DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

S.J. Sharman
CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY

To: **The Chair and Members of the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority**

(see below)

**SERVICE HEADQUARTERS
THE KNOWLE
CLYST ST GEORGE
EXETER
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DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
(Extraordinary Meeting)

Monday, 25th March, 2024

A meeting of the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority will be held on the above date, **commencing at 2.00 pm in The Committee Rooms, Somerset House, Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters, Exeter** to consider the following matters.

S.J. Sharman
Clerk to the Authority

A G E N D A

PLEASE REFER TO THE NOTES AT THE END OF THE AGENDA LISTING SHEETS

1   **Apologies**

2   **Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

Items which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered at the meeting as matters of urgency.

PART 1 - OPEN COMMITTEE

3   **Arrangements for Authority Proper Financial Officer (Treasurer) (Pages 1 - 6)**

Report of the Clerk to the Authority (& Monitoring Officer) (DSFRA/24/11) attached.

4 **Localism Act 2011 - Pay Policy Statement 2024-25 (Pages 7 - 22)**

Report of the Clerk to the Authority (& Monitoring Officer) DSFRA/24/12 attached.

5 **Appointments to Committees (Pages 23 - 26)**

Report of the Clerk to the Authority (& Monitoring Officer) DSFRA/24/13) attached.

6 **Digital, Data and Technology (DDaT) Transformation Update (Pages 27 - 42)**

Report of the Director of Finance & Corporate Services (Treasurer) (DSFRA/24/14) attached.

7 **Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority Performance Report 2023-24: Quarter Three (Pages 43 - 80)**

Report of the Assistant Director, Corporate Services (DSFRA/24/15) attached.

8 **His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary & Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Inspection:**

a Action Plan Update (Pages 81 - 88)

Report of the Chief Fire Officer (DSFRA/24/16) attached.

b Culture Recommendations Update (Pages 89 - 92)

Report of the Chief Fire Officer (DSFRA/24/17) attached.

MEMBERS ARE REQUESTED TO SIGN THE ATTENDANCE REGISTER

Membership:-

Councillors Atkinson, Best, Biederman (Vice-Chair), Brazil, Carter, Chesterton, Clayton, Coles, Cook-Woodman (Chair), Fellows, Gilmour, Hendy, Kendall, Kerley, Patel, Randall-Johnson, Peart, Power, Radford, Roome, Sellis, Slade, Sproston, Sully and Trail BEM

	NOTES
1.	**Access to Information**
	Any person wishing to inspect any minutes, reports or lists of background papers relating to any item on this agenda should contact the person listed in the "Please ask for" section at the top of this agenda.
2.	**Reporting of Meetings**
	Any person attending a meeting may report (film, photograph or make an audio recording) on any part of the meeting which is open to the public – unless there is good reason not to do so, as directed by the Chair - and use any communication method, including the internet and social media (Facebook, Twitter etc.), to publish, post or otherwise share the report. The Authority accepts no liability for the content or accuracy of any such report, which should not be construed as representing the official, Authority record of the meeting. Similarly, any views expressed in such reports should not be interpreted as representing the views of the Authority.
	Flash photography is not permitted and any filming must be done as unobtrusively as possible from a single fixed position without the use of any additional lighting; focusing only on those actively participating in the meeting and having regard also to the wishes of any member of the public present who may not wish to be filmed. As a matter of courtesy, anyone wishing to film proceedings is asked to advise the Chair or the Democratic Services Officer in attendance so that all those present may be made aware that is happening.
3.	**Declarations of Interests at meetings (Authority Members only)**
	If you are present at a meeting and you are aware that you have either a disclosable pecuniary interest, personal interest or non-registerable interest in any matter being considered or to be considered at the meeting then, unless you have a current and relevant dispensation in relation to the matter, you must:
	(i) disclose at that meeting, by no later than commencement of consideration of the item in which you have the interest or, if later, the time at which the interest becomes apparent to you, the existence of and – for anything other than a "sensitive" interest – the nature of that interest; and then
	(ii) withdraw from the room or chamber during consideration of the item in which you have the relevant interest.
	If the interest is sensitive (as agreed with the Monitoring Officer), you need not disclose the nature of the interest but merely that you have an interest of a sensitive nature. You must still follow (i) and (ii) above.
	Where a dispensation has been granted to you either by the Authority or its Monitoring Officer in relation to any relevant interest, then you must act in accordance with any terms and conditions associated with that dispensation.
	Where you declare at a meeting a disclosable pecuniary or personal interest that you have not previously included in your Register of Interests then you must, within 28 days of the date of the meeting at which the declaration was made, ensure that your Register is updated to include details of the interest so declared.

	NOTES (Continued)
4.	**Part 2 Reports**
	Members are reminded that any Part 2 reports as circulated with the agenda for this meeting contain exempt information and should therefore be treated accordingly. They should not be disclosed or passed on to any other person(s). Members are also reminded of the need to dispose of such reports carefully and are therefore invited to return them to the Committee Secretary at the conclusion of the meeting for disposal.
5.	**Substitute Members (Committee Meetings only)**
	Members are reminded that, in accordance with Standing Orders, the Clerk (or his representative) must be advised of any substitution prior to the start of the meeting. Members are also reminded that substitutions are not permitted for full Authority meetings.
6.	**Other Attendance at Committees)**
	Any Authority Member wishing to attend, in accordance with Standing Orders, a meeting of a Committee of which they are not a Member should contact the Democratic Services Officer (see "please ask for" on the front page of this agenda) in advance of the meeting.

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	DSFRA/24/11
MEETING	**DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**
DATE OF MEETING	**25 MARCH 2024**
SUBJECT OF REPORT	**ARRANGEMENTS FOR AUTHORITY PROPER FINANCIAL OFFICER (TREASURER)**
LEAD OFFICER	**Clerk to the Authority & Monitoring Officer**
RECOMMENDATIONS	*That the Authority considers this report with a view to:* *(a). appointment of the existing Head of Finance as the Authority's proper officer by virtue of section 112 of the Local Government and Finance Act 1988 (Treasurer) for a 12 month period to allow sufficient time for the appointment of a new Chief Fire Officer and review of the Executive Board structure thereafter; and* *(b). delegating to the Chief Fire Officer authority to effect the appointment as outlined above*
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	On 24 March 2021, the Authority's Appraisals & Disciplinary Committee appointed Shayne Scott to serve as the Authority's Director of Finance & Resources and also as the statutory "proper officer" for the administration of its financial affairs (Minute ADC/15 refers). Shayne took up this appointment on 19 July 2021. The Treasurer has given notice of his resignation which takes effect from 5 April 2024 (last working day is 29 March 2024). This report sets out proposals to fill the vacancy of Treasurer, which is a statutory requirement, pending the outcome of the process for appointment of a new Chief Fire Officer which may subsequently result in further changes at Executive Board level.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	Funding for the current post is contained within the existing revenue budget. Given that is recommended the post of Director of Finance & Corporate Services not immediately be replaced on a like for like basis, there will be savings of c£58.5k generated in 2024-25 if the arrangement is maintained for the entire financial year.
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	The contents of this report are considered compatible with existing equalities and human rights legislation.
APPENDICES	Nil.
BACKGROUND PAPERS	A. Fire and Rescue National Framework for England

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1. The Authority is required (by virtue of Section 112 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988) to have a "proper officer" responsible for administration of the Authority's financial affairs (including submission of reports to the Authority on the discharge of that responsibility). This post is commonly referred to as the Treasurer and has responsibilities equivalent to the "proper officer" as defined by Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972. This section requires every local authority (including a fire & rescue authority) to "make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and shall secure that **one of their officers** has responsibility for the administration of those affairs".

1.2. While it remains possible for this role to be held by any suitably qualified officer, it has traditionally been the Service's Director of Finance who has been appointed as Treasurer, apart from a short spell when this role was filled on an external, contractual basis by the former Director of Finance in 2017. Similarly, during the intervening period comprising of several months, following the departure of the previous Director of Finance and arrival of the present incumbent, the Deputy Treasurer (i.e. current Head of Finance) held this office.

1.3. The current Director of Finance & Corporate Services and Treasurer, Shayne Scott, who was appointed in March 2021 (Minute ADC/15 refers), has tendered his resignation with his last day in post being 5 April 2024 (last working day 29 March 2024). This report sets out potential options to fill this vacancy.

2. CONSIDERATIONS

2.1. One of the considerations in filling this vacancy is that the person appointed must hold a Consultancy Committee of Accountancy Bodies (CCAB) qualification as set out in section 113 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988. The Chartered institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA)'s Statement on the role of the Chief Financial Officer as set out within section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972, which the Authority is obliged to give regard to, further outlines that this appointment must be:

   (a) a key member of the leadership team.

   (b) must be actively involved in, and able to bring influence to bear on all material business decisions.

   (c) must lead the promotion and delivery…of good financial management.

   (d) and must lead and direct a finance function that is resourced to be fit for purpose.

2.2. A further consideration is that the Authority is in the process of recruiting a new, substantive Chief Fire Officer to take up post with effect from 14 September 2024 on the retirement of the current postholder. The new Chief Fire Officer may, on appointment, wish to request that the Authority review the structure of the Executive Board and appointments thereto. The roles of Assistant Director, Corporate Services and Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Service Delivery Support) are both filled on a temporary basis currently pending this appointment.

3. OPTIONS

3.1 The potential options that have been considered for this important appointment which gives regard to the above considerations are as follows:

    (a). The Service's Head of Finance, Andrew Furbear, be designated the Proper Officer (Treasurer) for a period of twelve months and be afforded an appropriate allowance to recognise this additional responsibility. On appointment, Andrew would attend and participate in meetings of the Executive Board, report directly to the Chief Fire Officer and hold monthly meetings with the Chair of Authority.

    (b). The Service's Head of Finance, Andrew Furbear, be designated the Proper Officer (Treasurer) and be afforded an appropriate allowance to recognise this additional responsibility whilst external recruitment takes place to fill the role of Director of Finance & Corporate Services which would then be designated as Treasurer.

3.2 This report has considered the advantages and disadvantages of each of these options before a recommendation is put forward for consideration.

4. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

4.1 As indicated above, it is a statutory requirement for this Authority to have a "proper officer" responsible for the administration of its financial affairs. Given this, two options have been considered which are set out below:

> ***Option (a) – appoint the Service's existing Head of Finance as the Proper Officer (Treasurer) for a period of 12 months pending review of the Executive Board structure following the permanent appointment of the CFO:***
>
> *Advantages:*

    1. The current Head of Finance has performed well in role and has worked closely with the existing Treasurer over a number of years and is experienced in Authority budget setting, budget monitoring and production of the Annual Statement of Accounts. As such, the current post-holder has a full knowledge of Service and Authority financial issues and is appropriately qualified (being a Member of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants). The Service Head of Finance also possesses considerable sector-specific experience and is respected by colleagues on the Service Leadership Team and Executive Board levels.

    2. This option fully recognises and meets the considerations noted earlier within this report whilst also giving stability and certainty during a period of time in which the Authority is implementing measures to secure its long-term financial stability.

    3. Provides flexibility to the Chief Fire Officer, once a permanent appointment has been made, to influence the composition of the Executive Board.

      4.   Delivers savings of circa £58.5k over the period, whilst allowing for the recruitment of an additional accountant within the finance department to provide additional capacity.

Disadvantages:

      1.   There would be no opportunity for the Authority to assess other candidates who may be equally or potentially more suitable for discharging the role effectively and efficiently.

      2.   There is a risk that the influence of the Treasurer is diminished by this appointment not being held by an Executive Board member. It is considered that this will be sufficiently mitigated through their attendance and involvement at Executive Board and direct reporting to the Chief Fire Officer. This arrangement is currently in place with the Monitoring Officer who is also the Service's Democratic Services Manager and this has proven to be successful.

Option (b) – appoint the Service's existing Head of Finance as the Proper Officer (Treasurer) and commence external recruitment to the post of Director of Finance & Corporate Services/Treasurer:

Advantages

      1. Ability to test the market with external candidates.

      2. Maintains the status quo of having the role of Treasurer held by a Service Director who is a voting member of the Executive Board.

      3. Accords with the requirements of the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework for England.

Disadvantages

      1. A lack of continuity and certainty at a time of significant financial challenges and forthcoming change.

      2. This would see the recruitment to this post running concurrently with that of the recruitment to the Chief Fire Officer vacancy meaning that should an external candidate be appointed to this role, they would have had no input into the appointment of this key leadership role.

5.   <u>CONCLUSION</u>

5.1.   There is a statutory requirement for the Authority to have a "proper officer" responsible for the administration of its financial affairs.

5.2.   Option (a) has been assessed as the most appropriate way forward as it ensures the Authority remains compliant with its obligations under the Local Government Act 1972 and with CIPFA's Statement on the role of the Chief Financial Officer. It also gives regard to the broader considerations unique to the Authority at this time.

5.3. Option (b) similarly ensures compliance with these obligations but would mean that the permanent CFO, if different to that of the interim incumbent, would have no involvement in the appointment of this director level appointment. That said, it comes with the benefit of maintaining the status quo of a Service director jointly holding the role of Treasurer.

SAMANTHA SHARMAN
Clerk to the Authority & Monitoring Officer

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REPORT REFERENCE NO.	DSFRA/24/12
MEETING	**DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY (Extraordinary Meeting)**
DATE OF MEETING	**25 MARCH 2024**
SUBJECT OF REPORT	**LOCALISM ACT 2011 – PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2024-25**
LEAD OFFICER	**Clerk to the Authority (& Monitoring Officer**
RECOMMENDATIONS	*That the Pay Policy Statement 2024-25 as appended to this report be approved and published on the Authority's website.*
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	The Authority is required under the Localism Act 2011 to approve and publish a Pay Policy Statement, by 31 March of each year, to operate for the forthcoming financial year. This Statement sets out the Authority's policy towards a range of issues relating to the pay of its workforce and in particular the senior staff and the lowest paid employees.
	This paper provides further background information in relation to the requirements of the Localism Act and includes a draft Pay Policy Statement for the forthcoming (2024-25) financial year.
	The draft Pay Policy Statement for 2024-25 has been updated to reflect current levels of pay for senior officers and other employees but, other than that, is unchanged from the previous year and is recommended to the Authority for approval.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	There are no resource implications associated with production of the Pay Policy Statement. Funding for staffing costs etc. are contained within the approved Authority revenue budget.
EQUALITY RISKS & BENEFITS ANALYSIS	The contents of this report are considered compatible with existing equalities and human rights legislation.
APPENDICES	A. Draft Pay Policy Statement 2024-25
BACKGROUND PAPERS	1. Localism Act 2011 Sections 38 to 43.
	2. "Pay Policy and Practice in Local Authorities: A Guide for Councillors" produced by the Local Government Association, published January 2013.
	3. Local Government Transparency Code 2015.
	4. Fire and Rescue National Framework for England – May 2018

1.   INTRODUCTION

1.1   The Localism Act 2011 ("the Act") introduced a new requirement for all public authorities, including combined fire and rescue authorities, to approve and publish annually a Pay Policy Statement. The reasons for the introduction of this new duty, included:

- the estimation that, between 2001 and 2008 median top salaries in local government grew at faster rate than entry salaries and that, in that context, around 800 local government employees were in the top 1% of all earners;

- the commitment of the Government at that time to strengthen councillors powers to vote on large salary packages for council officers;

- the outcome of the Hutton review into fair pay in the public sector which made several recommendations for promoting pay fairness in the public sector by increasing transparency over pay and tackling disparities between the lowest and the highest paid in public sector organisations.

1.2   The provisions on pay in the Act are designed to bring together the strands of Government thinking to address pay issues in local government as outlined above.

1.3   Pay Policy Statements must articulate an authority's policy towards a range of issues relating to the pay of its workforce, particularly its senior staff (or "chief officers") and its lowest paid employees. Pay Policy Statements must be prepared and approved by the Authority by 31 March in each year and be published as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter. Publication can be in such a manner as the Authority considers appropriate, but must include publication on the Authority's website. A Pay Policy Statement may be amended "in year" but, should it be amended, the revised Statement must again be published.

1.4   In essence, the purpose of the Pay Policy Statement is to ensure that there is the appropriate accountability and transparency of top salaries in local government. Under the Act, elected Members have the ability to take a greater role in determining the pay for top earners and therefore ensuring that these decisions are taken by those who are directly accountable to the local people. In addition, communities should have access to the information they need to determine whether remuneration, particularly senior remuneration, is appropriate and commensurate with responsibility.

2.   CONTENT OF THE PAY POLICY STATEMENT

2.1   The Act requires that each authority's Pay Policy Statement must include its policies on:

- the level and elements of remuneration for each chief officer;

- the remuneration of its lowest paid employees (together with its definition of "lowest paid employees" and its reasons for adopting that definition);

- the relationship between the remuneration of its chief officers and other employees;

- other specific aspects of chief officers' remuneration namely:

  o remuneration on recruitment;

  o increases and additions to remuneration;

  o use of performance-related pay and bonuses; termination payments; and

  o transparency (i.e. the publication and access to information on the remuneration of chief officers).

2.2 The term remuneration is defined as the chief officer's salary, any bonuses payable, any charges, fees or allowances payable, any benefits in kind to which the chief officer is entitled as a result of their office or employment, any increase in or enhancement of the chief officer's pension entitlement where the increase or enhancement is as a result of the resolution of the Authority and any amounts payable by the Authority to the chief officer on the chief officer ceasing to hold office under or be employed by the Authority other than amounts that may be payable by virtue of any enactment.

2.3 The term "chief officers" in a fire and rescue service context will refer to the Chief Fire Officer but "chief officers" are defined in Section 43 of the Act to include a Head of Paid Service, a Monitoring Officer, any other statutory chief officer, or a deputy chief officer or other non-statutory chief officer as defined in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (these include officers reporting directly either to the Head of Paid Service or the Authority).

3. AMENDMENTS TO THE PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2024-25

3.1. On 25 September 2023 (Minute DSFRA/23/16 refers), the Authority approved the appointment of one of its officers (Democratic Services Manager) as it's Monitoring Officer in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989. As a Statutory Officer appointment, which holds significant influence over the affairs of the Authority, the annual allowance paid is disclosed within this Pay Policy Statement.

3.2. On 25 March 2024, the Authority appointed the Service's Head of Finance as its proper officer (Treasurer) with effect from 6 April 2024 following the resignation and imminent departure of the Director of Finance & Corporate Services with effect from 5 April 2024. As a Statutory Officer appointment, which holds significant influence over the affairs of the Authority, the annual allowance paid is disclosed within this Pay Policy Statement.

3.3. As mentioned in paragraph 3.2 above, the resignation of the Director of Finance & Corporate Services will result in a vacancy being held at Executive Board level. As an interim measure to allow for the completion of the forthcoming recruitment of a new, substantive Chief Fire Officer and any structure changes arising thereafter, the Assistant Director – Corporate Services – will receive an allowance on a temporary basis to uplift her pay commensurate with the duties being taken on and equivalent to EB3.

3.4.   The above changes have been incorporated within the draft Pay Policy Statement for 2024-25 as appended to this report.

4.   SENIOR EMPLOYEES AND PAY RATIOS

4.1.   Whilst the Localism Act 2011 does not require details on salary levels to be published in the Pay Policy Statement, Schedule 1 to the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (as amended) requires the published Statement of Accounts for an authority to include information on the number of senior employees who are paid over £50,000. These numbers are to be reported in bands of £5,000. Any senior employee earning in excess of £150,000 must be identified by name.

4.2.   "Senior employees" are defined as per the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (see para. 2.3 above) but also include "a person who has responsibility for the management of the relevant body to the extent that the person has power to direct or control the major activities of the body (in particular activities involving the expenditure of money), whether solely or collectively with other persons".

4.3.   The Localism Act requires authorities to explain what they think the relationship should be between the remuneration of its chief officers and its employees who are not chief officers. The Hutton Review of Fair Pay recommended the publication of the ratio between the highest paid employee and the median pay-point of the organisation's whole workforce as a way of illustrating that relationship. Guidance produced by the [then] Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) on openness and accountability in local pay provides that:

> *"While authorities are not required to publish data such as a pay multiple within their pay policy statement, they may consider it helpful to do so, for example, to illustrate their broader policy on how pay and reward should be fairly dispersed across their workforce. In addition, while they are not required to develop local policies on reaching or maintaining a specific pay multiple by the Act they may wish to include any existing policy".*

4.4.   Section 5 of the proposed Pay Policy Statement shows two pay multiples. The first is a comparison with the median earnings of the whole workforce (as recommended by Hutton), using the basic pay for full-time equivalents.

4.5.   The second multiple is the relationship between the highest (for this Authority, the Chief Fire Officer) and lowest pay point. This method has previously been used as a benchmark following suggestions by the Government that a ratio of 20:1 should be regarded as a maximum level which public sector organisations should not exceed. The Service revised its pay grading structure for professional, technical and support staff ("Green Book" staff) in 2019-20. This resulted in a reduction in the number of pay increments within a salary grade from five to four for grades 3 to 11. For grade 2, the number of pay increments was decreased to three and for grade 1 this was reduced to two (although the Service does not currently have any posts at Grade 1). The effect of this was that the pay multiple ratio between the Chief Fire Officer and the lowest paid employee decreased from 12.8 to 1 to 8.5 to 1 in that year. The lowest pay point is currently £21,189, giving a ratio of 7.65 to 1.

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5.   RE-EMPLOYMENT OF OFFICERS

5.1   In 2013, the Local Government Association (LGA) published guidance titled "Pay Policy in Practice in Local Authorities – A Guide for Councillors". However, unlike other guidance published by [the then] DCLG, it does not constitute statutory guidance and is perhaps best viewed as "best practice". In November 2013, the LGA specifically issued the guidance to all fire and rescue authorities in England and Wales. Within the covering letter the LGA highlighted that the practice of re-employment of individuals who have been made redundant or have retired and are in receipt of a pension should be used only in exceptional and justifiable circumstances (such as business continuity).

5.2   The LGA guidance contains a model Pay Policy Statement which suggests the following paragraph:

> *"It is not the council's policy to re-employ or to contract with senior managers who have been made redundant from the council unless there are exceptional circumstances where their specialist knowledge and expertise is required for a defined period of time or unless a defined period of (define number of years) has elapsed since the redundancy and circumstances have changed."*

5.3   The covering letter to the LGA guidance suggested that this paragraph should be widened to incorporate retirements in addition to redundancies. This modification was incorporated into the Authority Pay Policy Statement 2014-15 and has been retained in subsequent Pay Policy Statements.

5.4   Additionally, the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, published by the Home Office in May 2018, included a section of "Re-engagement of Senior Officers". Paragraph 6.8 of the Framework sets out that:

> "*Fire and rescue authorities must not re-appoint principal fire officers after retirement to their previous, or a similar, post save for in exceptional circumstances when such a decision is necessary in the interests of public safety. Any such appointment must be transparent, justifiable and time limited".*

5.5   Principal Officers in this respect is defined as Area Managers and above, or those with comparable responsibilities to those roles.

5.6   The Authority's Pay Policy Statement sets out, in Section 8, controls approved by the Authority for the re-employment of former employees (whether through redundancy or retirement) which reflect the relevant contents of the 2018 National Framework.

6. THE TRANSPARENCY CODE

6.1   The Local Government (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015 imposed additional requirements in terms of publishing data relating to the Authority. The requirements are set out in the Local Government Transparency Code 2015. The Local Government Association produced a set of revised practical guidance documents to support local authorities in understanding and implementing the Transparency Code and to help them publish the data in a meaningful and consistent way. The Code covers information on spending and procurement, organisational information and asset and parking information.

6.2   The Transparency Code requirements overlap to a degree with certain staffing information required to be published both as part of the annual Statement of Accounts and the Pay Policy Statement. There are, however, some additions including requirements for further details of Senior Managers, including grading and responsibilities, where salary levels are in excess of £50,000 and also Trade Union Facility time.

7. PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2023-24

7.1   This is now the thirteenth iteration of the Pay Policy Statement, the Authority having approved and published a Statement for each of the last ten consecutive years following introduction of the requirement by the Localism Act 2011.

7.2   The draft Pay Policy Statement to operate for the 2024-25 financial year is appended to this report. The changes to the Pay Policy Statement as approved by the Authority for 2022-23 are as highlighted in paragraph 3.1 to 3.3 of this report.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1   The Localism Act requires the Authority to adopt, prior to the commencement of each financial year, a Pay Policy Statement to operate for the forthcoming financial year. This Statement sets out, amongst other things, the Authority's policy towards a range of issues relating to the pay of its workforce and in particular the senior staff and the lowest paid employees.

8.2   The Authority is now invited to approve the Pay Policy Statement 2024-25 as appended to this report for publication on the Authority's website.

SAMANTHA SHARMAN
Clerk to the Authority (& Monitoring Officer)

DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

LOCALISM ACT 2011 – PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2024-25

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Under section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011, Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority (the Authority) is required to prepare a Pay Policy Statement. The Authority is responsible for ensuring that its pay policy will set out the issues relating to the pay of the workforce and in particular, the senior officers and the lowest paid employees. This will ensure that there is the appropriate accountability and transparency of the salaries of the Authority's senior staff. The Authority will also publish the statement on its website and update it on an annual basis or at such times as it is amended. The purpose of the statement is to provide greater transparency on how taxpayer's money is used in relation to the pay and rewards for public sector staff.

1.2. This is the thirteenth such Pay Policy Statement that the Authority has produced and it will continue to be reviewed and refined by the Authority as part of its rewards & recognition strategies.

1.3. It should be noted that the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require authorities to disclose individual remuneration details for senior employees and these can be viewed here: Senior Management Salaries

1.4. In addition, the rates of pay for all other categories of staff can be found at: Rates of Pay

1.5. The Local Government (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015 imposed additional requirements in terms of publishing data relating to the Authority. The requirements are set out in the Local Government Transparency Code 2015. The Local Government Association produced a set of revised practical guidance documents to support local authorities in understanding and implementing the Transparency Code and to help them publish the data in a meaningful and consistent way. The Code covers information on spending and procurement, organisational information and asset and parking information and this open data is accessible via the following link: Transparency Data

1.6. There is some overlap within the Transparency Code with certain staffing information that is already required as part of the annual Statement of Accounts and the Pay Policy Statement but there are also some additions including further details of organisational structures relating to Senior Managers, including grading and responsibilities, where salary levels are in excess of £50,000 and also Trade Union Facility time.

2. CATEGORIES OF STAFF

2.1.   As part of the Pay Policy Statement, it is necessary to define the categories of staff within the Service and by which set of Terms and Conditions they are governed.

2.2.   ***Executive Board Officers (including Chief Fire Officer)***: The Executive Board is a mix of uniformed Brigade Managers and non-uniformed Officers who are the Directors of the Service. The salary structure for Brigade Managers and other Executive Board members has previously been determined by the Authority and is subject to annual reviews in accordance with the Constitution and Scheme of Conditions of Service of the National Joint Council for Brigade Managers of Local Authorities' Fire Brigades (the "Gold Book"). The two non-uniformed Executive Board Officers are conditioned to the Gold Book for pay purposes only. The minimum remuneration levels for Chief Fire Officers are set nationally in relation to population bands and in accordance with the Gold Book. At a national level, the National Joint Council for Brigade Managers of Fire and Rescue Services reviews annually any cost of living increase applicable to all those covered by the national agreement and determines any pay settlement. All other decisions about pay levels and remuneration over and above the minimum levels for Chief Fire Officers are taken locally by fire authorities, arrangements for which are set out in paragraphs 3.8 to 3.10.

2.3.   ***Uniformed Staff***: This includes Whole-time and On-call staff and also the Control Room uniformed staff. The remuneration levels for these staff are subject to national negotiation as contained in the Scheme of Conditions of Service of the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire & Rescue Services which is known as the "Grey Book". Any other remuneration is subject to local agreement.

2.4.   ***Support Staff***: This category is the non-uniformed employees who support our Operational Service. The Scheme of Conditions of Service for these employees is set out within the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services known as the "Green Book". The National Joint Council negotiates the level of any annual pay increases applicable to the nationally recognised local government pay spine and these increases are applied across the Authority's "Green Book" staff grading structure.

3. REMUNERATION OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AND EXECUTIVE BOARD

3.1.   The position of Chief Fire Officer is subject to minimum remuneration levels as set out in the "Gold Book" and according to population bands. The Authority is in Population Band 4 (1.5m people and above). The minimum salary level for this position is currently £144,337 per annum. The Authority is the largest non-metropolitan fire and rescue authority in the UK.

3.2.   In 2006, prior to the combination of Devon Fire & Rescue Service and Somerset Fire & Rescue Service, the [then] Shadow Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority reviewed the remuneration of the Chief Fire Officer and undertook a salary survey of other fire & rescue services within the same population band. The average salary, based on 2005 data, was found to be £124,184 and the salary level for the Chief Fire Officer for the new, combined service, was set at a notional level of £124,800 per annum for 2007. Since then, national annual pay awards, and the review of Executive Board Officers' pay conducted by the Authority in 2015, have increased the salary to £179,676.

3.3.   The 2015 review also saw the Authority agree that:

i)   the percentage link to the Chief Fire Officer salary for other Executive Board Officers would be removed;

ii) the annual review process will be considered on an individual basis;

iii) in conducting the annual review, any pay rise above the annual cost of living increases agreed nationally by the NJC for Brigade Managers, will be no greater than the percentage pay rise received by a Firefighter, unless such a pay rise is as a result of good performance, a reorganisation, restructure or other substantial reason.

3.4.   The other positions within the Executive Board are as follows:

Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Director of Service Delivery

Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Director of Service Delivery Support

Director of Finance & Corporate Services

Assistant Director – Corporate Services

3.5.   On 25 September 2023, the Authority approved the appointment of one of its officers (Democratic Services Manager) as its Monitoring Officer in accordance with the provisions within in the Local Government & Housing Act 1989. As a Statutory Officer appointment, which holds significant influence over the affairs of the Authority, the annual allowance paid is disclosed within this Pay Policy Statement.

3.6.   On 25 March 2024, the Authority appointed the Service's Head of Finance as its proper officer (Treasurer) with effect from 6 April 2024 following the resignation and imminent departure of the Director of Finance & Corporate Services with effect from 5 April 2024. As a Statutory Officer appointment, which holds significant influence over the affairs of the Authority, the annual allowance paid is disclosed within this Pay Policy Statement.

3.7.   As mentioned in paragraph 3.6 above, the resignation of the Director of Finance & Corporate Services has resulted in a vacancy being held at Executive Board level (currently EB4). As an interim measure to allow for the completion of the forthcoming recruitment of a new, substantive Chief Fire Officer and any structure changes arising thereafter, the Assistant Director – Corporate Services – will receive an allowance on a temporary basis to uplift pay commensurate with the additional duties being taken on and equivalent to EB3 (as set out in paragraph 3.10 below).

3.8.   Further details of our Executive Board can be found at Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service - Organisational Structure (to be updated post the Authority's meeting on 25 March 2024).

3.9.   The original structure including the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Assistant Chief Fire Officer salaries had previously been set locally at 80% and 75% respectively of the Chief Fire Officer salary, which reflected the previous minimum salary level set by the National Joint Council. However, following the review of Executive Board Officers' pay conducted by the Authority in 2015, the percentage link to the Chief Fire Officer salary was removed. The current salary for an Assistant Chief Fire Officer is £134,754. Uniformed Brigade Managers (Chief Fire Officer and Assistant Chief Fire Officers) also provide "stand-by" hours outside of the normal working day within a Brigade Manager rota. As such, this salary is inclusive of an enhancement of 20% over that which is afforded to non-uniformed EB4 (see para. 3.9 below)

3.10. The remaining two "non-uniformed" Executive Board positions are the Director of Finance & Corporate Services and the Assistant Director - Corporate Services. The Director of Finance & Corporate Services is on Grade 4 within a four-point grading structure with the Assistant Director - Corporate Services on Grade 1, the grading for which was determined by the [then] Shadow Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority in 2006 following an external, independent Job Evaluation process. The salary levels for these grades were set as a percentage of the Chief Fire Officer's salary but following the review of Executive Board Officers' pay conducted by the Authority in 2015, the percentage link to the Chief Fire Officer salary was removed. The current salary levels for the four grades are:

Grade	2023	2024
4	£109,025	£112,296
3	£99,939	£102,938
2	£90,856	£93,581
1	£81,771	£84,224

3.11. Both the Monitoring Officer and Treasurer are paid an allowance of £12,466 per annum. This is in addition to their Service roles of Democratic Services Manager (Grade 10) and Head of Finance (Grade 11) respectively. Details of the remuneration offered to these grades are published under 'Support staff rates of pay.'

3.12. The Gold Book NJC recommended that minimum increases are implemented with effect from 1 January of each year.

3.13. The relevant sections 9 – 11 from the Gold book in relation to salary increases are set out below:

Salaries

The NJC will publish annually recommended minimum levels of salary applicable to chief fire officers/chief executives employed by local authority fire and rescue authorities.

There is a two-track approach for determining levels of pay for Brigade Manager roles. At national level, the NJC shall review annually the level of pay increase applicable to all those covered by this agreement. In doing so, the NJC will consider affordability, other relevant pay deals and the rate of inflation at the appropriate date. Any increase agreed by the NJC will be communicated to fire authorities by circular.

All other decisions about the level of pay and remuneration to be awarded to individual Brigade Manager roles will be taken by the local Fire and Rescue Authority, who will annually review these salary levels.

3.14. Any locally determined increases in the Executive Board Officers' remuneration are subject to approval by the Authority. In accordance with the conditions within the Gold Book, the Authority is required to conduct an annual review of the remuneration afforded to members of the Executive Board. Any such reviews will be conducted by way of an expert, independent report to a full Authority meeting which will contain such relevant data as to enable the Authority to reach a determination on levels of appropriate remuneration. As a minimum, comparative benchmark data will be provided on chief executive and other senior officer salary levels in other relevant public bodies as may be determined, e.g. other fire and rescue authorities, constituent authorities, neighbouring police forces etc. The annual review will also consider the level of pay awards made for other groups of employees and the relationship between the remuneration of the Chief Fire Officer and the median basic pay of the Authority's whole workforce.

4.   REMUNERATION OF THE LOWEST PAID EMPLOYEES

4.1. The lowest grade in the Service is within the Support Staff category which has a grading structure from Grade 1 to 11. However, following the outsourcing of cleaning, there are no employees on Grade 1 so the lowest grade for substantive employees is Grade 2. Each grade has a number of spinal column points and a new joiner will progress through these with increasing service. The salary range at Grade 2 is currently £23114 to £23893 for a 37-hour week and is usually subject to review from 1 April each year. For contextual purposes the salary level for a competent full-time firefighter is £36226 per annum and is usually subject to review from 1 July each year.

5.   THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE REMUNERATION OF CHIEF OFFICERS AND THE REMUNERATION OF THOSE EMPLOYEES WHO ARE NOT CHIEF OFFICERS.

5.1. In terms of pay multiples, in line with recommendations contained within the Hutton Review of Fair Pay, the Authority will use two ratios to explain the relationship between the remuneration of the Chief Fire Officer and the remuneration of those employees who are not chief officers. The first is a comparison with the median earnings of the whole workforce (currently £36,226 The second multiple is for the lowest pay point (currently £23,893). This multiple has previously been used as a benchmark following suggestions by the Government that a ratio of 20:1 should be regarded as a level which public sector organisations should not exceed.

5.2.   The current pay multiple ratios are:

median basic pay	4.96 : 1
lowest pay point	7.52 : 1

5.3.   In terms of the pay multiple between the Chief Fire Officer and other staff across the organisation, the Authority's Pay Policy is that this will be 5.0 : 1 when compared with the median basic pay across the organisation, subject to the national pay settlements and any review by the Authority. The Pay Policy Statement for future years will continue to be determined by the full Authority.

6.   ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS OF THE REMUNERATION FOR THE CHIEF OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE BOARD

6.1.   These additional elements relate to the following:

- Bonuses or Performance Related Pay;

- Charges, Fees or Allowances;

- Benefits in Kind;

- Any increase or enhancement to the pension entitlement as a result of the resolution of the Authority;

- Any amounts payable by the Authority to the Chief Fire Officer on the Chief Fire Officer ceasing to hold office other than amounts that may be payable by virtue of any enactment.

6.2.   The Chief Fire Officer does not receive any additional bonuses, performance related pay, charges, fees or allowances. The Chief Fire Officer has an operational requirement for a Service provided emergency response vehicle. This is currently a 'provided car' who's annual cost cannot exceed the maximum permitted. As Brigade Managers operate on continuous duty, no benefit in kind is attributable. It should be noted that, instead of a provided car, all flexible duty officers (including that of ACFO and CFO) are eligible to avail themselves of a car allowance at rates outlined in para 6.3 below. However, in doing so, this is treated as taxable income. Non-uniformed executive board members are classed as 'essential car users' and do not have the option to receive a 'provided car' but are paid at rates outlined in para 6.3 below which is treated as taxable income.

6.3.   Allowance and mileage rates payable are:

Role	Response annual allowance: Service provided vehicle	Response annual allowance: Taxable allowance	Essential car user annual allowance	Mileage rate (not applicable to Service provided vehicle)
Flexible Duty Officer	5,470.00	5,970.00		0.43
Non-uniformed staff	-	-	1,239.00	0.43
Service Leadership Team	5,470.00	5,970.00	4,000.00	0.43
EB Grade 1 to 3	5,470.00	5,970.00	5,020.00	0.43
EB Grade 4/ ACFO/ DCFO	6,850.00	7,350.00	6,850.00	0.43
CFO	9,310.00	9,810.00	9,310.00	0.43

6.4. In relation to pension entitlement, the Chief Fire Officer is eligible to be a member of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme. All members of this pension scheme (which is closed to new members) can retire on reaching age 50, provided they have at least 25 years' service. The maximum pension entitlement that a member of the pension scheme can accrue is 30 years' service. Chief Fire Officers appointed before 2006 are required to seek approval to retire before age 55 whilst those appointed after 2006 do not. All other members of the pension scheme are not required to obtain such approval. This requirement for Chief Fire Officers to have to seek approval has been recognised nationally as being potentially discriminatory on the grounds of age but can be overcome by agreement with the Authority to permit retirement from age 50. The Authority has previously given approval for the Chief Fire Officer to retire at age 50 subject to any pensions benefit payable before the age of 55 not representing an unauthorised payment as defined in the Finance Act 2004.

6.5. The notice period from either the employee or employer for termination of employment for the post of Chief Fire Officer is three months. There are no additional elements relating to the Chief Fire Officer ceasing to hold this post other than those covered under any other enactments.

7. REMUNERATION OF CHIEF OFFICERS ON RECRUITMENT

7.1. Within the Localism Act there is a requirement to state the remuneration of Chief Officers on recruitment. The pay level for the Chief Fire Officer was determined by the Authority in 2006, based on 2005 data, in preparation for the new combined Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service commencing on 1 April 2007. The appointment of a Chief Fire Officer is subject to approval by the Authority. The current rate of remuneration would apply to any new Chief Fire Officer on recruitment, subject to any review that may take place in accordance with the arrangements set out within this Pay Policy Statement.

8. RE-EMPLOYMENT OF EMPLOYEES

Redundancy

8.1. The Authority will not normally re-employ or contract with employees who have been made redundant by the Authority unless:

- there are exceptional circumstances where their specialist knowledge and expertise is required for a defined period of time **and** there has been a break in service of at least one month; or

- a defined period of 12 months has elapsed since the redundancy and circumstances have changed; or

- the re-employment is in a different role **and** there has been a break in service of at least six months; or

- the re-employment is in the same role but at a lower cost and is within the context of an approved business case at the time of the redundancy **and** there has been a break in service of at least one month.

8.2.   For each of the above scenarios:

- the approval of the People Committee will be required for the re-employment, following redundancy, of any former employee from Station Manager up to and including Area Manager level (or non-uniformed equivalent posts); or

- the approval of the full Authority will be required for the re-employment, following redundancy, of any post-holder at Brigade Manager (including non-uniformed equivalent); and

- for both of the above two approval processes, the Authority may require the repayment of one 24th part of any redundancy payment made by the Authority for every month less than 24 months between the date of redundancy and the date of re-employment.

Retirement

8.3.   The Authority will, in principle, allow the re-employment of employees who have retired, subject to a break in service of at least one month, because it is recognised that this often represents an effective way of retaining specialist knowledge and skills without any increase in cost to the Authority (and noting that costs to the Pension Scheme are no more than would be the case for normal retirement).

8.4.   However, the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England ("the National Framework), published by the Home Office in May 2018, sets out that "fire and rescue authorities must not re-appoint principal fire officers after retirement to their previous, or a similar, post save for in exceptional circumstances when such a decision is necessary in the interests of public safety". In this context, Principal Officers refers to those officers at Area Manager and above, or those with comparable responsibilities to those roles. The National Framework also states that fire and rescue authorities will "have regard to this principle when appointing at any level".

8.5.   Where retired uniformed staff are re-employed, then the Fire-Fighters' Pension shall be abated such that the income from the gross annual rate of pay whilst re-employed together with the gross annual pension (after commutation) will not exceed the gross annual rate of pay immediately prior to retirement. For staff within the Local Government Pension Scheme, where an individual is re-employed on the same terms and conditions [salary] as previously, the same abatement rules as apply to those within the Fire Fighters Pension Scheme will be applied.

8.6.   However, the Authority's policy on Pension Discretions refers to flexible retirement and states that this "may be subject to abatement during such time as the individual remains employed by the Service". This allows the Authority to use flexible retirement opportunities where key employees may wish to continue working as they get older but step down in grade or reduce their working hours. This can be beneficial to the Authority in retaining key skills, knowledge and experience whilst also reducing costs. The authorisation of any such flexible retirement arrangements will be subject to the approval mechanism detailed below.

8.7. With this in mind and taking account of the National Framework provisions, the Authority has agreed the following approach in relation to requests for re-employment following retirement, subject in each case to an approved business case:

    (a). the Chief Fire Officer has delegated authority to approve such requests up to and including Watch Manager level (or non-uniformed equivalent posts);

    (b). the People Committee has delegated authority to approve such requests for Station Manager up to and including Area Manager level (or non-uniformed equivalent posts); and

    (c). the approval of the full Authority is required for the re-employment, following retirement, of any post-holder at Brigade Manager (or equivalent non-uniformed) level i.e. any member of the Service Executive Board (the Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Assistant Chief Fire Officers, Director of Governance & Digital Services and Director of Finance and Resourcing). Such approval will only be granted in exceptional circumstances where the re-appointment is necessary in the interests of public safety. The rationale for the decision (together with any alternative approaches considered but deemed not appropriate) must be published.

9. THE PUBLICATION OF AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION RELATING TO REMUNERATION OF CHIEF OFFICERS

9.1. In order to make this information in relation to the Pay Policy Statement accessible to members of the public, the statement will be published on the Authority website.

10. REVIEW OF THE PAY POLICY STATEMENT

10.1. This document will be reviewed at least annually by the Authority.

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REPORT REFERENCE NO.	**DSFRA/24/13**
MEETING	**DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**
DATE OF MEETING	**25 MARCH 2024**
SUBJECT OF REPORT	**APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES**
LEAD OFFICER	**Clerk to the Authority (& Monitoring Officer)**
RECOMMENDATIONS	*(a).* *That Councillors Biederman, Cook-Woodman, Coles, Hendy, Peart, Slade and Sully be appointed to serve on the Shareholder Committee until the Annual Meeting of the Authority in June 2024;* *(b).* *that the consequential vacancies on the Audit & Governance Committee left by Councillors Biederman, Coles (Chair), Slade and Sully be filled at the meeting as appropriate; and* *(c).* *that the overall position on appointments to committees be reviewed at the Authority's Annual General Meeting in June 2024.*
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	On 16 February 2024, the Authority agreed the establishment of a Shareholder Committee to oversee the performance of Red One Ltd. and to provide greater transparency on all elements of the company's operations. This report sets out the proposed appointments to the Shareholder Committee and consequential impact on appointments to the Audit & Governance Committee.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	As indicated in the paper.
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	An initial assessment has not identified any equality issues emanating from this report.
APPENDICES	None.
BACKGROUND PAPERS	Report DSFRA/34/7 and Minute DSFRA/23/xx refer.

## 1.	INTRODUCTION

1.1.	At its meeting on 16 February 2024, the Authority received a report (DSFRA/24/7) on the outcome of the governance review undertaken by the Devon Audit Partnership which recommended, amongst other matters, the establishment of a Shareholder Committee.

1.2.	The Shareholder Committee will provide the necessary oversight from a shareholder perspective and affords a formal route for the Authority and, where appropriate, Statutory Officers, to have an active, strategic role in the direction of the company and provide proportionate oversight and scrutiny of its affairs. The aim is to ensure that the objectives and policies that the Authority, as the sole shareholder, has established for the company are being adhered to. This is in addition to the Annual General Meeting which ROL hold with the Authority as its sole shareholder.

## 2.	APPOINTMENT OF AUTHORITY MEMBERS TO THE COMMITTEE

2.1.	The Authority resolved to appoint seven Members to include the Authority Chair and the Chair of Resources Committee together with five Members to be drawn from membership of the Authority, with the exception of Audit and Governance Committee which recognises their scrutiny and assurance role.

2.2.	The Clerk to the Authority has considered the principles set out within the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 (section 15) which states:

(a).	that not all the seats are allocated to the same political group;

(b).	that the majority of seats are allocated to a particular political group if the number of persons belonging to that group are a majority of the authority's membership;

(c).	subject to (a) and (b) above, that the total number of all seats of the ordinary committees allocated to each particular political group reflects the group's proportion to the membership of the authority;

(d).	subject to (a) – (c) above, that the number of seats allocated to a particular political group reflects that group's proportion of the membership of the authority.

2.3.	With the inception of the new Shareholder Committee (7 Members), this will result in there being 45 places for allocation to Members (instead of 38 currently). Based on the current political balance on the Authority, there is no one group with an overall majority on the Authority (Conservatives 48%, Liberal Democrats 32%, Labour 16%, Independent 4%).

2.4.	In view of this, to conform with (a) to (d). above and taking account of existing appointments to committees, it is recommended that the allocation of places on the new Shareholder Committee should be:

3 Conservative	2 Liberal Democrat	1 Labour	1 Independent

2.5.   Authority Members were contacted on 1 March 2024 to seek expressions of interest for appointment to this Committee. Members were encouraged to consider their skills and experience in a commercial environment either now or previously or who have an interest in developing such skills.

2.6.   The Clerk has received expressions of interest from the following Authority Members seeking appointment to this Committee:

Councillor Biederman (Independent)

Councillor Coles (Liberal Democrat)

Councillor Hendy (Labour)

Councillor Slade (Conservative)

Councillor Sully (Liberal Democrat)

2.7.   Councillors Cook-Woodman and Peart will be appointed by virtue of their roles as Authority Chair and Chair of Resources Committee respectively (both Conservative group).

2.8.   The appointments of Councillors Biederman, Coles, Slade and Sully to the Shareholder Committee would result in vacancies on the Audit & Governance Committee. This is because there should not be any overlap in membership given the need for this Committee to provide scrutiny and oversight of all Authority functions including that of Red One Limited to accord with good governance principles. These vacancies will also need to be filled and nominations will be sought at the Authority's meeting on 25 March 2024.

3.   **CONCLUSION**

3.1.   The appointments to the Committee should conform to the requirements for political balance overall and on all committees in accordance with the Local Government & Housing Act 1989. The Clerk to the Authority will review the overall position on appointments to Committees and report back to the Authority thereon at its Annual General Meeting on 10 June 2924.

SAMANTHA SHARMAN
Clerk to the Authority (& Monitoring Officer)

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REPORT REFERENCE NO.	**DSFRA/24/14**
MEETING	**DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**
DATE OF MEETING	**25 MARCH 2024**
SUBJECT OF REPORT	**DIGITAL, DATA AND TECHNOLOGY (DDAT) TRANSFORMATION UPDATE**
LEAD OFFICER	**Director of Finance and Corporate Services (Treasurer)**
RECOMMENDATIONS	That the report be noted.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	The Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority (the Authority) resolved on 31 October 2023 to support internal reform of the DDaT department as opposed to outsourcing the function to DELT Shared Services Ltd. (Minute DSFRA/23/24 refers). A condition of this support was that the lead director and other senior officers provide the Authority with an update on progress within six months. This report provides this update and focuses on key issues that needed to be addressed and the positive progress that has been made in each of these areas.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	N/A
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	N/A
APPENDICES	A. Draft Customer Charter B. Staff / customer feedback
BACKGROUND PAPERS	Minute DSFRA/24 refer.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1.   The Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority (the Authority) resolved on 31 October 2023 to support internal reform of the Digital, Data and Technology (DDaT) department as opposed to outsourcing the function to DELT Shared Services Ltd. (Minute DSFRA/23/24 refers). A condition of this support was that the lead director and other senior officers provide the Authority with an update on progress within six months.

1.2.   This report provides this update and focuses on key issues that needed to be addressed and the positive progress that has been made in each of these areas.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1.   The DDaT department (previously known as ICT) had been subjected to a total of five audit and performance reviews since 2020, which concluded that although the Service performs well in some areas, the department was not fully meeting its customer needs.

2.2.   These reviews led to 9 strategic recommendations and 24 actions. As well as this staff feedback suggested that the Digital Strategy and its implementation had not met internal customer expectations. His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary & Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) supported this in their inspection of 2021/22 stating *"we spoke to some staff who told us that the Service releases several new IT applications; however, these aren't always further developed and limited support is provided when the applications are released."*[2] As a result, delivery risks were identified across all departments associated with DDaT and there was a significant backlog in change requests together with a number of programmes in development that were well behind schedule.

2.3.   The drivers for change were not exclusively to reduce cost or achieve economies of scale. The spectrum was wider and deeper, driven by a need to demonstrate a data-led, risk-based, and intelligent organisation. A Service that is agile with the capability and capacity to meet the needs of a modern, innovative Fire Service and the communities it serves.

2.4.   In April 2023, a Business Case was commissioned by the Executive Board (EB) to review DELT Shared Service as an option. During this period, staff were engaged and additional evidence was collected. The full Business Case was presented to the Authority on 31 October 2023. The Authority resolved not proceed with moving to DELT as a Shared Service, but to instead reform the DDaT department internally (Minute DSFRA/23/24 refers).

3. KEY ISSUES TO ADDRESS

3.1.   After the review, it was essential to ensure the Service understood the key factors which had led to the review. After consultation with Senior Leaders and the team, it was agreed that there were 5 key issue areas to focus on, namely:

- Lack of strategic leadership;

- Cost of the Service;

- Build vs buy direction and cost for this;.

- Lack of engagement with Services users; and

- Lack of understanding of DDaT Service from service users as above.

4. INTERNAL REFORM – PROGRESS TO DATE

4.1. There have been significant changes within the DDaT department, which is leading to more positive relationships and outcomes for the department and the Service. The key issues are reviewed below.

Lack of strategic leadership

4.2. A full review has been completed of the DDaT structure and functions. In August 2023, recruitment took place and a new Head of DDaT was appointed. A key focus since then has been working with all team members to understand all aspects of the department, what they are looking to achieve and how affective they are. This has resulted in agreement of 5 core functions.

- Business Relationship (new function);

- Service Delivery;

- Development;

- Information Governance; and

- Data, Insights and Analytics.

4.3. Alongside the functions, it was identified that collaboration across departments, security and customer service need to run throughout the department.

DIGITAL, DATA AND TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT - FUNCTIONS

Customer Facing
Helpdesk - Line 1 / Training Service Skills / Mentors / Champions

Business facing - Digital / Business Delivery
Solution focused / Building relationships across DDaT Teams & departments / Triaging / Operational crossover

SKILLS / CAPABILTY PLANNING

STRATEGY / TRANSFORMATION
Data / Digital / Governance / Cyber / Exploration

DIGITAL SERVICE DELIVERY
- 2nd line support
- Infrastructure
- Architecture
- Network
- Servers
- Hardware
- Engineers
- Operational comms
- Data platform
- Report tooling management
- Contract / BAU / Adoption into Service / vender relationship management
- Cyber Security

DEVELOPMENT TEAM
- Solutions Analysis
- Business Process Realisation
- Solution Development
- Support and Maintenance
- Solution Integration and Deployment
- Future Architecture
- Technical Responsibility
- Data Intergration

INFORMATION AND DATA GOVERNANCE
- Information / Data Compliance
- Information Security and Assurance
- Records Management
- Data Architecture
- Data sets / standards
- Data Quality

DATA SERVICES
- Business Intelligence
- Management Information
- Strategic Analysis
- Data Insights
- Data Visualisation
- Geospatial Analysis
- Data Management
- Data Modelling

COLLOBORATION / FUTURES
- Process Improvements
- Future applications / data
- Agile approach
- Business Analyst
- Project Managers
- Business Intelligence
- Procurement
- Comms and Engagement

SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS / LINES OF BUSINESS AGREEMENTS / KPIS

SECURITY

4.4.　　　　This has also resulted in a structure review and the new Business Relationship function being added to the department. This structure (as below) is still under review and the Service and department are aware of the need to make some changes as this progresses to ensure all functions work as needed.
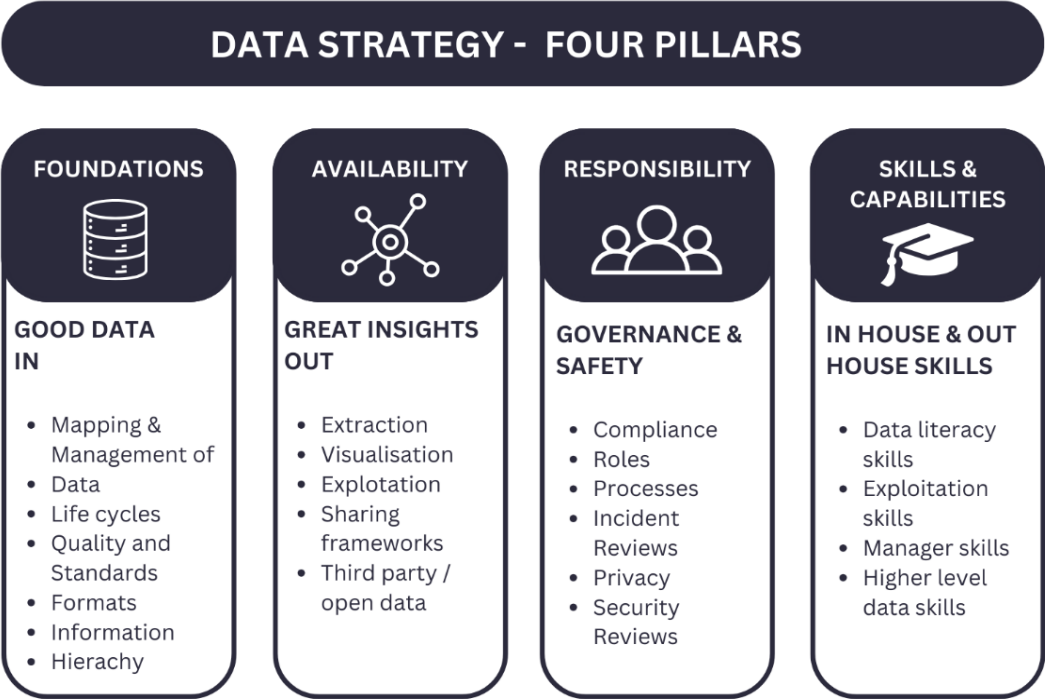
DIGITAL, DATA AND TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT
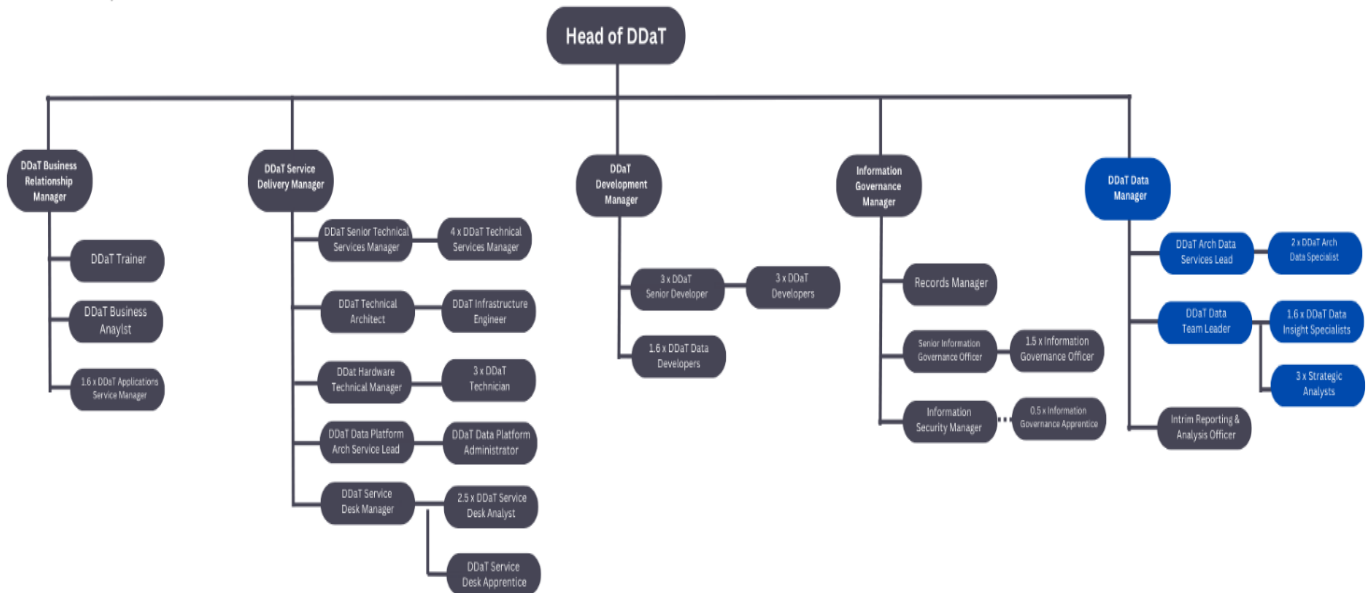
4.5.　　　　A new vision has been developed and agreed for the department:

"We are a customer-first department, utilising digital to drive transformation and effectiveness. We are the go-to subject matter experts who enable technologies for the whole Service".

4.6. The department has been advised that, over the next 18 months, there are 5 main priorities:

- Structure and Recruitment – Initial structure, reviews at 18 and 36 months, new posts Technical Architect, Trainer and Reporting Officer;

- Training and Competencies - Asking do we have the right competencies in the department? Are we providing you with enough/relevant training? Do we have gaps?;

- Data – Data and Information strategy, production of clear Standards / Sets / Guidance, full systems mapping, data quality;

- Customer Service Focus - New Business Relationship function, customer charter, help guides and video, new customer support pages, new support system;

- Cyber security - Review and production of department and Service wide plan, building resilience in the team and providing expert support and guidance; and

- Clear objectives have been set for team members and these are linked to the Service objectives, so staff understand what is expected and how this links to the wider picture. As well as these functions, we are reviewing priorities and have become more agile in support based on Service needs.

4.7. These principles and strategies for the department are under discussion. Over the next few months, the Department will be working on digital principles instead of digital strategy to allow for changes to embed, but also to allow us to focus in on Data and Information Strategies to inform the wider digital strategy.

4.8. Work has begun around the Data and Information Strategy initially looking at Data pillars to allow us to build foundations for this work.

DATA STRATEGY - FOUR PILLARS

FOUNDATIONS

GOOD DATA IN

- Mapping & Management of
- Data
- Life cycles
- Quality and Standards
- Formats
- Information
- Hierachy

AVAILABILITY

GREAT INSIGHTS OUT

- Extraction
- Visualisation
- Explotation
- Sharing frameworks
- Third party / open data

RESPONSIBILITY

GOVERNANCE & SAFETY

- Compliance
- Roles
- Processes
- Incident Reviews
- Privacy
- Security Reviews

SKILLS & CAPABILITIES

IN HOUSE & OUT HOUSE SKILLS

- Data literacy skills
- Exploitation skills
- Manager skills
- Higher level data skills

4.9.   The focus on providing strategic leadership has been a key focus and is proving to be effective. Relationships across the Service are being effectively built and there is open / honest communication being built across department and at Senior levels.

Cost of the Service

4.10.   As part of the full Business Case, a full review of costs was undertaken. This review also compared costs of Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service against other Fire Services. This showed that in many cases, Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service was comparable in terms of spend. The review showcased that a lot of expenditure is out of the control of DDaT including Airwave and systems / applications purchased by other departments. To avoid the misunderstanding of costs for the department, it has been agreed in the next financial year that the Department will look to create a new budget to show all costs out of DDaT control, allowing us to showcase and be reviewed based on actual spend.

Cost comparison shown in full Business Case.

	% of core <u>gross</u> revenue spending on DDaT (includes reserves and Airwave)				
Financial year	**DSFRS**	**FRS A**	**FRS B**	**FRS C**	**Avg FRS spending**
2021/22	6.6	5.2	6.1	5.5	5.6
2022/23	6.2	5.3	7.0	5.4	5.9
2023/24 (budget and forecast)	6.6	5.6	7.9	6.3	6.6

4.11.   The Head of DDaT has completed a full review of budgets and has already highlighted some areas for savings. This includes:

- removal of a licenced training system that was not being utilised, saving £16k;

- review with other department to remove data software that is no longer needed, saving around £9k; and

- Removal of e-Learning programme for Information Governance, saving £12k.

4.12.   In addition, the Department is also:

- Reviewing our overtime expenditure;

- Reducing with a view to removing all contract staff and instead recruiting full time staff with skills needed to support the department and Service; and

- Potentially removing CMAP pro (moving from on premise to Cloud version), saving £4k.

Build vs buy direction and cost for this.

4.13. Around 10 years ago, the Head of ICT and the former Executive Board adopted a strategy to build instead of buying off the shelf solution. This led to the building of a multitude of applications that were deemed suitable for the Service. This was built under the umbrella of 'Workbench' and currently consists of 21 apps and 6 dashboards. This takes significant resource to support and maintain.

4.14. In 2023, the decision was taken by the current Executive Board to move from the build approach to 'build appropriate' approach. The approach does not mean that the Service will not continue to build applications as needed (which will also include Microsoft 365), but the change moves the direction to looking at the most appropriate solution. In many cases, the Service is now introducing new 3rd party systems and removing some of the applications built. The Service is in the process of creating a roadmap which will show the applications that should be removed and will allow a focus on applications that will support the Service the most.

4.15. By reducing the number of applications supported, the Service will need less resource and moving away from using consultants in this area. Previously, this was a function which had a significant number of consultants which was not financially viable for the Service. The new approach will be to bring in full-time roles instead, however, recruitment is proving challenging.

4.16. A key focus in this area has been looking to reduce Business as Usual (BAU) "backlog" that had been identified as an area of concern following the DELT review into the ICT service at Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service. DELT had proposed that they could reduce the backlog by 80%, however, this was through the application of an approach that did not meet with the team's and DDaT's philosophy. Following the decision to not proceed with DELT and to look to internal transformation in DDaT, the team reviewed the backlog and identified a more suitable, more customer focussed and engaged process, though still with the ambitious target to bring numbers down by 80% by the end of April 2024.

4.17. Work to date has reduced the number from 124 to 38 which is a reduction of 69%, this means that the team are on target to reach the 80% reduction within the agreed timeframe. In addition to this reduction in the backlog, the way the team has gone about engaging with customers, involving them in the process and working with them on solutions and testing has also seen an improvement in the relationships between areas of the service. This should also be considered a very positive outcome from the focussed efforts of the team.

Lack of engagement with Services users and lack of understanding of DDaT Service from service users

4.18. As part of the structural review of the department the Service has introduced a new Business Relationship function within the Department. This function aims to:

- Serve as a liaison between customers and upper management, executives, and stakeholders;

- Review and maintain customer-facing processes;

- Establish initiatives to support customer relations; and

- Inform future DDaT strategies.

4.19. The Service recruited into this role in March 2024 and is already seeing positive results. This function is allowing the Department to ensure it has the time needed to invest in relationships ensuring the "customer first" approach.

4.20. The Department is in the process of creating a customer charter (see appendix A of this report for the draft) that will allow us to clearly inform end users of what the Department does, why and how support is provided. This will align with the Service's wide customer charter.

4.21. The Department is currently running a short questionnaire to look at Digital Maturity within the Service. This has started with a short survey to all users, which will allow the Department to refine its focus and carry out a full digital maturity assessment in April 2024. The assessment is designed to help organisations understand their own digital capabilities and the capabilities and compatibilities of information systems across other organisations. The outcomes will inform our digital, data and information strategy moving forwards.

4.22. A key focus currently is around improving engagement with Operational staff. Previously, the focus has not been on the impacts that Operational staff may feel due to the changes made by DDaT. The Department is striving to be more acceptable, visiting stations and sending out specific Operational communications to staff. In addition to this, the department is in the process of recruiting a new Digital trainer who will provide a range of support to all staff across the Service based on needs.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1. Over that past 5 months, the DDaT team and Service have embraced changes to improve efficiency and effectiveness within the department. Feedback is showing that the team feel more empowered, and they feel they are part of the journey. Relationships across the departments at all levels are becoming positive and there is a clear drive around collaboration and supporting each other to ensure digital transformation to succeed.

SHAYNE SCOTT
Director of Finance & Corporate Services (Treasurer)

DDaT Customer Charter

DDaT – Who We Are

Our vision

We are a customer-first department, utilising digital to drive transformation and effectiveness. We are the go-to subject matter experts who enable technologies for the whole Service.

Building on the fire service's commitment to continuous improvement and excellence, the Digital, Data and Technology (DDaT) Team plays a crucial role in driving innovation and modernisation. This charter serves as an affirmation of the team's purpose, goals, and operating framework.

The DDaT Team will leverage technology and champion a culture of transformation to:

- **Increase efficiency and productivity** across the service.
- **Enhance user experience** and drive business growth.
- **Foster innovation** and agility to stay ahead of the curve.

This charter serves as a roadmap for the DDaT Team, guiding our collaborative efforts and ensuring alignment with the service's overall goals. By working together, the Digital, Data and Technology teams will empower the service to thrive in the digital age.

DDaT DEPARTMENT

1. Overview of DDaT department. Leadership roles, and how this sits within DSFRS EB / SLT.
2. Main responsibilities within DSFRS and why it is crucial for the Service

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PROTECT

SUPPORT

IMPROVE

PROTECT DSFRS FROM THREATS

1. Summary of how DDaT protect DSFRS from external threats.
2. What teams are involved in this.
3. Overview of each team remit.
4. When you would contact.
5. Team leads and staff.

PROVIDE SUPPORT TO INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL CUSTOMERS

1. Summary of how DDaT provide support to DSFRS on current systems and equipment.
2. What teams are involved in this.
3. Overview of each team remit.
4. When you would contact.
5. Team leads and staff.

CONTINUALLY IMPROVE DSFRS

1. Summary of how DDaT are developing new software and updating existing systems.
2. What teams are involved in this.
3. Overview of each team remit.
4. When you would contact.
5. Team leads and staff overview.

1. Commitment

1.1. Clear Communication

We are committed to transparent communication, providing timely updates, and delivering information in a way that is accessible to all. Our goal is to foster a clear understanding of IT services, changes, and incidents, ensuring our communication is inclusive and easily comprehensible.

1.2. Security and Privacy

Ensuring the security and privacy of user data is a top priority. We adhere to the highest industry standards to safeguard information, respecting individuals' rights to privacy and confidentiality.

1.3. Collaboration

Our aim is to build strong collaborative relationships across all service areas. By understanding everyone's goals, we can align IT services accordingly, fostering a collaborative and inclusive approach to achieve common objectives.

2. Delivery

2.1. Responsive Support

Our objective is the swift resolution of issues and the provision of proactive support to minimise downtime and disruptions. We uphold a customer-first approach in every interaction, actively listening, and continuously improving to better serve our customers while effectively collaborating with suppliers and vendors.

2.2. Training and Education

We are devoted to empowering users with the knowledge and skills they need. Through training sessions and resources, we enhance IT literacy and user experience, promoting inclusivity and equal opportunities for all.

2.3. Self-Support and Continuous Improvement

We encourage self-support through best practice guides, coaching, and consistent engagement. Our commitment to learning and adapting as a team enables us to provide high-quality services, always seeking ways to improve and meet the evolving needs of our community through:

- **Comprehensive knowledge base**: We will maintain an accessible knowledge base containing best practice guides, FAQs, and tutorials. This allows users to find answers to common questions and troubleshoot issues independently.

- **Coaching and training opportunities**: We will offer various training options, including workshops, webinars, and online modules, to equip users with the necessary skills and knowledge to utilise our services effectively.
- **Collaborative learning environment**: We encourage open communication and knowledge sharing within the team and with our users. This fosters a collaborative learning environment where everyone can contribute and learn from each other's experiences.
- **Continuous feedback loop**: We actively seek feedback from our users through surveys, user testing, and open communication channels. This feedback loop allows us to identify areas for improvement and adapt our resources and services to meet evolving needs.

2.4. Effective Prioritisation

① Aligning with organisational goals, we prioritise our efforts on strategic initiatives, ② major incidents, and reputational issues. This ensures our services are optimised ③ to support the overarching mission of our organisation, promoting adaptability and contributing to sustained success.

3. Our Values in Action

3.1. Responsiveness

We will **swiftly resolve issues**, keeping users informed through multiple channels and providing clear timelines, while conducting root cause analysis to prevent recurrence and enhance service reliability.

3.2. Empowering Through Knowledge

We will bridge the knowledge gap by equipping users with the resources and skills needed to navigate our services confidently and independently, fostering informed decision-making.

3.3. Foster Clear Communication

We will maintain **open and transparent communication channels**, actively **seeking user feedback** and ensuring **inclusive and accessible information**. We believe clear communication fosters trust and collaboration.

3.4. Building Strong Relationships

We will cultivate strong and collaborative relationships with users, service areas, and external partners. We believe that working together allows us to achieve more and deliver exceptional service.

3.5. Our functions

Summary of each function:

- Business relationship management

- Service Delivery
- Information Governance
- Development
- Data, Insights and Analysis

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Feedback

The changes we are making are making a difference, below is some of the feedback we have received recently;

"I just wanted to say thank you for the work on the fleet department system mapping. I know my team and your team prioritised this when everyone is already so busy – so I just wanted to share how useful it had been. Whilst the mapping itself does not make change the stopping to think and review has so wanted to share some immediate changes made and what we plan to do, and I have no doubt will lead into more considerations".

"I just wanted to drop a quick line to say THANK YOU for sorting out the safe exam browser for me yesterday and for your patience and persistence".

"I just wanted to shine a light on one of your team and give some positive feedback about them. Thomas Smith came to my rescue on Tuesday when my computer went into melt down, more than likely caused by my actions, but his perseverance and skills got me back up and working and importantly back online, which is vital to my working day.
He was professional and prompt and gave a professional representation of the DDaT team in helping me resolve the problem".

"Pat turned some SRT availability data around for us on Friday for the OBC at short notice ..... just wanted to use it as an opportunity to once again say thanks to your team for their ongoing support to help us with this".

"I started in IT 25 years ago because I loved to learn by solving problems and I loved the collaborative sprit that the IT community embodied at the time. I think DSFRS has been the best place to work. There are few jobs in IT where you can see how the job you do improves the lives and safety of a community so clearly. Across the service, teams are always working to improve and IT is often fundamental. Relative to our size we operate an array of different systems so there are many more opportunities to learn new skills then in similar sized commercial organisations. Support and training are always available, there are many opportunities to collaborate with other organisations. Colleagues are well motivated and the service cares for its staff. I would absolutely recommend DSFRS as a place to work".

"I've only been in the DDaT team for 3 months. It's been so easy for me to feel like I 'belong' in the team. I don't need to 'fit in', I come to work as my authentic self and am welcomed with open arms. I genuinely feel valued, respected and included because everyone has a role to play, and it's definitely a 'team' ethos. It's great to see such commitment to growth and progression at all levels, as well as leaders providing clear leadership and direction which is at the heart of DSFRS. This opportunity has really enabled me to see exactly what DDaT is all about. I'm excited to be part of the journey and extremely thankful for everyone's support during my first few months. Who knew things could be so exciting in DDaT".

"Thank you for the hard work you have put into to this. You have managed to make a positive difference to my role since being appointed Head of DDaT with the car allowance and the job title change and open door attitude".

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	DSFRA/24/15
MEETING	DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY (Extraordinary Meeting)
DATE OF MEETING	25 MARCH 2024
SUBJECT OF REPORT	DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY PERFORMANCE REPORT: 2023*24 QUARTER THREE
LEAD OFFICER	Maria Phillips, Assistant Director, Corporate Services
RECOMMENDATIONS	(a). That the Authority considers the areas of performance in exception in relation to agreed strategic objectives and requests its committees to investigate further as appropriate; and (b). That, subject to (a) above, the report be noted
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	The Service regularly updates the Fire & Rescue Authority on performance in detail through quarterly reports to each of its committees allowing for a high level of scrutiny. The Authority's external auditor, Grant Thornton, set out an improvement recommendation within its Annual Audit report 2022-23: "we recommend that a summary performance report, similar to the one taken to the Executive Board or of its Senior Leadership Team, is taken to each Authority meeting so that the Authority has full oversight of key performance and financial issues". The Executive Board has committed to providing the Authority with an overview of performance in accordance with the external auditors recommendation above to ensure there is sufficient visibility of the effectiveness of the Service. The report covers the period up to the end of quarter three of the 2023-24 financial year and focuses on a selection of key performance indicators (KPIs) which are aligned to our four Strategic priorities: Performance is measured against the following indicators: • Succeeding; • Near target; and • Requires improvement. Where a KPI has a status of "requires improvement" an exception report is included which provides more detailed analysis and any actions that are being undertaken to support improved performance.

Any actions that are reported will be included in appendix A of the performance report with updates provided until the action is concluded.

Table one below is a summary of the current status of KPIs by each priority for 2023/24 Quarter 3 (with change from previous report):

	Succeeding (ü)	Near target (Ÿ)	Requires improvement (û)
Priority 1	10 (-1)	5 (0)	4 (+1)
Priority 2	6 (-1)	7 (+1)	1 (0)
Priority 3	2 (-)	10 (-)	2 (-)
Priority 4	6 (-)	0 (-)	0 (-)

Eight of the 53 KPIs have a status of "requires improvement". All have been subject to review, with exception reports included as appropriate as set out in more detail within the Appendix attached.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	Existing budget and staffing are sufficient to deliver required improvements.
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS (ERBA)	N/A
APPENDICES	A. Fire Authority Performance Report: 2023-24 Quarter Three
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS	Community Safety Committee: Strategic Priority 1 and 2 Performance Measures: Quarter 3 2023/24 People Committee: Performance Monitoring Report 2023-24: Quarter 3 Resources Committee: Financial Performance Report 2023-24: Quarter 3

Fire Authority Performance Report

April to December 2023 Performance

This report summarises performance of the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service corporate key performance indicators (KPIs).

Where a KPI is assessed as requiring improvement, an exception report is provided. These provide additional information relating to the indicator and details of any actions that have been put in place to improve performance.

Alice Murray, Strategic Analyst

06/03/2024

Contents

Introduction

To make sure that we are delivering the best possible service to the communities of Devon and Somerset and its visitors, we need to regularly monitor our performance.

Our Key Performance Indicators are aligned to our **corporate objectives** and support us to deliver our four **strategic priorities**.

Our targeted prevention and protection activities will reduce the risks in our communities, improving health, safety and wellbeing and supporting the local economy.

Our operational resources will provide an effective emergency response to meet the local and national risks identified in our Community Risk Management Plan.

Our Service is recognised as a great place to work. Our staff feel valued, supported, safe and well trained to deliver a high performing fire and rescue service.

We are open and accountable and use our resources efficiently to deliver a high performing, sustainable service that demonstrates public value.

Our assessment method varies based on the type and nature of the data that a KPI uses. A description of these methods can be found in appendix B of this report.

If a KPI has a status of "requires improvement", an exception report will be provided which will contain further analysis and identify whether any action needs to be taken to drive improvement. Updates on progress against actions will be provided in future reports until they are closed.

KPIs that are "near target" will be monitored by the lead manager to assess whether performance is likely to improve and where appropriate implement tactical changes to influence the direction of travel. No further information will be provided within this report.

Performance summary

Table 1: performance status overview 2023/24 Q3 with change from previous report

	Succeeding (✓)	Near target (•)	Requires improvement (✗)
Priority 1	10 (-1)	5 (0)	4 (+1)
Priority 2	6 (-1)	7 (+1)	1 (0)
Priority 3	2 (-)	10 (-)	2 (-)
Priority 4	6 (-)	0 (-)	0 (-)

KPIs requiring improvement		Exception report
1.1.2.	Number of fire-related deaths in dwellings	Page 8
1.1.9.	Number of fire related deaths in other locations	Page 10
1.2.4.1.	Number of fire safety checks completed	Page 13
1.2.5.	Rate of false alarms due to apparatus in non-domestic premises	Page 15
2.1.4.2	Percentage of operational risk information in-date for revalidation: level four tactical plan	Page 19
3.1.3.	Number of safety events	Page 25
3.1.7.	Average number of persons absent due to stress related illness per month	Page 27

Priority one performance

Our targeted prevention and protection activities will reduce the risks in our communities, improving health, safety and wellbeing and supporting the local economy.

Objective one: we will work with partners to target our prevention activities where they have the greatest impact on the safety and wellbeing of our communities.

Key:	✓ Succeeding	• Near target	✗ Requires improvement

Table 2: KPIs requiring improvement - priority one, objective one.

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
1.1.2. Number of fire-related deaths in dwellings	Quarter (✗)	1	0	NA	Lower is better
	Annual (✓)	3	6	-50.0%	Lower is better
1.1.9. Number of fire related deaths in other locations	Quarter (✗)	1	0	NA	Lower is better
	Annual (✗)	2	1	100.0%	Lower is better

Table 3: KPIs near target – priority one, objective one.

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
1.1.3. Rate of dwelling fire hospitalisations per 100,000 population	Annual (•)	4.28	4.20	2.0%	Lower is better
1.1.11. Rate of secondary fires per 100,000 population	Annual (•)	90.9	90.7	0.2%	Lower is better
1.1.14. Rate of persons killed or seriously injured in RTCs per 100,000 population	Annual (•)	25.5	25.4	0.5%	Lower is better

Table 4: KPIs succeeding - priority one, objective one.

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
1.1.1. Rate of primary dwelling fires per 100,000 population	Annual (✔)	49.35	51.74	-4.6%	Lower is better
1.1.4. Number home fire safety visits completed	Annual (✔)	15,081	13,500	11.7%	Higher is better
1.1.6. Percentage of targeted home fire safety visits completed to households with two or more risk factors	Annual (✔)	62.4%	60.0%	4.0%	Higher is better
1.1.8. Rate of primary fires in other locations per 100,000 population	Annual (✔)	43.35	46.12	-6.0%	Lower is better
1.1.10. Rate of other fire hospitalisations per 100,000 population	Annual (✔)	0.46	0.53	-12.9%	Lower is better
1.1.12. Rate of deliberate fires per 100,000 population	Annual (✔)	73.5	80.4	-8.6%	Lower is better
1.1.13. Rate of RTCs per 100,000 population	Annual (✔)	44.2	45.6	-3.2%	Lower is better

Exception report: KPI 1.1.2. Number of fire-related deaths in dwelling fires

Preventing fire-related deaths and injuries is our primary focus. We deliver a range of prevention activities from wide-reaching campaigns to targeted home fire safety visits to the most vulnerable within our communities.

We consider any fire-related death to be a failure and therefore have a **zero** target for the reporting month and quarter. However, we know that accidents happen and sadly we cannot prevent every fire-related death, so we also monitor a rolling 12-month period and compare it to the five-year average.

Table 5: KPI 1.1.2. number of fire-related deaths in dwellings, 2023/24 Q3 performance

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
1.1.2. Number of fire-related deaths in dwellings	Quarter (✗)	1	0	NA	Lower is better
	Annual (✓)	3	6	-50.0%	Lower is better

Analysis

This KPI is in exception due to a fire-related death occurring during the current reporting quarter. Performance for the rolling 12-month period remains within target.

Details of the incident are outlined below.

Incident date and time: 6th November 2023, 7:15am
Location: Alhampton, Shepton Mallet
Property type: Single occupancy terraced house
Victim age and sex: 87-year-old, male
First response time: 27 mins (time of emergency call to time of arrival on scene)

Fire Control received a call from a member of the public reporting smoke issuing from the roof and windows of the property. During the call it was reported that an attempt had been made to gain entry to the premises by a neighbour who was met with a well-developed fire and could see someone inside.

An ambulance crew was first on scene an confirmed the presence of a person inside the property. Fire crew from Shepton Mallet arrived on scene at 7:42am. The Officer in Charge confirmed the property to be well alight and requested additional resources.

A BA crew was committed to the ground floor of the property and confirmation was provided of a deceased person within.

The fire was extinguished externally using hose reel jets.

Fire investigation was undertaken and identified significant levels of hoarding and the use of multiple extension leads and halogen lamps / heaters. There was no central heating, hot water or electrically wired lighting in the premises. It is believed that the fire started accidentally.

The victim had been referred for a Home Fire Safety Visit by his GP Practice on the 17/05/2023. The visit was attempted on the 07/06/2023 but the victim refused access to the property and ~~the~~ despite the best efforts of the Home Safety Technician and GP a visit could not be completed.

Information gathered from partner agencies suggested that it would have been highly unlikely that the victim would have allowed access to the property at any point.

Actions

Table 6: KPI 1.1.2. number of fire-related deaths in dwellings, 2023/24 Q3 actions

Action Reference	Action description	Lead officer
2324.Q3.1.1.2.A	**Conduct fatal fire review.** Completed. No additional actions identified through the review.	Community Safety Prevention Manager

Exception report: KPI 1.1.9. Number of fire-related deaths in other locations

Preventing fire-related deaths and injuries is our primary focus. We use insight gained through analysing our data to inform our fire prevention campaigns and targeting.

We consider any fire-related death to be a failure and therefore have a **zero** target for the reporting month and quarter. However, we know that accidents happen and sadly we cannot prevent every fire-related death, so we also monitor a rolling 12-month period and compare it to the five-year average.

Table 7: KPI 1.1.9. number of fire-related deaths in other locations, 2023/24 Q3 performance

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
1.1.9. Number of fire-related deaths in other locations	Quarter (✖)	1	0	NA	Lower is better
	Annual (✖)	2	1	100.0%	Lower is better

Analysis

This KPI is in exception due to a fire-related occurring during the current reporting quarter. Performance for the rolling 12-month period remains within target.

Details of the incident are outlined below.

Incident date and time: 9 October 2023, 1:35am
Location: Paignton
Property type: Car
Victim age and sex: 40-year-old, male
First response time: 6 mins (time of emergency call to time of arrival on scene)

Fire Control received a call from ambulance service to a small vehicle fire, persons reported. Crews arrived on scene at 1:41am and were met by a vehicle fire resulting from a collision between a car and a stationary van which was unoccupied.

It is believed that the victim was clear of the vehicle following the collision but then intentionally returned to the vehicle when it caught fire.

While the intent of the collision cannot be confirmed, fire investigation has determined that the fire began accidentally as a result and was most likely caused by an electrical short circuit from the battery igniting fuel vapours.

Actions

Table 8: KPI 1.1.9. number of fire-related deaths in other locations, 2023/24 Q3 actions

Action Reference	Action description	Lead officer
2324.Q3.1.1.9.A	**Conduct fatal fire review.** Completed. No additional actions identified through the review.	Community Safety Prevention Manager

Objective two: we will protect people in the built environment through a proportionate, risk-based approach to the regulation of fire safety legislation.

Key:	✓ Succeeding	• Near target	✗ Requires improvement

Table 9: KPIs requiring improvement – priority one, objective two.

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
1.2.4.1. Number of fire safety checks completed	Annual (✗)	1,793	2,250	-20.3%	Higher is better
1.2.5. Rate of false alarms due to apparatus in non-domestic premises	Annual (✗)	280.5	247.1	13.5%	Lower is better

Table 10: KPIs near target – priority one, objective two.

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
1.2.1. Rate of non-domestic premises fires per 10,000 rateable premises	Annual (•)	58.46	56.97	2.6%	Lower is better
1.2.6. Percentage of statutory consultations completed to required timescales	Annual (•)	98.8%	100.0%	-1.3%	Higher is better

Table 11: KPIs succeeding – priority one, objective two.

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
1.2.2. Number of fire-related deaths in non-domestic premises	Quarter (✓)	0	0	NA	Lower is better
	Annual (✓)	1	1	0.0%	Lower is better
1.2.3. Rate of non-domestic premises fire hospitalisations per 10,000 rateable premises	Annual (✓)	1.01	1.12	-10.1%	Lower is better
1.2.4.2 Number fire safety audits completed	Annual (✓)	646	425	52.0%	Higher is better

Exception report: KPI 1.2.4.1. number of fire safety checks completed

This KPI reports on the number of Fire Safety Checks (FSC) completed. FSCs provide a basic assessment of compliance with fire safety regulations in business premises and are primarily delivered by wholetime crews. If significant issues are identified, an FSC may be escalated to a full fire safety audit (FSA) which is delivered by specialist Fire Safety Officers.

Analysis

The KPI remains in exception due to the number of FSCs completed being more than 10% below target.

Table 12: KPI 1.2.4.1. number of fire safety checks completed, 2023/24 Q3 performance.

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
1.2.4.1. Number of fire safety checks completed	Annual (✗)	1,793	2,250	-20.3%	Higher is better

Table 13: performance status – cumulative count of fire safety checks completed against target by month.
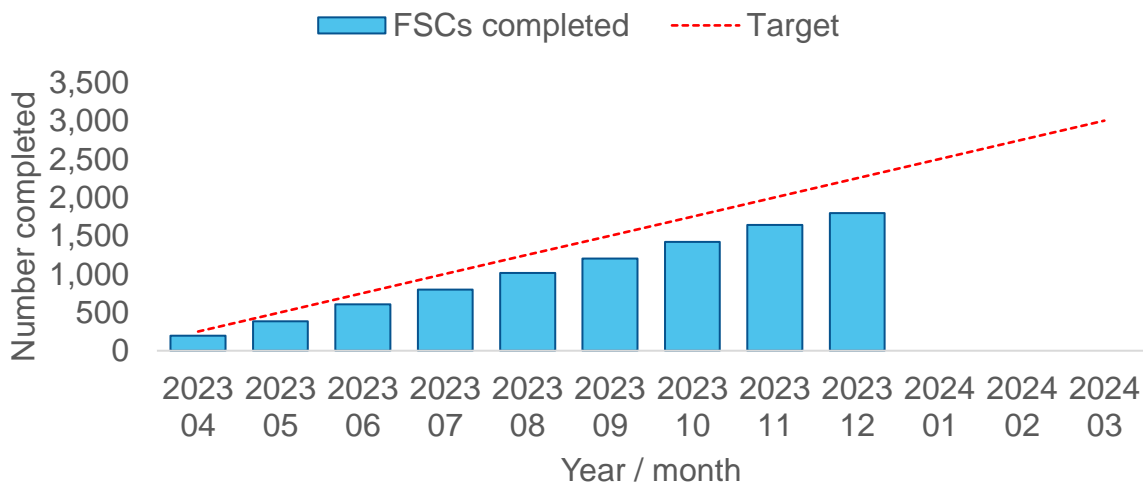
Following investigation, it has been identified that the deficit is due to two main factors:

1) During the 2022/23 financial year, delivery of fire safety checks was supplemented by non-station-based personnel (trainee Fire Safety Inspection Officers). As these personnel have become competent to deliver more complex activity, their time has been utilised to deliver FSAs rather than FSCs.

2) Stations have also completed fewer FSCs compared to the same period last year.

To support our crews to deliver the required volume of Fire Safety Checks, whilst ensuring that they are targeted appropriately, we have extended our use of Fire Risk Event Data (FRED) to include down to the 70th percentile (previously the 80th). While lowering this threshold provides additional premises, further cleansing is required to remove buildings that we do not regulate, such as small business working from home e.g., driving instructors.

Work to identify additional premises for watches has been completed by the data team and has surfaced some 2,000 premises. This includes premises that have scored as unsatisfactory in a previous fire safety check.

Wholetime watches can self-generate referrals for Fire Safety Checks at suitable premises. These are submitted via the MORI app to the admin teams for due diligence checks. Where deemed suitable the premises are re-allocated back to the requesting watch for completion. Further work is required to fully communicate and embed this process.

Table 14: 1.2.4.1. number of fire safety checks completed, 2023/24 Q3 actions

Action Reference	Action description	Lead officer
2324.Q3.1.2.4.1.A	Continue to communicate to watches to ensure self-generation process is fully embedded.	Community Safety Protection Manager

Exception report: 1.2.5. Rate of false alarms due to apparatus in non-domestic premises

This KPI reports on the number of false alarms due to fire or smoke detections apparatus in non-domestic premises located within the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service area. False alarms can occur for a number of reasons but are most commonly related to system faults, dust or insects entering the equipment or human error.

Analysis

The KPI is in exception due to the rate of incidents being more than 10% above target.

Table 15: KPI 1.2.5. Rate of false alarms due to apparatus in non-domestic premises, 2023/24 Q3 performance

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
1.2.5. Rate of false alarms due to apparatus in non-domestic premises	Annual (✗)	280.5	247.1	13.5%	Lower is better

There has been an upward trend in number of false alarms in non-domestic premises over the past five-years, with the KPI being in exception since August 2023.

Table 16: *KPI 1.2.5. Rate of false alarms due to apparatus in non-domestic premises, 2023/24*, 12-month average of rolling five-year period.
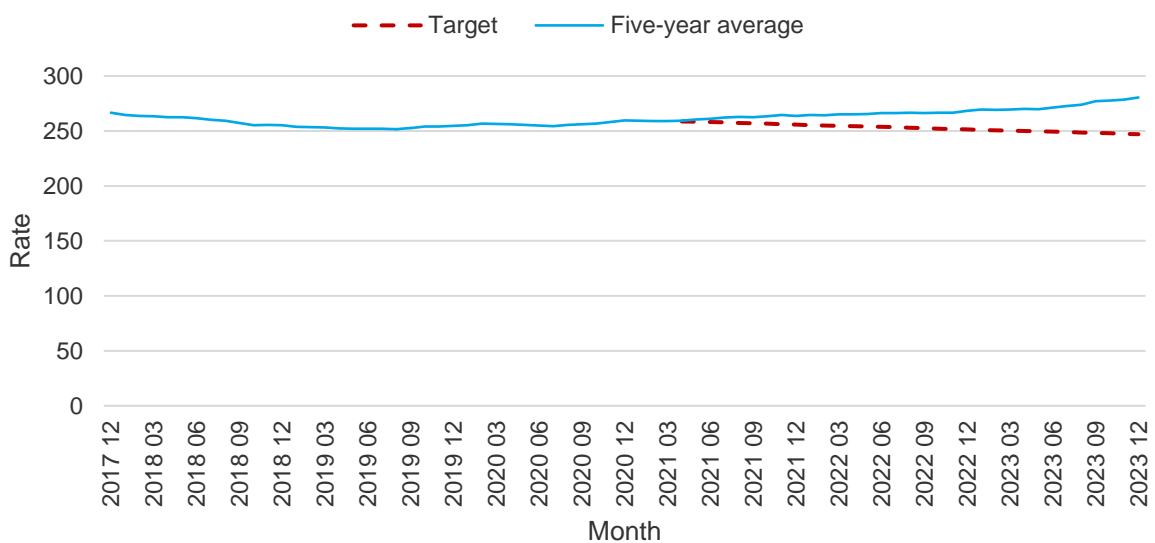
While the duration of these incidents is generally short, there is still a cost implication to the service, particularly where on-call resources are utilised. Additionally, wholetime crews can be drawn away from delivery of essential community safety activities and attendance at genuine emergencies.

The increase is most evident during the past three years; however, it is likely that the COVID-19 pandemic influenced a decrease in the number of incidents during the first lockdown (26th March 2020 to 15th June 2020 - the date at which non-essential shops were allowed to reopen).

Table 17 shows the annual number and rate of false alarm incidents that were attended for years ending December. There has been an 25% increase in incidents between December 2019 and December 2023.

Table 17: Number and rate of false alarms due to apparatus in non-domestic premises by year-ending December
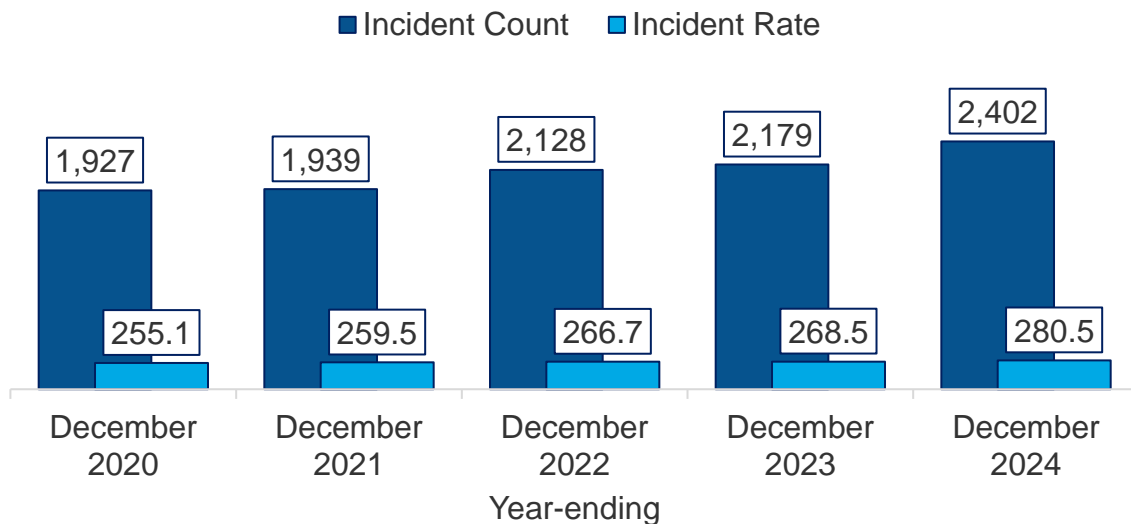
The cause of the increase is being investigated. It has been identified that processes that were in place to engage with premises that had repeat false alarms had not been followed. This was partially due to a breakdown in the provision of data to support the identification of these premises.

While this may have had some impact, it is likely that there are other factors at play. Nationally, when considering all false alarms due to apparatus, the pattern has been similar to that of DSFRS. This supports the notion that failure to follow policy is not the sole cause of the increase.

Actions

Work is being undertaken to review our approach to repeat actuations with a focus on educating responsible parties. There is also potential to charge for attendances at

premises that have repeat false alarms. Data provision to support call reduction work has been improved which will support more effective engagement.

Work to review our attendance policy with a view to extending the non-attendance periods at non-residential premises is continuing.

Table 18: KPI 1.2.5. Rate of false alarms due to apparatus in non-domestic premises, 2023/24 Q3 actions

Action Reference	Action description	Lead officer
2324.Q3.1.2.4.1.A	Complete review of AFA attendance policy	Community Safety Protection Manager
2324.Q3.1.2.4.1.B	Complete review of process for premises having repeat false alarms due to apparatus	Community Safety Protection Manager

Priority two performance

Our operational resources will provide an effective emergency response to meet the local and national risks identified in our Community Risk Management Plan.

Objective one: we will maintain accurate, timely and relevant risk information, enabling our operational crews to understand and be prepared to respond to the demand and risks present in their local communities.

Key:	✓ Succeeding	• Near target	✕ Requires improvement

Table 19: KPIs requiring improvement – priority two, objective one.

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
KPI 2.1.4.2 Percentage of operational risk information in-date for revalidation: level four tactical plans	Dec 2023 (✕)	79.4%	98.0%	-18.6%	Higher is better

Table 20: KPIs near target – priority two, objective one.

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
KPI 2.1.4.1 Percentage of operational risk information in-date for revalidation: level three SSRI	Dec 2023 (•)	91.4%	94.0%	-2.6%	Higher is better

Table 21: KPIs succeeding – priority two, objective one.

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
KPI 2.1.1.1 Number of local exercises completed	YTD (✓)	95	36	163.9%	Higher is better
KPI 2.1.1.2 Number of cross-border exercises completed	YTD (✓)	21	12	75.0%	Higher is better
KPI 2.1.1.3 Number of national exercises completed	YTD (✓)	12	1	1100.0%	Higher is better

Exception report: KPI 2.1.4.2 Percentage of operational risk information in-date for revalidation: level four tactical plans

This KPI reports on the percentage of premises with a level 4 tactical plan that are in date for revalidation.

A site or premises that is classified as level 4 requires the completion of a Tactical Plan. This may be in addition to an SSRI, but an SSRI is not a pre-requisite for the production of a Tactical Plan. A Tactical Plan is a detailed document with information relevant to Level 2 and 3 Incident Commanders about the response to an incident at a specific site should it be likely to be complex or protracted.

Analysis

The KPI is in exception due to the percentage of sites that are in date for revalidation being more than 10% below target. As at 31st December 2023, seven of 34 level four risk sites were overdue revalidation.

Table 22: KPI 2.1.4.2 Percentage of operational risk information in-date for revalidation: level four tactical plans, 2023/24 Q3 performance

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
KPI 2.1.4.2 Percentage of operational risk information in-date for revalidation: level four tactical plans	Dec 2023 (✗)	79.4%	98.0%	-18.6%	Higher is better

A plan is in place to ensure the overdue sites are revalidated.

As at the 15 January 2024, the number of sites overdue revalidation had reduced to four with KPI performance standing at 88.2%.

Of the four sites that remain overdue, it is anticipated that two will be in date by 19 January 2024 and the other two will be in date by the 26 January 2024.

Actions

No further action required at this time.

Objective two: We will monitor changes in risk to ensure that our resources are most available in the locations necessary to mitigate them.

Key:	✓ Succeeding	• Near target	✗ Requires improvement

Table 23: KPIs requiring improvement – priority two, objective two.

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
No KPIs currently require improvement.					

Table 24: KPIs near target – priority two, objective two.

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
KPI 2.2.3.1 Percentage of dwelling fires attended within 10 minutes of emergency call answer	YTD (•)	67.3%	75.0%	-7.7%	Higher is better
KPI 2.2.3.2 Percentage of RTCs attended within 15 minutes of emergency call answer	YTD (•)	73.8%	75.0%	-1.2%	Higher is better

Table 25: KPIs succeeding – priority two, objective two.

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
No KPIs currently succeeding					

Objective four: we will support the effective delivery of our frontline services by seeking improvements to our operational resourcing, mobilising and communications functions.

Key:	✓ Succeeding	• Near target	✗ Requires improvement

Table 26: KPIs requiring improvement – priority two, objective four.

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
No KPIs currently require improvement.					

Table 27: KPIs near target – priority two, objective four.

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
KPI 2.4.1.1 Risk prioritised pump availability as a percentage of possible hours	YTD (•)	97.4%	98.0%	-0.6%	Higher is better
KPI 2.4.1.2 Standard pump availability as a percentage of possible hours	YTD (•)	77.8%	85.0%	-7.2%	Higher is better
KPI 2.4.3.1 Percentage of calls handled within target time	YTD (•)	87.0%	90.0%	-3.0%	Higher is better
KPI 2.4.3.3 Average turnout time to emergency incidents: on-call crews	YTD (•)	316	300	5.3%	Lower is better

Table 28: KPIs near target – priority two, objective four.

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
KPI 2.4.3.2 Average turnout time to emergency incidents: wholetime crews	YTD (✓)	84	90	-6.7%	Lower is better

Objective eight: we will be prepared to respond to major incidents and support partner agencies.

Table 29: KPIs requiring improvement – priority two, objective eight.

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
No KPIs currently require improvement.					

Table 30: KPIs near target – priority two, objective eight.

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
No KPIs currently near target.					

Table 31: KPIs succeeding – priority two, objective eight.

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
KPI 2.8.1.1 Availability of national resilience assets	Dec 2023 (✔)	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	Higher is better
KPI 2.8.1.2 National resilience competencies in-date	Dec 2023 (✔)	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	Higher is better

Priority three performance

Our Service is recognised as a great place to work. Our staff feel valued, supported, safe and well trained to deliver a high performing fire and rescue service.

Objective one: we will Ensure that the workforce is highly trained and has the capability and capacity to deliver services professionally, safely and effectively.

Key:	✓ Succeeding	• Near target	✗ Requires improvement

Table 32: KPIs requiring improvement – priority three, objective one.

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
KPI 3.1.3. Number of safety events	Quarter (✗)	60	51	17.6%	Lower is better
KPI 3.1.7. Average number of persons absent due to stress related illness per month	Quarter (✗)	48	36	33.3%	Lower is better

Table 33: KPIs near target – priority three, objective one.

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
KPI 3.1.1.4. Percentage of operational personnel competent in core skill: working at height and confined spaces (SHACS)	Dec '23 (•)	92.9%	95.0%	-2.1%	Higher is better
KPI 3.1.3.1. Number of safety events involving vehicles	Quarter (•)	34	34	0.0%	Lower is better
KPI 3.1.4. Number of persons injured in safety events	Quarter (•)	13	12	8.3%	Lower is better
KPI 3.1.6. Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per Full Time Equivalent (FTE)	YTD (•)	8.04	7.74	3.9%	Lower is better

Table 34: KPIs succeeding – priority three, objective one.

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
KPI 3.1.1. Number of operational core skills with at least 90% of required personnel competent	Dec '23 (✓)	7	7	0%	Higher is better
KPI 3.1.1.1. Percentage of operational personnel competent in core skill: breathing apparatus	Dec '23 (✓)	99.0%	95.0%	4.0%	Higher is better
KPI 3.1.1.2. Percentage of operational personnel competent in core skill: incident Command	Dec '23 (✓)	98.9%	95.0%	3.9%	Higher is better
KPI 3.1.1.3. Percentage of operational personnel competent in core skill: water rescue	Dec '23 (✓)	96.0%	95.0%	1.0%	Higher is better
KPI 3.1.1.5. Percentage of operational personnel competent in core skill: maritime level 2	Dec '23 (✓)	97.1%	95.0%	2.1%	Higher is better
KPI 3.1.1.6. Percentage of operational personnel competent in core skill: casualty care	Dec '23 (✓)	97.7%	95.0%	2.7%	Higher is better
KPI 3.1.1.7. Percentage of operational personnel competent in core skill: response driving	Dec '23 (✓)	98.8%	95.0%	3.8%	Higher is better
KPI 3.1.2.1. Percentage of operational personnel meeting the required fitness standards	Dec '23 (✓)	98.2%	95.0%	3.2%	Higher is better

Exception report: KPI 3.1.3. number of safety events

This KPI monitors the total number of health and safety events reported (excluding near misses).

Enabling our personnel to operate in a safe and effective manner is essential. Lower numbers of safety events indicate that the policies and procedures that we have in place are effective and followed.

Analysis

This KPI is in exception due to performance for the reporting quarter (60 events) being more than 10% above previous quarter performance (51 events).

Table 35: KPI 3.1.3. number of safety events, 2023/24 Q3 performance

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
KPI 3.1.3. Number of safety events	Quarter (✗)	60	51	17.6%	Lower is better

While the KPI is in exception due to performance against previous quarter, it should be noted that the number of safety events is below that of the average for the previous eight quarters (65 safety events) and there continues to be a slight downward trend over that period.

Table 36: KPI 3.1.3. number of safety events with linear trend
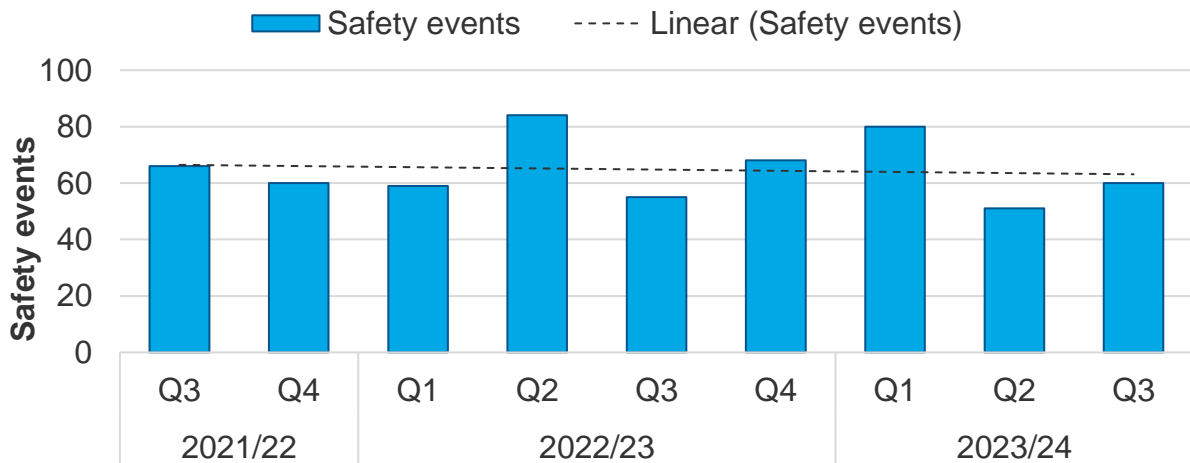
The number of safety events can be influenced by a range of factors. Increases in operational incidents, training or delivery of prevention or protection activity, for example, may increase the chance of a safety event occurring, as can extreme weather conditions.

The most common outcome type for safety events is vehicle damage[1]. Thirty-four of the 60 safety events during the reporting quarter (56.7%) involved vehicles[2] a rate of one event per 242 mobilisations.

Vehicle related accidents most commonly occur during non-blue light activity. Most accidents happen during low-speed manoeuvring, for example, clipping hedges and banks on tight lanes, another vehicle in congested streets or when manoeuvring at an incident.

Actions

The Organisational Road Risk group meets monthly. The group is working to improve safety by increasing awareness of the areas where vehicle accidents are occurring and providing support, advice and guidance to staff. Guidance for driving in heavy rain and flooding, and winter driving advice have been placed on SharePoint as part of this works.

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[1] Based on the past eight reporting quarters.
[2] This includes safety events which had multiple outcomes e.g., vehicle damage and injury to person(s) etc.

Exception report: KPI 3.1.7. Average number of persons absent due to stress related illness per month

This KPI monitors the average number of personnel absent from work due to stress related illness per month during the reporting quarter.

Mental health related illness is responsible for the greatest number of working days lost due to sickness absence. Stress accounts for almost half of mental health absence, monitoring the number of people affected enables us to track the scale of the issue and to ensure that we are providing appropriate, accessible support to our people.
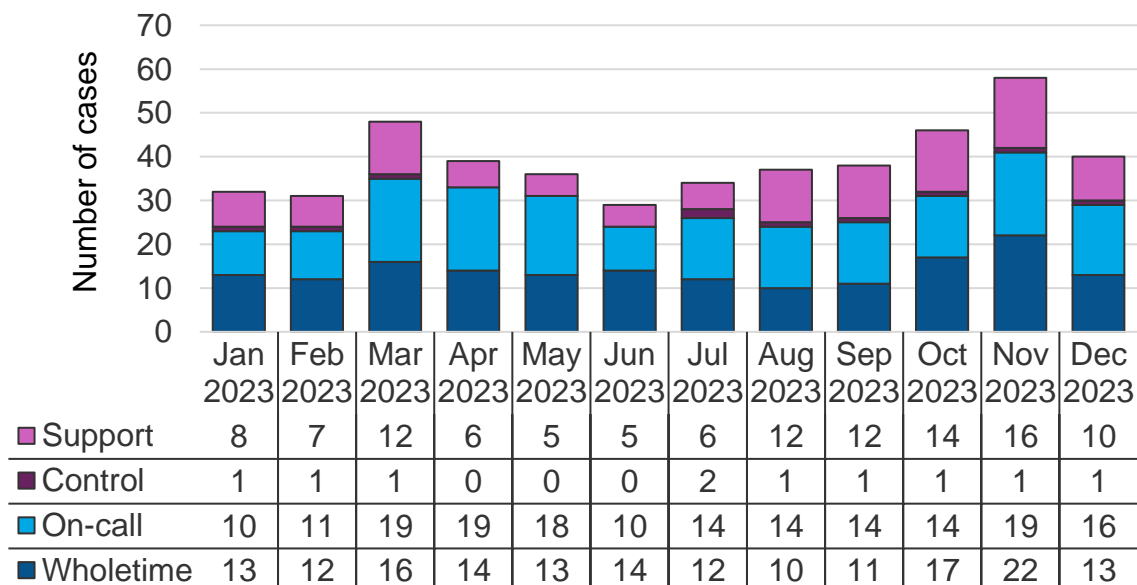
Analysis

This KPI is in exception due to performance for the reporting quarter (48 people) being more than 10% above previous quarter performance (36 people).

Table 37: KPI 3.1.7. Average number of persons absent due to stress related illness per month*, 2023/24 Q3 performance*

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
KPI 3.1.7. Average number of persons absent due to stress related illness per month	Quarter (✗)	48	36	33.3%	Lower is better

Table 38 shows the number of people that have been absent due to stress by month for the past 12-month period. There was a notable increase in cases during the latter part of the year, peaking in November with 58 periods of absence.

Table 38: KPI 3.1.7. Number of persons absent due to stress related illness by month

	Jan 2023	Feb 2023	Mar 2023	Apr 2023	May 2023	Jun 2023	Jul 2023	Aug 2023	Sep 2023	Oct 2023	Nov 2023	Dec 2023
■ Support	8	7	12	6	5	5	6	12	12	14	16	10
■ Control	1	1	1	0	0	0	2	1	1	1	1	1
■ On-call	10	11	19	19	18	10	14	14	14	14	19	16
■ Wholetime	13	12	16	14	13	14	12	10	11	17	22	13

When reviewing the number of cases by role type, it is important to also consider the number of total number of people within each role. This provides additional context around whether there are specific pressures that may be affecting different staff groups.

Table 39 shows the proportion of staff absent as a percentage of staff in each role type. When considered alongside table 39, it indicates that while a greater number of wholetime personnel were absent due to stress during the October, November and December, proportionally there was a greater rate of absences in professional and technical services (support) roles.

Table 39: proportion people absent due to stress related illness as a percentage of staff in role type
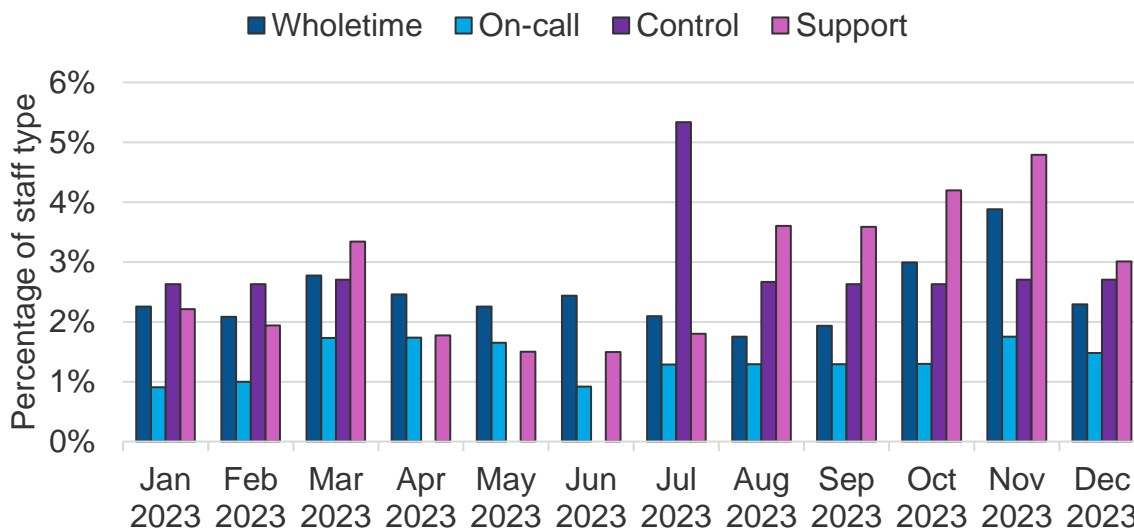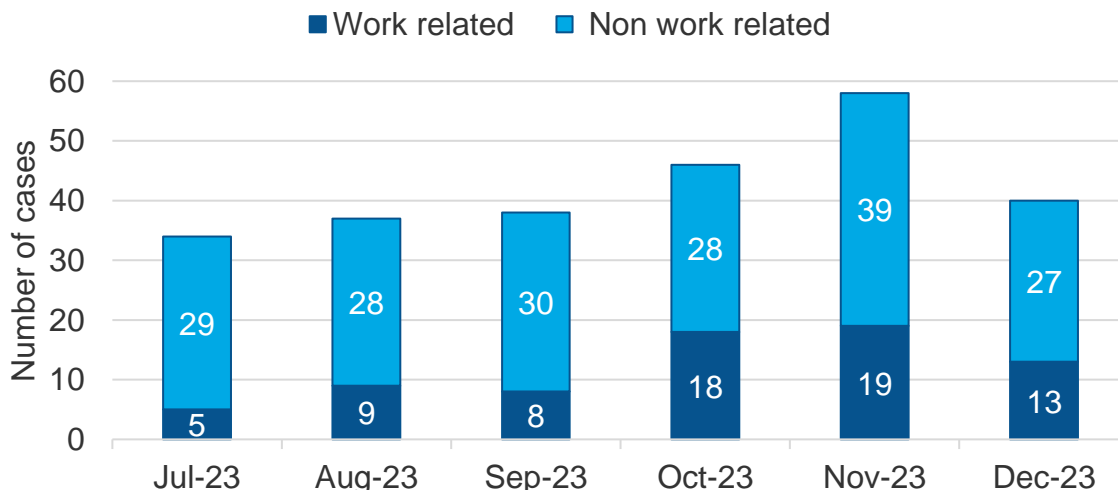

Table 40 shows the number of employees with stress related absence reported over the last six months.

Table 40 KPI 3.1.7. number of employees with stress related absence by cause

While the Service has seen an increasing number of people absent due to stress related illness during 2023, the proportion of cases reported as being work-related has decreased. During January 2023 there were a total of 32 employees with stress related absences, with a 50:50 split between work related and non-work-related issues. In December 2023 there were 40 absences, but only a third were reported as work related.

Actions

The Service is exploring additional wellbeing provisions to complement its existing package.

Table 41: KPI 3.1.7. Average number of persons absent due to stress related illness per month*, 2023/24 Q3 actions*

Action Reference	Action description	Lead officer
2324.Q3. 3.1.7.A	**Financial and wellbeing guidance and support provision** This being developed with the Money and Pension Service (MAPS) which are an arm's-length body, sponsored by the Department for Work and Pensions. On 13 March 2024, we have a Financial Wellbeing Lunch and Learn (hosted by Bippit, an external financial support organisation).	Head of People Services

Objective two: we will increase the diversity of the workforce to better reflect the communities we serve, promoting inclusion and developing strong and effective leaders who ensure that we have a fair place to work where our organisational values are a lived experience.

Key:	✓ Succeeding	• Near target	✗ Requires improvement

Table 42: KPIs requiring improvement – priority three, objective two.

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
No KPIs currently require improvement.					

Table 43: KPIs near target – priority three, objective two.

KPI		Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
KPI 3.2.1.2. Proportion of female firefighters as a percentage of total firefighters: on-call	Mar '23 (•)	6.0%	6.2%	-0.2%	Higher is better
KPI 3.2.3.1. Proportion of females in senior roles: wholetime	Mar '23 (•)	11.1%	14.3%	-3.2%	Higher is better
KPI 3.2.4.2. Proportion of personnel from an ethnic minority background in senior roles: wholetime	Mar '23 (•)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	Higher is better
KPI 3.2.4.3. Proportion of personnel from an ethnic minority background in senior roles: professional and technical services	Mar '23 (•)	9.1%	11.1%	-2.0%	Higher is better
KPI 3.2.5.1. Proportion of personnel identifying as LGBTQIA+ in senior roles: wholetime	Mar '23 (•)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	Higher is better

KPI		Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
KPI 3.2.5.2. Proportion of personnel identifying as LGBTQIA+ in senior roles: professional and technical services	Mar '23 (•)	9.1%	11.0%	-1.9%	Higher is better

Table 44: KPIs succeeding – priority three, objective two.

KPI		Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
KPI 3.2.1.1 Proportion of female firefighters as a percentage of total firefighters: wholetime	Mar '23 (✓)	6.9%	6.3%	0.6%	Higher is better
KPI 3.2.2.1. Proportion of firefighters from an ethnic minority background: wholetime	Mar '23 (✓)	3.7%	2.8%	0.9%	Higher is better
KPI 3.2.2.2. Proportion of firefighters from an ethnic minority background: on-call	Mar '23 (✓)	2.8%	2.4%	0.4%	Higher is better
KPI 3.2.3.2. Proportion of females in senior roles: professional and technical services	Mar '23 (✓)	36.4%	30.8%	5.6%	Higher is better

Objective three: we will recognise and maximise the value of all employees, particularly the commitment of on-call firefighters, improving recruitment and retention.

Table 45: Monitoring only – targets to be set.

KPI		Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
KPI 3.3.1.1. Attrition rate (12 month): wholetime	Dec '23 (Monitor)	9.0%	7.0%	2.0%	NA
KPI 3.3.1.2. Attrition rate (12 month): on-call	Dec '23 (Monitor)	12.0%	11.0%	1.0%	NA
KPI 3.3.1.3. Attrition rate (12 month): professional and technical services	Dec '23 (Monitor)	17.0%	16.0%	1.0%	NA

Priority four performance

	We are open and accountable and use our resources efficiently to deliver a high performing, sustainable service that demonstrates public value.

Key:	✓ Succeeding	• Near target	✗ Requires improvement

Table 46: KPIs requiring improvement – priority three, objective one.

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
No KPIs currently require improvement					

Table 47: KPIs near target – priority three, objective one.

KPI	Period	Actual	Target	% Diff.	Aim
No KPIs currently near target					

Table 48: KPIs succeeding – priority three, objective one.

KPI		Actual	Target	Diff.	Aim
Forecast outturn spending against agreed revenue budget	Quarter (✓)	£83.548 million	£85.413 million	-1.90%	Lower is better
Forecast outturn general reserve balance as % of total revenue budget (minimum)	Quarter (✓)	5.01%	5.00%	1 bp	Higher is better
Forecast outturn spending against agreed capital budget	Quarter (✓)	£6.423 million	£13.086 million	-50.9%	Lower is better
Forecast outturn external borrowing within Prudential Indicator limit	Quarter (✓)	£24.426 million	£25.155 million	-2.90%	Lower is better
Forecast outturn debt ratio (debt charges over total revenue budget)	Quarter (✓)	2.91%	5.00%	-209 bp	Lower is better
Progress against Medium Term Financial Plan	Dec '23 (✓)	On track	On track	NA	On track

Appendix A: update on actions arising from performance exceptions

Action reference / KPI name	Action description
2324.Q3.1.2.4.1.A KPI 1.2.4.1. False alarms due to apparatus	**Action:** Complete review of AFA attendance policy. **Update:** 04/03/2024 – review in progress. **Lead:** Head of Community Safety
2324.Q3.1.2.4.1.B KPI 1.2.4.1. False alarms due to apparatus	**Action:** Complete review of process for premises having repeat false alarms due to apparatus. **Update:** 04/03/2024 – review in progress. **Lead:** Head of Community Safety
2324.Q3.1.1.2.A KPI 1.1.2. number of fire related deaths in dwellings	**Action:** Conduct fatal fire review. **Update:** 04/03/2024 – review completed. No further actions identified. **Lead:** Head of Community Safety
2324.Q3.1.1.9.A KPI 1.1.9. number of fire related deaths in vehicles and other locations	**Action:** Conduct fatal fire review. **Update:** 04/03/2024 – review completed. No further actions identified. **Lead:** Head of Community Safety
2324.Q3. 3.1.7.A KPI 3.1.7. Average number of persons absent due to stress related illness per month	**Action:** Financial and wellbeing guidance and support provision **Update:** 04/03/2024 – in progress. This is being developed with the Money and Pension Service (MAPS) which are an arm's-length body, sponsored by the Department for Work and Pensions. **Lead:** Head of Community Safety

Appendix B: glossary

Most terms and definitions can be found within the Home Office Fire Statistics Definitions document: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-statistics-guidance/fire-statistics-definitions

Some other terms are listed below:

Operational risk information: this information is focused on location specific risks posed to firefighters.

Site specific risk information (SSRI): this information is captured for locations that are particularly complex and pose greater levels of risk to our fire-fighters. Visits are made to these locations, hazards identified and plans made on how to respond if an incident occurs.

Risk prioritised pump: there are 33 priority fire engines in areas that present higher levels risk or demand which are essential to enabling us to effectively manage risk levels. There is an expectation that each of these appliances will be available to respond a minimum of 98% of the time.

Standard pump: there are 89 fire engines located in areas of lower risk or lesser demand, but which are still key to ensuring that we are keeping our communities safe. These are all crewed by on-call or volunteer firefighters and there is an expectation that each fire engine will be available at least 85% of the time.

Home fire safety visits: these are visits that are carried out at people's homes by our home safety technicians and wholetime firefighters.

Fire safety checks: FSCs are delivered by our operational crews and provide a basic assessment of fire safety standards within businesses. Where potential issues are identified premises will be referred for a fire safety audit that is conducted by one of our professional fire safety officers.

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REPORT REFERENCE NO.	DSFRA/24/16
MEETING	DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
DATE OF MEETING	25 MARCH 2024
SUBJECT OF REPORT	HIS MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY & FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES (HMICFRS) AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN UPDATE
LEAD OFFICER	Chief Fire Officer
RECOMMENDATIONS	*That the report be noted.*
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	On Wednesday 27th July 2022, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary & Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) published the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service (DSFRS) 2022 inspection report. The inspection report identified one Cause of Concern and 14 Areas for Improvement (AFIs). Progress against these is monitored by the relevant committee, with a full update against the action plan presented to the Fire and Rescue Authority twice per year.

The paper appended to this report outlines the progress that has been made against the HMICFRS Areas for Improvement action plan since the last update to the Fire and Rescue Authority in September 2023. The key highlights are that:

- All actions under the Cause of Concern have now been marked as completed. The recommendation for closure has been approved by HMICFRS Governance Board (13/03/2024) and will now be presented to the Executive Board for review and approval (19/03/2024).

- Three Areas for Improvement have been marked as 'closed'.

- Seven Areas for Improvement are currently recorded as 'In Progress – Off Track'. This is due to the following factors:

    - Although evaluation is completed for prevention processes, and decisions are informed by risk data, there is still a requirement to evaluate the effectiveness of prevention activities on delivery of improved community outcomes. (HMI-1.2-202203: Prevention Activity).

	- A target was set for 95% of the workforce to have completed the new safeguarding training. As of today (12/03/2024) completion is at 94%. (HMI-1.2-202204: Safeguarding Training).
	- The Estates Strategy is currently in the final stages of consultation, after which it will be published (expected by 22/03/2024). (HMI-2.2-202206b).
	- One area for improvement is dependent upon data from the new training recording system which is currently under development. The target completion date will be reviewed following implementation of the new system. (HMI-2.2-202207b: Response – Technology and Future Innovation).
	- The People Services team are currently working on a revised recruitment policy, to include temporary promotion and secondary contracts. Resourcing pressures are leading to delays for actions under three areas for improvement (HMI-3.1-202208: Secondary Contracts, HMI-3.2-202210: Temporary Promotions, HMI-3.4-202213: Selection and Promotions Process).
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	Considered within the Action Plan where appropriate.
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	Considered within the Action Plan where appropriate.
APPENDICES	None.
BACKGROUND PAPERS	None

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. On Wednesday 27th July 2022 HMICFRS published the DSFRS 2022 inspection report. The inspection report identified one Cause of Concern and 14 Areas for Improvement (AFIs).

1.2. This report provides an update on the Cause of Concern and Areas For Improvement action plan that has been produced following the inspection, which concluded in October 2021.

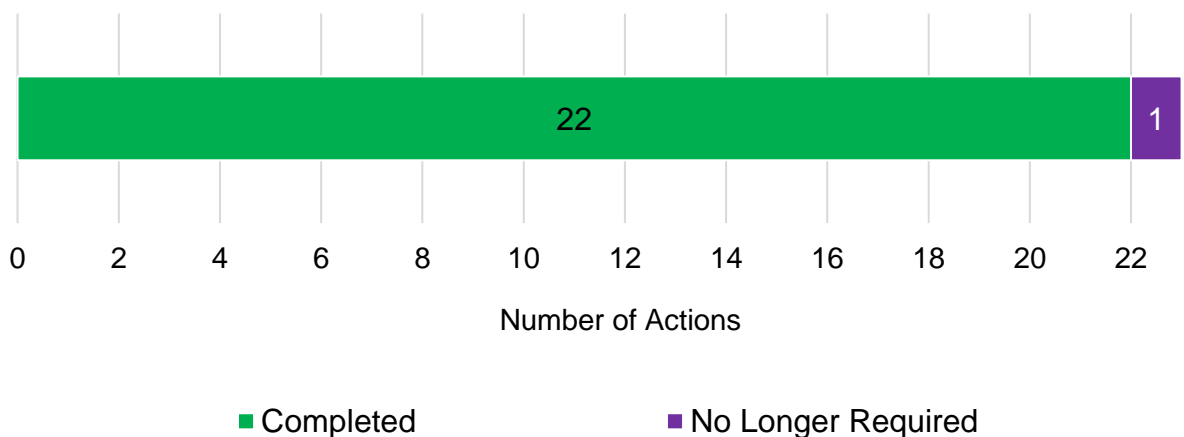## 2. CAUSE OF CONCERN ACTION COMPLETION STATUS

2.1 The Cause of Concern is as follows:

"The service has shown a clear intent from the executive board to improve the culture of the service. However, more needs to be done throughout the organisation. We have found evidence of poor behaviours that are not in line with service values. Some staff didn't have the confidence to report these issues. By 31st August 2022, the service should develop an action plan to:

- Make sure that its values and behaviours are understood and demonstrated at all levels of the organisation.

- Make sure that staff are trained and supported to identify and challenge inappropriate behaviour when identified and that they have clear mechanisms in place to raise their concerns."

2.2 23 actions have been established to address the Cause of Concern. Figure 1 below outlines the completion status of these actions.

Figure 1: Cause of Concern Action Status - March 2024

2.3   Table 1 below outlines the completion status of these actions in table view.

Table 1: Summary of progress against the individual actions						
Cause of Concern – Values and Behaviours						
Not started (on track)	Not started (off track)	In progress (on track)	In progress (off track)	Completed	Closed	No Longer Required
0	0	0	0	22	0	1

2.4   All actions under the cause of concern have now been marked as completed. A recommendation for closure report has been approved by HMICFRS Governance Board (13/03/2024) and will now be presented to the Executive Board for review and approval (19/03/2024).

2.5   The Cause of Concern will now be transitioned into Service business as usual. Progress on improving organisational culture will continue to be an area of focus.

3.   AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN COMPLETION STATUS

3.1.   Table 2 below lists the Areas For Improvement and their individual implementation status.
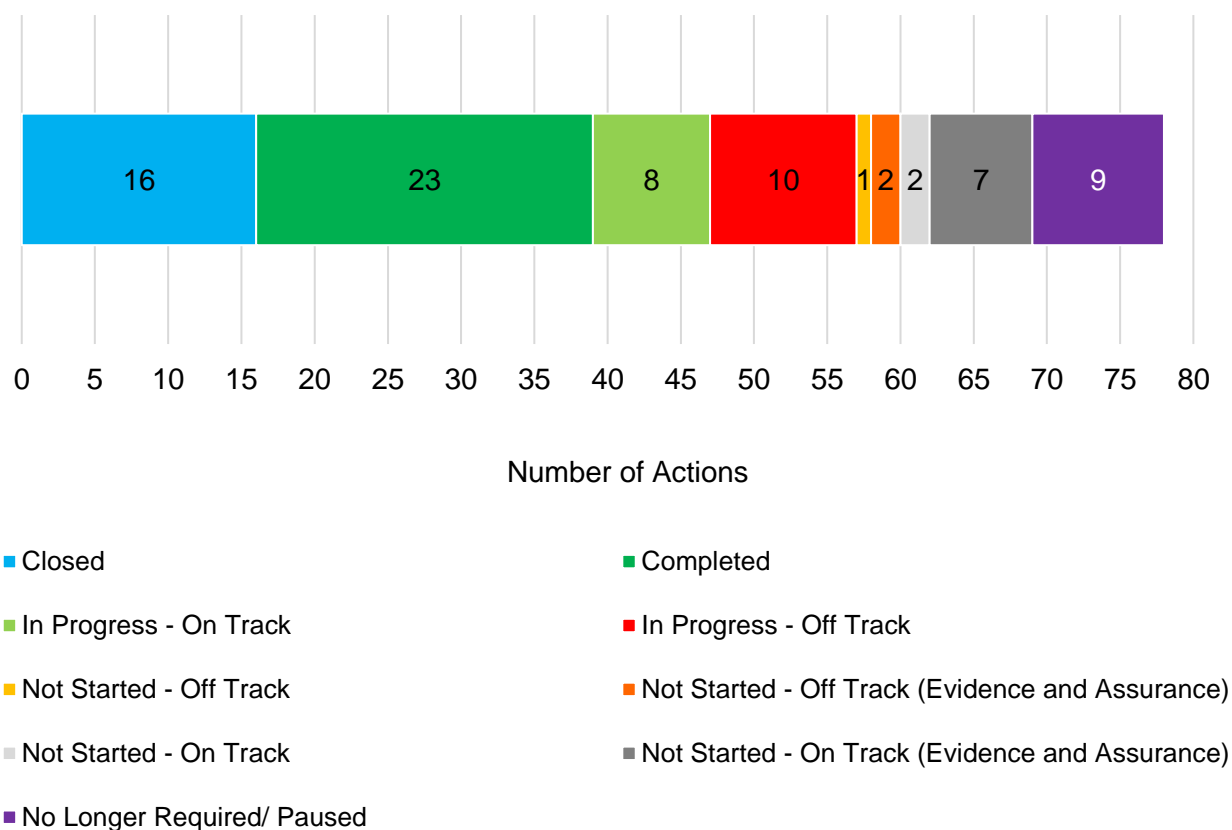
Table 2:

Reference	Description	Target Completion	Status
HMI-1.1-202202	IRMP Mitigating Risk	31/01/2024	Closed
HMI-1.2-202203	Prevention Activity	29/02/2024	In Progress – Off Track
HMI-1.2-202204	Safeguarding Training	30/06/2024	In Progress – Off Track
HMI-1.3-202205	QA Audits and FSCs	31/08/2024	In Progress – On Track
HMI-2.2-202206a	Fleet Strategy	31/01/2024	Closed
HMI-2.2-202206b	Estates Strategy	31/01/2024	In Progress – Off Track
HMI-2.2-202207a	Prevention and Protection - Technology and Innovation	30/04/2025	In Progress – On Track
HMI-2.2-202207b	Response - Technology and Innovation	31/07/2024	In Progress – Off Track
HMI-3.1-202208	Secondary Contracts	31/03/2024	In Progress – Off Track

Reference	Description	Target Completion	Status
HMI-3.2-202209	Workforce Planning	30/09/2024	In Progress – On Track
HMI-3.2-202210	Temporary Promotions	31/12/2023	In Progress – Off Track
HMI-3.3-202211	Grievance Procedures	31/01/2024	Closed
HMI-3.3-202212	Positive Action	30/09/2023	Closed
HMI-3.4-202213	Selection and Promotions Process	31/01/2025	In Progress – Off Track
HMI-3.4-202214	PDR Process	30/06/2024	In Progress – On Track
HMI-3.4-202215	High-Potential Staff	N/A	Paused

3.2. Figure 2 below outlines the completion status of all actions designed to address the Areas for Improvement outlined above.

Figure 2: Areas for Improvement Action Status - March 2024

Number of Actions

■ Closed   ■ Completed

■ In Progress - On Track   ■ In Progress - Off Track

■ Not Started - Off Track   ■ Not Started - Off Track (Evidence and Assurance)

■ Not Started - On Track   ■ Not Started - On Track (Evidence and Assurance)

■ No Longer Required/ Paused

3.3.   Table 3 below outlines the completion status of these actions in table view.

Table 3: Summary of progress against the individual actions						
Areas for Improvement						
Not started (on track)	Not started (off track)	In progress (on track)	In progress (off track)	Completed	Closed	Paused/ No Longer Required
9 *	3 **	8	10	23	16	9

∗   Please note that 7 of the actions marked as 'Not Started – <u>On Track</u>' are the evidence and
          assurance required once all other actions have been completed.
**   Please note that 2 of the actions marked as 'Not Started – <u>Off Track</u>' are the evidence and
          assurance required once all other actions have been completed.

4.   <u>AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT WHICH ARE 'OFF-TRACK'</u>

4.1.   The tables below outline the Areas for Improvement which are currently marked
           as 'In Progress – Off Track' and the factors impacting delivery.

Improvement Area	Status
HMI-1.2-202203 – Prevention Activity	In Progress – Off Track
Factors impacting delivery	
Although evaluation is completed for prevention processes, and decisions are informed by risk data, there is still a requirement to evaluate the effectiveness of prevention activities on delivery of improved community outcomes.	

Improvement Area	Status
HMI-1.2-202204 – Safeguarding Training	In Progress – Off Track
Factors impacting delivery	
A target was set for 95% of all staff to have completed the training by the deadline (16/02). This accounts for individuals that will be unable to take the training due to casual contracts or being on long term sick leave. As of today (13/03/2024) 94% of individuals have undertaken the training.	

Improvement Area	Status
HMI-2.2-202206b – Estates Strategy	In Progress – Off Track
Factors impacting delivery	
The Estates Strategy is currently in the final stages of consultation, after which it will be published (expected by 22/03/2024).	

Improvement Area	Status
HMI-2.2-202207b – Response – Technology and Innovation	In Progress – Off Track
Factors impacting delivery	
This area for improvement is dependent upon data from the new training recording system which is currently under development. The data will inform a risk-based approach to training utilising technology to realise efficiencies. The target completion date will be reviewed following implementation of the new system.	

Improvement Area	Status
HMI-3.1-202208 – Secondary Contracts	In Progress – Off Track
HMI-3.2-202210 – Temporary Promotions	In Progress – Off Track
HMI-3.4-202213 – Selection and Promotions Process	In Progress – Off Track
Factors impacting delivery	
The People Services team are currently working on a revised recruitment policy, to include temporary promotion and secondary contracts. These areas for improvement will remain as 'In Progress – Off Track' until the new policy and process have been implemented. Resourcing pressures are leading to delays for actions under these areas for improvement.	

GAVIN ELLIS
Chief Fire Officer

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REPORT REFERENCE NO.	DSFRA/24/17
MEETING	**DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**
DATE OF MEETING	**25 MARCH 2024**
SUBJECT OF REPORT	**HIS MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY & FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES (HMICFRS) CULTURE RECOMMENDATIONS UPDATE**
LEAD OFFICER	**Chief Fire Officer**
RECOMMENDATIONS	*That the report be noted.*
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	On Friday 31 March 2023, HMICFRS published a report into the values and culture in fire and rescue services. The report contains 35 recommendations, 1 specific for the police, 14 which require action at a national level and 20 which are specific for fire and rescue services.
	This report outlines the progress that has been made against these recommendations since the last update to the Fire and Rescue Authority in September 2023.
	HMICFRS have requested services to provide a final update on the status and progress against each of the culture recommendations by Tuesday 19/03/2024. The following recommendations will remain marked as 'In Progress':
	• Recommendation 32: Diversity in succession planning
	• Recommendation 09: Background checks
	• Recommendation 12: Staff disclosure, complaint and grievance handling standard
	• Recommendation 14: Misconduct allegations standard
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	Considered within the Action Plan where appropriate.
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	Considered within the Action Plan where appropriate.
APPENDICES	None.
BACKGROUND PAPERS	HMICFRS Report – Values and Culture in Fire and Rescue Services

1.   **INTRODUCTION**

1.1.   On Friday 31 March 2023, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary & Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) published a report into the values and culture in fire and rescue services. The report contains 35 recommendations, 1 specific for the police, 14 which require action at a national level and 20 which are specific for fire and rescue services.

1.2.   This report provides an update on the action plan to address these recommendations.

2.   **CULTURE RECOMMENDATIONS COMPLETION STATUS**

2.1.   An update has been provided to HMICFRS, via their online document sharing platform, detailing the actions the Service has taken against each of the 20 recommendations for the fire and rescue sector.

2.2.   Figure 1 overleaf outlines current progress against addressing these recommendations (as at 13/09/2023), as reported to HMICFRS, with the colour coding as follows:

-       Blue (B): Closed (evidence has been reviewed by the HMICFRS Governance Board and the Executive Board has approved the closure)

-       Green (G): Completed (awaiting approval from the Executive Board for closure)

-       Amber (A): In Progress (recommendation deadline not met)

Figure 1: HMICFRS Culture Recommendations Completion Status

Recommendation 1	Recommendation 3	Recommendation 4
Confidential Reporting (B)	Support for individuals raising concerns (B)	Handling of raised concerns (B)

Recommendation 5	Recommendation 9	Recommendation 12
How to raise concerns (staff and public) (B)	Background Checks (A)	Disclosure, complaint and grievance standard (A)

Recommendation 14	Recommendation 17	Recommendation 18
Misconduct allegations standard (A)	Allegations of staff gross misconduct (B)	Support during ongoing investigations (B)

Recommendation 20	Recommendation 21	Recommendation 22
Fire Standards (B)	360 Feedback (ACFO and above) (B)	360 Feedback (all managers) (B)

Recommendation 23	Recommendation 24	Recommendation 26
Feedback from staff (B)	Monitoring and Evaluating Feedback (G)	Management and Leadership Training (B)

Recommendation 27	Recommendation 28	Recommendation 32
Equality Impact Assessments (B)	Equality and Diversity Data (B)	Diversity in succession planning (A)

Recommendation 33	Recommendation 34
Progression of non-operational staff (B)	Core Code of Ethics (B)

3. **CULTURE RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH ARE 'IN PROGRESS' (DEADLINE NOT MET)**

3.1.   Table 1 below outlines the recommendations which are currently marked as 'In Progress' where the recommendation deadline has not been met.

3.2.   HMICFRS has requested that services provide a final update on the status and progress against each of the culture recommendations by Tuesday 19/03/2024. The following recommendations will remain marked as 'In Progress'.

Table 1:

DSFRS Ref.	Description	Deadline	Status
REC32	Diversity in succession planning	01/06/2023	In Progress
REC09	Background checks	01/01/2024	In Progress
REC12	Staff disclosure, complaint and grievance handling standard	01/03/2024	In Progress
REC14	Misconduct allegations standard	01/03/2024	In Progress

GAVIN ELLIS
Chief Fire Officer