



Northamptonshire Commissioner (Fire Authority) Fire and Rescue Statement 2021/22

1. Introduction & Background

- 1.1 The Fire and Rescue National Framework (2018) sets out a requirement for Fire and Rescue Authorities to provide annual assurance on financial, governance and operational matters. In addition, the annual report is required to show due regard to:
- The Fire and Rescue National Framework
 - The Fire and Rescue Plan for the area
 - The Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) for the area
- 1.2 This year's statement comes at the end of the third year of governance under the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC), and the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic. For the service, the third wave of infections in late 2021/22 saw the highest levels of staff sickness of the pandemic, which also impacted service delivery in a different way to previous lockdowns.

During 2021/22, the service developed 'A Vision for 2025 – Fire 25' and the Community Risk Management Plan (previously known as Integrated Risk Management Plan), these two documents provide strategic direction for the service over the next three years and sit alongside the PFCC's plan (Police, Fire and Crime Plan); the first combined plan for both police and fire. Additionally, the service has been subject to its second inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

2. Performance

- 2.1 The Authority monitored progress for this period against the Fire and Rescue Plan 2019/21 and Integrated Risk Management Plan 2018/22, and has introduced more detailed monitoring and oversight of key areas (prevention/protection). Community outcome measures and operational objectives are included within the plans.

3. Community Outcome Measures:

		2021/22				2020/21 EOY	2021/22 EOY	
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4			
NI 33 (A)	No. of Deliberate Primary Fires per 10,000 population	0.79	0.71	0.73	0.57	2.59	2.80	↑
NI 33 (B)	No. of Deliberate Secondary Fires per 10,000 population	1.91	1.78	1.40	1.19	4.36	6.29	↑
NI 49 (1)	No. of Primary Fires per 100,000 population	31.83	33.94	28.26	24.04	107.64	118.07	↑
NI 49 (ii)	No. of fatalities in primary fires per 100,000 population	0.26	0.00	0.13	0.26	0.40	0.66	↑
NI 49 (iii)	No. of non-fatal injuries in primary fires per 100,000 population	0.66	1.19	1.06	0.26	5.81	3.17	↓
BVPI 143 (i)	The No. of deaths arising from accidental fires in dwellings per 100,000 population	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.13	0.00	↓
BVPI 143 (ii)	The No. of injuries (excluding precautionary checks), arising from accidental fires in dwellings per 100,000 population	0.40	0.79	0.26	0.26	2.51	1.72	↓
BVPI 142 (iii) D1	No. of accidental dwelling fires per 10,000 dwellings	2.74	3.14	2.27	2.54	9.89	10.69	↑
BVPI 207	Non-Domestic Fires per 1000 Non-Domestic premises	1.79	1.39	1.83	1.04	4.50	6.05	↑
LPI 8ai	sickness - Wholetime (days/shifts lost per head)	1.55	1.91	2.57	4.07	7.03	10.09	↑
BV 12 ii	sickness absence (All staff, excluding on-call)	1.58	1.85	2.47	3.86	7.34	9.75	↑

Table Notes

It should be noted that the previous (2020/21) reporting year was anomalous due to the effect of covid restrictions on society.

Data is accurate as of 23 June 2022, with calculations based on the 2020 population figure of 757,181 for Northamptonshire.

NI 49 (ii) – Number of Fatalities in Primary Fires per 100,000 population. This indicator includes all fire related fatalities in all property types. During 2021/22 there were 5 fire fatalities, 3 were within vehicles and 2 were within a property

BVPI 143 (i) – The number of deaths arising from accidental dwelling fires in dwellings per 100,000 population. This figure has decreased as there were no fatalities arising from accidental fires in dwellings.

NI 49 (iii) and BVPI 143 (ii) - Number of non-fatal injuries in primary fires per 100,000 population and the number of injuries (excluding precautionary checks), arising from accidental fires in dwellings per 100,000 population. There has been an overall decrease in the number of injuries in fires to 24 for 2021/22, the lowest total figure since 2009.

NI 33 (A) and NI 33 (B) – The number of Deliberate Primary Fires per 10,000 population and number of Deliberate Secondary Fires per 10,000 population. There has been an increase in both primary and secondary deliberate fires, these have returned to a similar level as before the pandemic.

LPI 8ai and BV 12 ii - Sickness - Wholetime (days/shifts lost per head) and sickness absence (All staff, excluding on-call). Sickness due to Covid has contributed to staff sickness levels, which have increased to a level higher than before the pandemic.

		2021/22				2020/2021 EOY	2021/2022 EOY	Compared to previous EOY
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4			
Prevention	Progress against target for Home Fire Safety Visit (HFSV)					----	84%	
	Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV)	561	1130	1238	1293	1771	4222*	↑
	% of HFSV completed by: dedicated prevention staff/ station based staff	49%/51%	32%/68%	27%/73%	28%/72%	----	32%/68%	
Protection	Progress against Risk Based Inspection Plan (RBIP) – End of Year One						On track	
	Targeted Risk Management (TRM)** activity	240	30	13	36	----	319	N/A***
Response	Average of Full Response Time#	10:17	10:34	10:26	10:34	10:17	10:27	↑

Table notes

Prevention

England entered third national lockdown on 06 January 2021, ending on 19 July 2021 when most legal limits on social contact were removed, during this time dedicated prevention staff dealt with the most high-risks cases and then as society opened-up station crews were able to deliver more of these.

*78.9% of visits within households identified as high/very high risk. 11.3% in non-white British households.

Protection

** Risk is not static, and our understanding continues to evolve as new intelligence and information is known. As a result, the RBIP allows some capacity to respond to emerging risks, via Targeted Risk Management TRM. This does not affect the premises which have been identified as higher risk within the RBIP but allow additional activity to be planned to supplement the plan. The protection team undertake TRM activity as required and in order to understand areas of potential change. Following this additional activity, consideration is then given to the RBIP and how this might be affected. As an example, the publication of a 'Preliminary Guidance Technical Note – Higher Risk Occupancies' prompted the inspections of some schools, a portion of which have a Special Educational Needs provision. TRM activity is captured and evaluated and outcomes will contribute to the design of future RBIPs.

*** This is the first year of the current RBIP, and the first year of monitoring and capturing more detailed information in relation to protection activity. It is therefore not possible to compare activity to previous years.

Response

#Standard of Operational Response is to respond to all incidents within an average (mean) of 10 minutes.

4. Financial Assurance

- 4.1 The Authority is responsible for ensuring that our Service's business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for. The Authority is required to ensure that finances are used to ensure a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 4.2 Regular financial monitoring reports are considered monthly by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and regularly throughout the year at the Accountability Board. Financial updates are considered by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel throughout the year.
- 4.3 Financial performance, level of reserves and medium term financial outlook is included within the annual NCFRA Statement of Accounts.
- 4.4 Since the Governance change on 1 January 2019, the Authority has produced three Statement of Accounts, all of which have received unqualified audit opinions:
- The 2018/19 accounts cover the 3 month period 1 January to 31 March 2019 , and
 - The 2019/20 accounts cover the 12 month period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 and
 - The 2020/21 accounts cover the 12 month period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.
- 4.5 The Statement of Accounts were produced ensuring compliance with Codes of Practice issued by CIPFA and include within it an Annual Governance Statement which assesses controls within the Authority, making recommendations for changes in the following year.
- 4.6 The pre-audit Statement of Accounts for 2020/21 were published by the statutory deadline of the 31 July 2021 and a workshop took place with auditors, officers and Joint Independent Audit Committee members scrutinising the Statements in September 2021.
- 4.7 The Statement of Accounts were externally audited by Ernst and Young and the accounts, alongside the audit report to those charged with governance (the ISA260) were signed off and received an unqualified audit opinion on 25 February 2022.
- 4.8 The 2020/21 audited Statement of Accounts can be found at the following link:
- [Microsoft Word - FINAL Northamptonshire Fire Accounts 2020-21 .docx \(northantspfcc.org.uk\)](#)
- 4.9 Work is well progressed on the 2021/22 statement of accounts for NCFRA which cover the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022. The pre-audit Statement of Accounts will be published prior to the statutory deadline and available on the PFCC website after that time, with the external audit taking place after this date.

5. Governance Assurance

- 5.1 The governance of Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service is the responsibility of The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire
- 5.2 Governance is concerned with how the Authority manages its affairs on a day-to-day basis including its business practices, standards of conduct and overall management procedures. The 'rules' for how the Authority conducts business are set out in the Corporate Governance Framework, which can be found at:

<http://www.northantspfcc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/NCFRA-Corporate-Governance-Framework.pdf>

This document is scheduled for review in 2022.

- 5.3 For the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 21, the Authority prepared an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) as part of the Statement of Accounts and which included:
- an acknowledgement of responsibility for ensuring there is a sound system of governance and system of internal control;
 - a brief description of the key elements of the governance arrangements including explicit areas such as internal audit and risk management;
 - a brief description of the process that has been applied in maintaining and reviewing the effectiveness of the governance arrangements;
 - an evaluation of the level of assurance that the systems and processes that comprise the governance arrangements can provide an outline of the actions taken, or proposed, to deal with significant governance and internal control issues.
- 5.4 The 2020/21 Annual Governance Statement for the Authority for the 12 month period is included in the Statement of Accounts and can be found by accessing the link above.
- 5.5 The Chief Internal Auditor for NCFRA provided his annual opinion on the NCFRA Internal Control environment for 2020/21 which he assessed as “**Satisfactory**” and is consistent with the “**Satisfactory**” assessment made for 2019/20.
- 5.6 This Chief Internal Auditor’s opinion was considered by the PFCC and statutory officers charged with governance in the formulation of the Annual Governance Statement for the year and the report and opinion were considered in full at the Joint Independent Audit Committee (JIAC) in July 2021.
- 5.7 The 2021/22 assessment is awaited. Once received it will be considered by the PFCC and statutory officers, included within the 2021/22 Statement of Accounts and AGS and considered by the Joint Independent Audit Committee (JIAC) at their meeting scheduled for July 2022.

6. Operational Assurance

- 6.1 The Northamptonshire Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority has carried out its functions in accordance with the defined statutory and policy framework in which it is required to operate. The key documents setting this out are:
- [the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004](#)
 - [the Civil Contingencies Act 2004](#)
 - [the Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#)
 - [the Fire and Rescue Services \(Emergencies\) \(England\) Order 2007](#)
 - [the Localism Act 2011](#)
 - [the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England](#)
 - [the Health and Safety Act at Work etc Act 1974](#)
- 6.2 Whilst the Authority is primarily a locally based service, mutual aid arrangements are in place with other services where incidents occur near our borders and to provide resilience for large scale or complex incidents where additional resources need to be called on. The Authority contributes to national resilience and can make a number of its assets available to support a national emergency.
- 6.3 The Authority has robust Business Continuity Management (BCM) plans in place which are integral to our strategy in managing corporate risk and to provide, in the event of a major disruption, a fire and rescue service to the community.
- 6.4 The Authority publishes a Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) that sets out details of its operational service provision and improvement plans at a local, regional and national level, together with individual delivery plans. The current Plan came into effect on 1 April 2022 and runs until 2025 but was developed and consulted upon during the period 2021/22, replacing the previous IRMP for the period 2019 – 2022.
- 6.5 A copy of the current Police, Fire and Crim plan, CRMP, Fire 25 and related documents can be found on our website at:
<https://www.northantspfcc.org.uk/fire-and-rescue-service/>
- 6.6 The service was subject to an inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in January 2022. The report findings are due to be published in July 2022.

7. Overall Assurance Arrangements

- 7.1 The assurance arrangements that the Authority had in place are considered to meet the requirements set out in the National Framework.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1 That the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel considers the content of the report.