position for Police which showed some shortfalls anticipated in future years. As a result, the PFCC set the Chief Constable a challenge to identify 1% of efficiency savings each year which can be reinvested back into the service and/or support any future year shortfalls.
- 4.2 However, the MTFP is based on a range of prudent assumptions, including that sustainable core funding is provided for the Uplift programme to support additional officers recruited to date and new officers planned for 2022/23. Any reductions in the assumptions made could significantly affect the MTFP.
- 4.3 At this stage, the MTFP does not include the potential impact of additional pension contributions which are assumed from the next treasury review. This affects both Fire and Policing unfunded pension schemes. Conservative estimates for Police highlight a 5% increase would result in a financial pressure of £2.8m per annum increasing to £5.6m per annum at 10% from 2024/25. National discussions have highlighted the possibility that the potential impact could be even higher.

- 4.4 The 2019/20 HMICFRS Value for Money profiles show that Northamptonshire receive the 27<sup>th</sup> lowest grant funding per head of population across all forces. As the Northamptonshire population continues to grow at a faster rate than the national average, the gap will continue to increase if the formula is not changed.
- 4.5 The Police funding formula was partially implemented in 2014/2015 and has not been updated since that time. If the 2015 formula had been fully implemented, Northamptonshire Police would receive additional funding each year.
- 4.6 Ministerial commitment has been given towards a funding formula review for policing – however, whilst the Home Office anticipate work commencing in the Autumn, it is unlikely that this will be concluded in time for the 2022/23 Police Funding Settlement.
- 4.7 At this stage, the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review in the autumn and the impact on public finances of COVID-19 is still unknown at this time.
- 4.8 As such, it remains the view of the PFCC that Northamptonshire Police are not served well by the current funding formula and the PFCC and CC will continue to take every opportunity to seek a fairer funding formula on behalf of the residents of Northamptonshire.

## **5. Recommendation**

- 5.1 That the Police, Fire and Crime Panel considers the financial update and forecast outturn.

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**Appendix A – Detailed Policing Forecast Outturn 2021/22 – As at 30 June 2021**

<b>Budget Heading</b>	<b>Budget £'000</b>	<b>Outturn £'000</b>	<b>Variance £'000</b>
<b>Budgets Managed by the Chief Constable</b>			
<b>Non Devolved Budgets</b>			
Police Pay and Oncosts	74,572	74,804	232
Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)	3,264	3,093	(171)
Other Pensions Costs	902	902	0
	<b>78,738</b>	<b>78,799</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Devolved Budgets</b>			
Enabling Departments	23,798	24,619	821
Collaboration Units	7,307	7,104	(203)
Devolved Operational Budgets	23,454	23,450	(4)
Control Room	6,174	6,540	366
Corporate Services	3,200	3,191	(9)
	<b>63,933</b>	<b>64,904</b>	<b>971</b>
Agreed Transfers to/from Reserves		(790)	(790)
<b>Budgets consented to the Chief Constable</b>	<b>142,671</b>	<b>142,913</b>	<b>242</b>
<b>Budgets Managed by the PFCC</b>			
<b>PFCC Office Budget</b>			
Staff and Office Costs	1,352	1,299	(53)
Contribution to Governance Costs from Fire	(232)	(232)	0
	<b>1,120</b>	<b>1,067</b>	<b>(53)</b>
<b>Commissioning and Delivery Budgets</b>			
Commissioning	737	773	36
Early Intervention Youth Work	374	374	0
Crime Prevention and Safer Streets Support	250	297	47
Customer Services - Complaints	125	125	0
Delivery, Accountability and Digital	139	139	0
Domestic and Sexual Abuse Provision	474	494	20
Early Intervention & EI DA support	852	793	(59)
Joint Communications Team With Fire (net)	166	151	(15)
Reducing Reoffending	650	615	(35)
Youth Work, Safeguarding and Youth Offending	732	695	(37)
Police and Crime Plan Delivery Fund	250	250	0
	<b>4,749</b>	<b>4,706</b>	<b>(43)</b>
<b>Total Budgets Managed by the PFCC</b>	<b>5,869</b>	<b>5,773</b>	<b>(96)</b>
Capital Financing Costs	4,133	4,133	0
Budgeted Transfer to Reserves	(141)	(141)	0
Investment Ring Fenced	1,000	1,000	0
<b>Total Policing</b>	<b>153,532</b>	<b>153,678</b>	<b>146</b>

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## NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE, FIRE & CRIME PANEL

9<sup>th</sup> September 2021

### Office of the Northamptonshire Police Fire & Crime Commissioner

#### Joint Independent Audit Committee - Annual Report 2020-21

#### 1. Purpose of report

This report presents the JIAC Annual Report, as required by the terms of reference, for inclusion in the Annual Accounts.

#### 2. Role of the Committee

The Audit Committee became operational in November 2012 and this is the eighth annual report of the Joint Independent Audit Committee (JIAC) created under the Home Office Financial Code of Practice for Police Services.

The current purpose of the Committee is:

*'To support the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable to discharge their responsibilities by providing independent assurance on the adequacy of their corporate governance, risk management arrangements and the associated control environments and the integrity of financial statements and reporting.'*

The full responsibilities of the JIAC are contained in its terms of reference.

#### 3. Committee membership

Membership of the Committee during the financial year was:

Name	Appointment	Qualifications
John Beckerleg (Chair)	Appointed 1 October 2014*	MA, CIPFA, MBA
Ann Battom	Appointed December 2018	CIPFA, MSc
John Holman	Appointed 23 September 2019	TA MA MRICS
Gill Scoular	Appointed 1 December 2014*	CIPFA

Edith Watson

Appointed 23 September 2019

[\*Note: the PFCC has offered to extend the terms of office of these members, due to the Covid pandemic, up to 30 November 2022 if required]

The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) and Chief Constable (CC) agreed in 2017 that the size of the Committee should be increased to 5. Recruitment in 2019 means that the committee now has 5 members.

#### **4. Committee's Terms of Reference**

The Committee has established terms of reference derived from the CIPFA best practice model. The Committee is required to review its terms of reference annually and this was undertaken at the July 2021 JIAC meeting.

The JIAC covers three organisations: the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC), the Force and the Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Authority (NFRA). The Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) is provided by NFRA.

The Committee's work and scope are now well established and no changes were proposed to the terms of reference.

#### **5. How the Committee discharges its responsibilities**

The Committee's terms of reference drive the work programme and there is a well-established approach to agenda planning. The Committee held four formal meetings in the year. During the pandemic period the meetings have been held online. The meetings were open to the public and, as far as possible, the agenda items are taken in public. Attendance at meetings was as follows:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Attendance / Possible attendance</b>
John Beckerleg (Chair)	4/4
Ann Battom	3/4
John Holman	4/4
Gill Scoular	4/4
Edith Watson	2/4

The Committee's meetings have been well supported by officers from the Force, OPFCC and the FRS. The improved quality and timeliness of reports has been maintained. In addition, the Committee has appreciated the open and transparent approach of officers.

In addition, representatives of the Internal Auditors and the External Auditor attended the meetings and the Committee took the opportunity as it felt necessary to discuss topics in private with the auditors without officers being present.

The JIAC has received regular reports on:

- the Statement of Accounts (2018/19 and 2019/20);
- risk management and risk registers;
- treasury management;
- internal and external audit plans, recommendations and updates on progress; and
- updates on the inspectorate (HMICFRS) reports and recommendations.

It has also received updates or sought extra assurance on areas of specific risk or concern, including:

- Multi Force Shared Services (MFSS) upgrade, timescales and issues;
- Support provided by LGSS to the Fire Authority
- Future support arrangements:
- Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan update and timetable;
- Reviews by the Inspectorate (HMICFRS);
- Corruption and fraud controls and processes;
- Complaints procedures;
- Arrangements within the Police force to handle ethics;
- Update on the Professional Standards Department; and
- Business continuity and disaster recovery.

Three workshops were held during the year which considered the following areas:

- Sept 2020 - Fire Accounts;
- Oct 2020 - Police Accounts; and
- Feb 2019 - Fire IT services.

The two internal audit teams have successfully delivered a full programme of reviews.

In addition, the Chair and/or other JIAC members attended a CIPFA training day for Police Audit Committees and a CIPFA update for Police Audit Committees.

Members of the Committee are able to attend the Force Assurance Board to gain a more detailed insight into the many aspects of the Force from which assurance is required. There is a very positive approach within this Board to addressing aspects of assurance such as outstanding internal audit recommendations and risk which are a standing item for the Committee.

The pattern of the Committee working across the three organisations is now well established and there is the opportunity to share information and learn from each

other. Managing the agenda, now spanning all three bodies, continues to be a challenge but this is greatly assisted by well-produced and timely reports. In some cases there is the opportunity to reduce the frequency of reporting on some topics now that policies and procedures have become more embedded.

The Committee continues to gain significant assurance from both the reports and officers. There are some areas where there are concerns which are set out below. However, the members of the Committee appreciate the openness of the officers to discuss all areas of the business and willingness to respond to questions.

## **6. Assessment of the Audit Committee's performance against its plan and terms of reference**

The Committee is keen to be effective and in particular make a positive and constructive contribution to the work of the PFCC, CC and NFRA and the achievement of their strategic priorities.

The Committee's aims and objectives for 2020/21 are set out in Appendix A. Five of the six objectives have been completed. The final objective – a self-assessment of JIAC has not been concluded but the Committee continues to invite constructive criticism from officers and auditors to help it improve the contribution it makes.

Appendix B sets out the objectives for 2021/22. There are some key areas which the Committee will keep under review including support services and statutory accounts. Given that the core work programme is now established there is an opportunity to explore other governance topics; these will be discussed with officers.

## **7. Identification of key issues**

During 2020/21 the Committee considered a range of topics and issues. Two of the key ones were:

### **Delays in signing off Annual Accounts 2018/19 and 2019/20**

This must be an area of major concern for all of those responsible for effective governance.

The late completion of the audit of the statutory accounts has been caused by a number of factors including:

- The impact of the pandemic;
- Insufficient auditors with appropriate experience;
- Increased expectations being placed on auditors;
- Ensuring adequate working papers; and
- Dependence on the completion of related audits.

From the perspective of a member of the public, there is a need to ensure that the statutory accounts present a fair picture of the organisations' financial activities and standing. The external audit arrangements are intended to provide a level of assurance that this is the case. But significant delays in the auditor providing their opinions significantly undermines the value of that assurance and effective accountability.

The actual dates when the accounts have been signed off were;

Organisation	2018/19	2019/20
Police and PFCC	28 July 2020	21 June 2021
Fire	1 July 2020	31 March 2021

Delays in the audit timetable are not unique to Northamptonshire Police, Fire and PFCC.

Delays in concluding the statutory accounts has a knock-on effect on the Finance teams and their ability to devote time to other activities in the annual financial cycle (e.g. budget preparation).

In recent months there have been a number of reviews into the role of and arrangements for external audit. These are likely to lead to increased expectations on the external auditor; this will probably result in increased fee levels and will be a consideration in the re-tendering for external audit services.

### **Enabling services programme**

The provision of support services by the Multi-Force Shared Services (MFSS) has been a topic identified in three previous JIAC reports. There was increasing concern about the effectiveness and cost of the support.

The decision has now been taken to conclude the partnership arrangement in 2022 and to bring many of the support services 'in-house'. The opportunity will also be taken to achieve the benefits of joint working across Police and Fire.

This is a major and important programme affecting the effective governance and control framework for each of the services. JIAC has received a briefing on the programme from the chief officer leading the programme and will continue to seek updates as the programme is implemented.

## **8. Assessment of Internal Audit**

### **PFCC and CC**

Mazars were appointed as the internal auditor for four years with effect from 1 April 2015 following a competitive tendering process involving neighbouring Counties.

Chief Finance Officers across the region have extended the contract with Mazars for a further three years to April 2022. The internal audit service will be re-tendered in 2021/22 by Derbyshire on behalf of the region.

There are distinct benefits in having the same internal auditor covering the Police region (for example, for audits of collaborative arrangements).

The internal audit plan for 2020/21 was approved by the JIAC in March 2020, and the Committee recommended the Commissioner and the Chief Constable to sign off the plan. Progress against the audit plan has been good.

The Force and OPFCC have generally accepted the recommendations made in the internal audit reports (or explained why a particular recommendation has not been accepted). Managers have progressed the agreed actions in most cases to the agreed timescale and the Committee continues to monitor progress until actions have been completed.

The Committee has been monitoring the recommendations which have passed their implementation date.

## **NFRA**

The internal audit of NFRA (and NFRS) was undertaken by LGSS for 2020/21.

The internal audit plan for NFRA was approved at the March 2021 JIAC meeting and the Committee recommended the Commissioner to sign off the plan. Progress against the Audit Plan has been good. The audit reports have produced a number of important recommendations for the Service which will help to strengthen the control framework.

In due course there will need to be consideration of whether there should be a single internal auditor covering all three organisations. The regional approach to the procurement of internal audit for Police may make this slightly more difficult but there are probably benefits to be gained by having the same internal auditor for all organisations.

## **9. Assessment of External Audit**

Paragraph seven above comments on the late conclusion of the external audit of the statutory accounts.

The Committee has explored the mechanism for managing this poor performance. Regrettably, because of a national decision to join a consortium tendering for external audit work to secure better value for money, the PFCC and CC have limited ability to manage the contract directly. Committee members have highlighted concerns to the tendering body. It will be necessary to consider the pros and cons of continuing to use the consortium for the imminent re-tendering exercise.

The Covid 19 pandemic has disrupted the audit work for 2020/21. This was recognized by the Government which has extended the deadlines for authorities to complete their closedown work. At the time of writing there is no certainty when the audit work will commence and conclude.

Locally the external audit team has been thorough and engagement has remained positive and constructive. But from the Committee's observations, the timing, structure, planning, fees and for the 2018/19 audit, the quality of some of the audit team have been below expectations.

## **10. Looking forward**

Appendix B sets out the draft Aims and Priorities for the Committee for 2021/22.

These reflect:

- Any outstanding recommendations from 2020/21;
- Known areas of concern / high risk; and
- Strategic areas or change programmes directly related to effective governance or the control framework.

## **12. Conclusion**

The Committee has an effective work programme based on robust governance frameworks across the three organisations.

Thanks are due to the officers who support the Committee and who have provided honest and objective assurance about the arrangements which exist. The committee is grateful to the Finance teams including the statutory officers; they have again been put under considerable pressure working throughout the last year, not least because of the lockdown and the protracted audit timetable.

The JIAC will continue to undertake the duties assigned to it in the agreed terms of reference and seek to ensure that it makes a constructive contribution to achieving the agreed priorities. The Committee would welcome feedback or suggestions about how it can become more effective in discharging its responsibilities.

## **13. Recommendations**

- 13.1 That the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel considers the content of the report and its appendices.

J Beckerleg  
Chair of Joint Independent Audit Committee

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## The Joint Independent Audit Committee's – Aims and Objectives 2020/21

<b>Aims and Objectives</b>
<p>Undertake a review of the effectiveness of JIAC</p> <p><i>A survey has been undertaken and the results will be presented to the September 2021 meeting of the JIAC. There is some useful feedback which can be considered but a common concern is the breadth of the Committee's work which is affecting the ability to consider items fully.</i></p>
<p>Continue to place importance on the prompt production and audit of the organisation's statutory accounts.</p> <p><i>The Committee has continued to monitor the production of the annual accounts and the completion of the external audits. The external audit of the accounts has not progressed in a timely manner for a variety of reasons set out in the report and this remains a major concern for the Committee in trying to ensure good governance and appropriate accountability. This aspect of JIAC's role will need to continue.</i></p>
<p>Keep under review the programme for adapting the full range of support services including, where appropriate, the integration of functions cross Police and Fire services</p> <p><i>The external arrangements for some support services using the multi-function shared services arrangements has been an area of focus for the Committee for some years. During 2020/21, the Committee has received updates on the progress of an Enabling Services programme to bring many support services in-house and to integrate support across Police and Fire. It is supportive of this decision but, given the complexity of the arrangements and the relationship to good governance, it will continue to seek updates on the progress in this area during 2021 and 2022.</i></p>
<p>Monitor the planned improvements in governance arrangements for the Fire and Rescue Service</p> <p><i>Governance arrangements within the FRS have continued to develop since the transfer of governance. There are recommendations from Internal Audit Reviews which should continue to strengthen the governance.</i></p>
<p>Develop a better understanding of counter fraud activity within the three organisations.</p>

*The Committee received information about the arrangements in respect of counter fraud and gained assurance about existing arrangements. This is a specific element of the Committee's terms of reference and will continue to be reviewed periodically.*

Review the work of a sample of other joint audit committees to learn from their approaches and help this to shape the future work programme of the JIAC.

*A review of the agendas of other Audit committees from within the Northamptonshire Region has identified a number of topics which are common with those considered by JIAC. Most have established agenda plans which allow the annual programmes to be compared. There are examples of some topics being presented which JIAC may wish to consider in its programme (although some are outside the terms of reference of JIAC).*

The Joint Independent Audit Committee’s – Draft Aims and Objectives 2021/22

<b>Aims and Objectives</b>
Continue to place importance on the prompt production and audit of the organisations’ statutory accounts
Review the implementation of the Enabling Services programme for adapting the full range of support services including, where appropriate, the integration of functions across Police and Fire services. Identify the benefits which have arisen from the closer governance arrangements.
Support the work to determine the approach to future tendering for external services
Initiate up to 3 reviews in areas of strategic importance in the governance of the organisations. [Note: possible areas – approach to climate change, estates, HR policies, workforce planning (in relation to achieving strategic objectives), post Covid changes, use of digital technology, regional working, decision making, equality and diversity, well being, .....]

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## NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE, FIRE & CRIME PANEL

**9 SEPTEMBER 2021**

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Northamptonshire Police, Fire &amp; Crime Panel Work Programme 2021/22</b>
<b>Report Author</b>	<b>James Edmunds, Democratic Services Assistant Manager, West Northamptonshire Council</b> <a href="mailto:James.edmunds@westnorthants.gov.uk">James.edmunds@westnorthants.gov.uk</a>

<b>Contributors/Checkers/Approvers</b>		
<b>West MO</b> (for West and joint papers)	Catherine Whitehead	01/09/2021
<b>West S151</b> (for West and joint papers)	Martin Henry	24/08/2021

### List of Appendices

#### **Appendix A – Outline Work Programme 2021/22**

##### **1. Purpose of Report**

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- 1.1. The report is intended to enable the Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel to review progress with the development and delivery of its 2021/22 work programme as well as to consider other matters relating to the operation of the Panel.

##### **2. Executive Summary**

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- 2.1. The report invites the Panel to review the latest version of its outline work programme for 2021/22 and to endorse this subject to any changes that the Panel considers to be necessary.
- 2.2. In addition, the report provides updates on the latest position with regard to the following matters relating to the operation of the Panel
- Location of Panel meetings
  - Remuneration of independent co-opted Panel members

### **3. Recommendations**

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- 3.1 It is recommended that the Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel:
- a) Endorses its outline work programme for 2021/22, subject to any changes that the Panel considers to be necessary.
  - b) Agrees the location(s) to be used for its future formal meetings, taking into account the potential approach set out in paragraph 5.9 of the report.
  - c) Agrees that independent co-opted members of the Panel should be paid an annual allowance of £500 from 2021/22, subject to confirmation of the provision of Police & Crime Panel grant funding to the host authority.
- 3.2 Reasons for Recommendation(s) – The recommendations are intended to support the effective operation of the Panel during 2021/22 and the delivery of its statutory responsibilities.

### **4. Report Background**

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- 4.1 The Police Reform & Social Responsibility Act 2011, the Policing & Crime Act 2017 and supporting legislation give various specific responsibilities to the Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel (“the Panel”). These are principally as follows:
- Scrutinising and reporting on the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner (PFCC)’s proposed Police and Fire & Rescue precepts
  - Scrutinising and reporting on the PFCC’s Police & Crime Plan and Fire & Rescue Plan
  - Scrutinising and reporting on the PFCC’s Annual Report on the delivery of Police & Crime Plan objectives and on the annual Fire & Rescue Statement reporting compliance with the Fire & Rescue National Framework
  - Scrutinising and reporting on proposed appointments by the PFCC to certain positions (: Deputy PFCC; Chief Executive; Chief Finance Officer; Chief Constable of Northamptonshire Police; and Chief Fire Officer of Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service)
  - Dealing with complaints from members of the public about the conduct of the PFCC.
- 4.2 In addition, the legislation referred to in paragraph 4.1 above gives the Panel the general responsibility to review and scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, by the PFCC in connection with the discharge of his functions and to make reports or recommendations to the PFCC with respect to these matters. The Panel is required to carry out its role with a view to supporting the PFCC in effectively exercising his functions.
- 4.3 It is standard practice for the Panel to agree a work programme that provides a framework within which it carries out its functions and the practical tasks these involve. The work programme is made up of a combination of statutory and discretionary scrutiny work; matters relating to the operation of the Panel; and any supporting activities such as briefings or training. The work programme covers a rolling 12-month period. The work programme is considered at the first Panel meeting in the municipal year. It is then kept under regular review by the Panel and modified or updated as necessary, with a view to ensuring that it is focussed on the aim of using available capacity to best effect.

## 5. Issues and Choices

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### Outline Work Programme 2021/22

- 5.1 The Panel considered its outline work programme at its meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021 and identified items of business that it wished to consider during the year ahead alongside its mandatory tasks. The resulting outline work programme is included with this report (at Appendix A).
- 5.2 The work programme should not be seen as fixed and it is open to the Panel to review and modify it at any time as the municipal year progresses. The work programme can be informed by input from a range of sources, including suggestions from individual Panel members and from the PFCC. The Panel should consider suggested business from all sources on its merits, with a view to maintaining a work programme that reflects the Panel's remit, has the support of Panel members, is realistically deliverable within available resources and has the potential to produce the most worthwhile outcomes.

### Location for Panel meetings

- 5.3 The Panel was invited at its meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021 to consider the location(s) to be used for its formal meetings in 2021/22, given the need to resume physical meetings following the expiry of legislation permitting remote meetings in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Panel agreed the following resolutions on this matter:
- a) *The Panel prioritises the following considerations in relation to the locations to be used for its formal meetings in 2021/22:*
- *The ability to webcast meetings*
  - *A location that is relatively central in Northamptonshire, that is accessible and that offers appropriate parking.*
- b) *The Panel requests that a proposal regarding the future location of its formal meetings be developed for consideration by the Panel.*
- 5.4 The Panel Secretariat has since carried out further work to develop a proposal regarding the future location of formal meetings, as requested by the Panel.
- 5.5 It is logical that the Panel should seek to use local authority venues for its meetings. The priority set out at paragraph 5.3(a) above directs away from holding meetings in Corby, Daventry, Thrapston or Towcester, as they are towards the edges of the county. This leaves Northampton, Kettering and Wellingborough as relatively central locations. The local authority venues in these locations are as follows:
- Kettering: Bowling Green Road
  - Northampton: The Guildhall, One Angel Square, County Hall
  - Wellingborough: Swanspool House

- 5.6 All five of these venues provide the standard of accessibility associated with local authority premises. All have either on-site parking or public parking in the immediate vicinity. All except One Angel Square have one room that is large enough to accommodate a Panel meeting with social distancing measures: more rooms at all five venues will become available for Panel meetings when social distancing ceases to be necessary.
- 5.7 The Panel has specified the ability to webcast as its top priority for future meetings. The Panel Secretariat has identified a technical solution for webcasting, using some of the webcasting equipment that was used to webcast Panel meetings up to March 2020 to stream to YouTube through a Zoom session. The only on-site technology required for this approach is an internet connection and microphones in the meeting room. This would normally be available at all five local authority venues discussed above, although the Panel Secretariat was advised at the end of July 2021 that the microphone system in the council chamber at Bowling Green Road, Kettering, was not working at that point.
- 5.8 The considerations detailed in paragraphs 5.5 – 5.7 above, plus the availability of specific venues, have resulted in the use of The Guildhall for the current Panel meeting. This will provide an opportunity to test the technical solution for webcasting in real life.
- 5.9 Subject to the experience of the current meeting it is proposed that the Panel may then wish to consider identifying the local authority venues in Northampton as the normal location for its meetings. This option arguably represents the best fit for the priorities identified by the Panel. However, this is ultimately a matter for the Panel to determine.

#### Remuneration of independent co-opted Panel members

- 5.10 All members of the Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel are currently able to claim expenses for activities connected with their roles according to a set Member Expenses Scheme. The cost of such expenses is met from grant funding that the Panel's host authority can claim from the Home Office for the purpose of maintaining a panel for the Northamptonshire Police area.
- 5.11 The previous Panel agreed at its final meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2021 to recommend that the Panel appointed for 2021/22 should consider whether there should be additional remuneration for Panel members in future. In practice, this focusses on the question of whether independent co-opted members of the Panel should receive specific remuneration, given that councillor members' work on the Panel is covered by the basic allowance paid to all councillors by their respective local authorities. Different views on this question were expressed by members at the meeting in March 2021; in any case it was recognised that the previous Panel was not in a position to pursue the matter further at that point.
- 5.12 The potential to introduce an allowance for independent co-opted members was revisited by the current Panel at its meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021 during discussion of its work programme and operating arrangements. The Panel noted that the Scheme of Allowances adopted by West Northamptonshire Council includes the provision that "An allowance of £500 will be paid to the co-optee(s) to the Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel" (for reference, the North

Northamptonshire Council Scheme of Allowances also provides for remuneration of co-opted members of committees). This provision and the size of the allowance was recommended by an Independent Remuneration Panel. The resulting situation effectively answers questions that the Panel would otherwise need to raise with the constituent authorities, concerning their position on the principal of introducing specific remuneration for independent co-opted members and the level at which this remuneration should be set.

- 5.13 Since the previous Panel meeting the Panel Secretariat has also carried out further research into approaches to remuneration taken by other panels. Approaches differ across all panels but include various examples of panels that already pay allowances to some or all of their members: for example, the panels for Cheshire, Essex, Greater Manchester, Hampshire, Kent, North Yorkshire, Warwickshire and West Yorkshire. These panels' experiences also indicate that there is no issue with the principal of using Police & Crime Panel grant funding to cover the cost of allowances for panel members.
- 5.14 Taking into account the factors set out in paragraphs 5.12 – 5.13 above the Panel is invited to agree that independent co-opted members should be paid an annual allowance of £500 from 2021/22, subject to confirmation of the provision of Police & Crime Panel grant funding to the host authority.

## **6. Implications (including financial implications)**

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### **6.1 Resources and Financial**

- 6.1.1 It is intended that the resource implications associated with the proposed decisions set out in this report will be accommodated within grant funding that the Panel's host authority can claim from the Home Office for the purpose of maintaining a panel for the Northamptonshire Police area. The host authority for the Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel was able to claim up to £64,340 in grant funding for 2020/21 (consisting of up to £53,300 for administration and up to £11,040 for member expenses). It is anticipated that the same will apply for 2021/22, subject to receipt of confirmation from the Home Office.

### **6.2 Legal**

- 6.2.1 There are no legal implications arising from the proposal.

### **6.3 Risk**

- 6.3.1 The Panel should ensure that its work programme and operating arrangements enable it to carry out its statutory role and functions effectively. Factors that might represent a risk to this could include setting a work programme that was unfocussed, that included too much business to be realistically deliverable, or that was not sufficiently flexible. These risks should be mitigated by the Panel reviewing its work programme and any associated matters at each of its normal meetings during the municipal year. This will enable the Panel to consider any changes to existing arrangements that may seem necessary, with a view to ensuring that the work programme and

the specific activities contained within it remain deliverable within the Panel's overall capacity and the resources available to support it.

## **7. Background Papers**

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Police Reform & Social Responsibility Act 2011

Policing & Crime Act 2017

Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel Rules of Procedure

Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel – Outline Work Programme 2021/22

MEETING DATE	STATUTORY BUSINESS	DISCRETIONARY BUSINESS	BUSINESS RELATING TO PANEL OPERATION	OTHER BUSINESS
9 September 2021		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PFCC’s Delivery updates</li> <li>- PFCC’s Budget updates</li> <li>- Joint Independent Audit Committee Annual Report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work programme</li> <li>- Complaints and conduct matters update</li> </ul>	
9 December 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PFCC’s Police &amp; Crime Plan</li> <li>- PFCC’s Fire &amp; Rescue Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PFCC’s Delivery updates</li> <li>- PFCC’s Budget updates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work programme</li> </ul>	
3 February 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PFCC’s proposed Police precept and budget for 2022/23</li> <li>- PFCC’s proposed Fire &amp; Rescue precept and budget for 2022/23</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work programme</li> </ul>	
17 February 2022 (Reserve meeting)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PFCC’s revised Police precept and budget for 2022/23 [if required] and/or</li> <li>- PFCC’s revised Fire &amp; Rescue precept and budget for 2022/23 [if required]</li> </ul>			

MEETING DATE	STATUTORY BUSINESS	DISCRETIONARY BUSINESS	BUSINESS RELATING TO PANEL OPERATION	OTHER BUSINESS
14 April 2022		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PFCC's Delivery updates</li> <li>- PFCC's Budget updates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work programme</li> <li>- 2022/23 meeting dates</li> <li>- Complaints and conduct matters update</li> </ul>	
Meeting #1 2022/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PFCC's Annual Report on Policing for 2021/22</li> <li>- PFCC's Fire &amp; Rescue Statement for 2021/22</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Appointment of Panel Chair and Deputy Chair</li> <li>- Work programme</li> <li>- Appointment of Complaints Sub Committee members</li> </ul>	

### **Additional work programme topics to be scheduled**

1. The Panel has requested to receive a report on action being taken in Northamptonshire to respond to the outcomes of the Kerslake Report and the Public Inquiry into the Manchester Arena terror attack.

### **Task-and-finish work**

1. A workshop session open to all Panel members in September 2021 on the 2021/22 Police and Fire & Rescue budget positions.
2. A workshop session open to all Panel members in January 2022 on the development of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner (PFCC)'s proposed precepts, to include separate sections on Police and Fire & Rescue.

### **Briefings / Training**

1. Two briefing sessions open to all Panel members with the Chief Constable and the Chief Fire Officer on their respective service's priorities and challenges, to take place in venues appropriate to the subject matter.
2. A visit to Darby House for all Panel members.

## **Background Information**

### **(A) Statutory Business**

PFCC's Annual Report and Fire & Rescue Statement – The PFCC is required to produce an Annual Report on the exercise of the PFCC's police and crime functions during the previous financial year and the progress made in meeting objectives set out in the PFCC's Police & Crime Plan. The PFCC is also required to publish an annual statement of assurance of compliance with the priorities set out in the Fire & Rescue National Framework for England. The Panel must review and report on both the Annual Report and Fire & Rescue Statement as soon as practicable after they are received.

PFCC's proposed Police and Fire & Rescue precepts – The PFCC's proposed precepts must be reviewed and reported on by the Panel before they can be issued. The Panel has the power to veto a proposed precept, in which case the PFCC is required to produce a revised proposal that must also be reviewed by the Panel at the reserve meeting included in the outline work programme (if the Panel does not veto either of the proposed precepts the reserve meeting will not be held). The steps involved in this process must take place by specific deadlines set in legislation.

PFCC's Police & Crime Plan and Fire & Rescue Plan – The PFCC is required to issue a Police & Crime Plan setting out his police and crime objectives and associated matters during the financial year following an election. The PFCC is also required to issue a Fire & Rescue Plan setting out strategic priorities and objectives 'shortly after the PFCC takes office'. In both cases, proposed plans must be reviewed and reported on by the Panel. These matters are currently listed provisionally in the work programme to reflect that the timing may vary.

### **(B) Discretionary Business**

PFCC's Delivery Updates – These are two regular reports setting out actions by the PFCC supporting progress towards the delivery of the strategic outcomes set out in his Police & Crime Plan and in his Fire & Rescue Plan. The Delivery Updates also include contextual information about Northamptonshire Police and Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service performance.

PFCC's Budget Updates – These are two regular reports setting out the latest in-year position for the budgets for policing and the Office of the PFCC and for the budget for the Northamptonshire Commissioner Fire & Rescue Authority.

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## NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE, FIRE & CRIME PANEL

**9 SEPTEMBER 2021**

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Complaints and Conduct Matters Update</b>
<b>Report Author</b>	<b>James Edmunds, Democratic Services Assistant Manager, West Northamptonshire Council</b> <a href="mailto:James.edmunds@westnorthants.gov.uk">James.edmunds@westnorthants.gov.uk</a>

<b>Contributors/Checkers/Approvers</b>		
<b>West MO</b> (for West and joint papers)	Catherine Whitehead	01/09/2021
<b>West S151</b> (for West and joint papers)	Martin Henry	24/08/2021

### List of Appendices

#### **Appendix A – Record of the outcome of Informal Resolution**

##### **1. Purpose of Report**

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- 1.1. The report is intended to provide the Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel with an update on complaints and conduct matters relating to the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire, in accordance with arrangements agreed by the Panel.

##### **2. Executive Summary**

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- 2.1. The Panel is advised that during the period January – August 2021 one new complaint about the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner was recorded and was subject to Informal Resolution by the Panel's Complaints Sub Committee. There are no other outstanding complaints or conduct matters at the time of writing this report.

##### **3. Recommendations**

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- 3.1 It is recommended that the Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel notes the update.

- 3.2 Reasons for Recommendation(s) – The recommendation is intended to assist the Panel to oversee the operation of arrangements it has adopted to deliver its statutory responsibilities concerning complaints and conduct matters relating to the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire.

#### **4. Report Background**

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- 4.1 The Police Reform & Social Responsibility Act 2011 and the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints & Misconduct) Regulations 2012 set out certain responsibilities on Police & Crime Panels for dealing with complaints against Police & Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and Deputy Police & Crime Commissioners (DPCCs) and conduct matters. The Regulations define these terms as follows:
- “Complaint”: means a complaint about the conduct of the PCC or DPCC.
  - “Conduct”: includes acts, omissions, statements and decisions (whether actual, alleged or inferred).
  - “Serious Complaint”: means a complaint made about conduct which constitutes or involves or appears to constitute or involve a criminal offence.
  - “Conduct Matter”: means a case where there is an indication that the PCC or DPCC may have committed a criminal offence (for example, where an indication comes to light through media reporting).
- 4.2 In summary, the Regulations require the Panel to make suitable arrangements for:
- Receiving and recording complaints and conduct matters.
  - Initial sorting of complaints and conduct matters to determine whether they appear to have a criminal element that requires referral to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC), which is the body responsible for their investigation.
  - Informal Resolution of complaints that do not have a criminal element. Informal Resolution is intended to represent a locally-agreed process for resolving a complaint, involving engagement with the complainant and the person complained against. It is not an investigation of the complaint: the Panel is prohibited from taking any action intended to gather information about a complaint other than inviting the comments of the complainant and the person complained against.
- 4.3 The Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel has previously agreed arrangements for delivering its statutory responsibilities relating to complaints and conduct matters. The main elements of these arrangements are:
- Delegation to the Monitoring Officer of the host authority of the Panel’s responsibilities for receiving, recording and referring complaints and conduct matters.
  - Establishment of a Complaints Sub Committee with delegated responsibility for the Informal Resolution of non-criminal complaints, according to an agreed Informal Resolution Protocol.
  - Provision by the Monitoring Officer of a half-yearly monitoring report to the Panel about all complaints and conduct matters dealt with in the preceding period, the actions taken (including any obligations to act, or refrain from acting, that have arisen under the Regulations but have not yet been complied with or have been contravened) and the outcome of the process.

## **5. Issues and Choices**

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- 5.1 The outline work programme for 2021/22 presented to the Panel at its meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021 listed the complaints and conduct matters update as an item of business for the Panel meetings on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2021 and 14<sup>th</sup> April 2022. This schedule has been used in the past and has worked well in terms of scheduling the update relative to other business in the Panel's overall work programme. It does mean that the current update covers a slightly longer period than should normally be the case, as the preceding update was presented to the Panel meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2021 and covered the period July – December 2020.
- 5.2 The current update therefore deals with the period January – August 2021. As noted in paragraph 2.1 above, one new complaint was recorded during this period and was subject to Informal Resolution by the Panel's Complaints Sub Committee. The record of the outcome of the Informal Resolution that was published on the then-host authority website is included with this report (at Appendix A). There are no other outstanding complaints or conduct matters at the time of writing this report.

## **6. Implications (including financial implications)**

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### **6.1 Resources and Financial**

- 6.1.1 There are no resource or financial implications arising from the proposal.

### **6.2 Legal**

- 6.2.1 There are no legal implications arising from the proposal.

### **6.3 Risk**

- 6.3.1 It is important that the Panel deals with complaints and conduct matters in accordance with statutory requirements and the arrangements that that Panel has adopted to deliver its specific responsibilities. In this context it should be recognised that the complaints and conduct matters update is not presented to the Panel with a view to it discussing matters relating to individual complaints, which would be inappropriate. Rather, the update provides the Panel with an overview of complaints dealt with during the preceding period in order to support the Panel's role of monitoring the operation and effectiveness of the arrangements that it has adopted.

## **7. Background Papers**

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Police Reform & Social Responsibility Act 2011

The Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2012

Police & Crime Panel Regulations: Non-Criminal Complaints and Misconduct - Home Office Guidance

Police & Crime Panels: Handling Complaints about the Police & Crime Commissioner and their Deputy -  
Local Government Association Guidance

Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel Rules of Procedure

**Outcomes of Informal Resolution by the Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel Complaints Sub Committee of a complaint concerning the conduct of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire**

Reference	Date received	Nature of the case made by the complainant (summary)	Actions taken	Outcome(s) of Informal Resolution
01/2021	06/01/2021	The complainant contended that the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner (PFCC) had wrongly refused to investigate a complaint about the Chief Constable of Northamptonshire Police that the complainant had made to the PFCC.	The complaint was recorded and referred to the Panel’s Complaints Sub Committee to consider in accordance with the Informal Resolution Protocol. The Complaints Sub Committee met on 11 <sup>th</sup> March 2021 and completed Informal Resolution of the complaint.	<p>The Complaints Sub Committee considered information relating to the complaint about the PFCC provided to it by the complainant and by the PFCC. As a result, the Sub Committee agreed to request that the PFCC reconsider the decision not to record the complaint about the Chief Constable made by the complainant.</p> <p>The PFCC wrote to the Sub Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 advising that the complaint about the Chief Constable would be recorded. The complainant would be advised of this. The complaint would then be assessed and managed in accordance with the relevant statutory guidance.</p>

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