



Northamptonshire Commissioner Fire & Rescue Authority Annual Report & Fire & Rescue Statement 2019

1. Introduction & Background

- 1.1 The Fire and Rescue National Framework sets out a requirement for Fire and Rescue Authorities to provide annual assurance on financial, governance and operational matters. In addition, the annual report is required to show due regard to:
- The Fire and Rescue National Framework
 - The Fire and Rescue Plan for the area
 - The Integrated Risk Management Plan for the area
- 1.2 This year's statement comes at the end of a year that has seen a significant change in the governance of the fire and rescue service, from Northamptonshire County Council to Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. In addition, for the first time, the service has been subject to inspection from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services.

2. Performance

- 2.1 The Authority has consulted on a new Fire and Rescue Plan and an Integrated Risk Management Plan. Community outcome measures and operational objectives are included within the plans.

3. Community Outcome Measures:

		2018/19				2017-18 EOY ¹	Compared to previous EOY
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
NI 33 (A)	No. of Deliberate Primary Fires per 10,000 population	1.07	2.33	3.25	3.97	4.56	↓
NI 33 (B)	No. of Deliberate Secondary Fires per 10,000 population	1.79	4.88	6	7.47	7.05	↑
NI 49 (1)	No. of Primary Fires per 100,000 population	35.9	74.1	103.1	129.7	149.8	↓
NI 49 (2)	No. of Fatalities in Primary Fires per 100,000 population	0	0.13	0.27	0.27	0.55	↓
NI 49 (3)	No. of Non-fatal Casualties in Primary Fires per 100,000	0.54	0.94	1.75	2.56	3.04	↓
BVPI 143 (i)	The No. of deaths arising from accidental fires in dwellings per 100,000 population	0	0	0	0	0.28	↓
BVPI 143 (ii)	The No. of injuries (excluding precautionary checks), arising from accidental fires in dwellings per 100,000 population	0.4	0.54	1.35	1.89	1.94	↓
BVPI 142 (iii)	Accidental fires in Dwellings per 10,000 dwellings	2.6	4.9	7.7	10	12.6	↓
BVPI 207	Non-Domestic Fires per 1000 Non-Domestic	1.67	3.3	4.58	5.65	7.25	↓
LPI 8ai	LPI 8ai Sickness - Wholetime (days/shift lost per head)	1.75	3.83	6.07	8.04	6.09	↑
BV 12 (ii)	Sickness Absence (All staff, excluding RDS)	1.89	3.76	6.12	8.68	6.95	↑

¹ EOY – End of Year

		2018/19				2017-18 EOY	Compared to previous EOY
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
	Home Fire Safety Checks and refits completed	1162	2054	2922	3555	2538	↑
LPI 77	Total number of Protective Full Risk Inspections (FI) and Re-Inspections (RI) Completed	199	364	597	764	492	↑
	Average of Full Response Time*	10:14.0	10:37.6	10:26.6	10:29.5	10:47.9	↓
	Average of Call Handling Time*	1:41.6	1:43.42	1:50.74	1:55.26	1:35.54	↑

4. Financial Assurance

- 4.1 The Authority is responsible for ensuring that our Services business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for. The Authority is required to ensure that finances are used to ensure a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 4.2 The Authority has produced an annual Statement of Accounts for the 3 month period 1 January to 31 March 2019, ensuring compliance with Codes of Practice issued by CIPFA. The Statement of Accounts includes within it an Annual Governance Statement which assesses controls within the Authority, making recommendations for changes in the following year.
- 4.3 In accordance with the Statutory Instrument, NCFRA are required to produce a Statement of Accounts as a new corporation sole for the 3 month period 1 January to 31 March 2018/19.
- 4.4 The pre-audit Statement of Accounts for the 3 month period were published by the statutory deadline of the 31 May 2019 and a workshop took place with auditors, officers and Joint Independent Audit Committee members scrutinising the Statements in June 2019.
- 4.5 The Statement of Accounts will be subject to External Audit and the accounts, alongside the audit report to those charged with governance (the ISA260) will be will be considered at a future Joint Independent Audit Committee prior to sign off.
- 4.6 The first NCFRA Statement of Accounts will be externally audited by Ernst and Young LLP (EY) and the audit will give both an audit opinion and a value for money opinion on the Accounts. The date for the external audit to be undertaken and production of the audit opinion is currently anticipated in September 2019, however, this may be subject to change due to external audit availability.
- 4.7 As the governance transfer took place mid year, for 2018/19, there are only one set of accounts for a 3 month period (1 January to 31 March 2019) for Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Authority. In line with previous years as a County Fire Service, Northamptonshire Fire is included for 9 months within the Northamptonshire County Council Statement of Accounts for 2018/19.
- 4.8 The Northamptonshire Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority Draft (pre-audit) Statement of Accounts for the period 1 January to 31 March 2019 are available on the PFCC website and can be accessed from the following link:

<http://www.northantspfcc.org.uk/the-northamptonshire-commissioner-fire-rescue-authority-audit-of-accounts-notice-of-public-rights/>

- 4.9 For the period 1 April to 31 December 2018, financial assurance and controls and the Annual Governance Statement are included within the Northamptonshire County Council governance and accounting requirements.

5. Governance Assurance

- 5.1 The governance of Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service has changed during 2018/19. A Statutory Instrument, (The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire (Fire and Rescue Authority) Order 2018) was laid in Parliament in October 2018 to move the Fire Authority for Northamptonshire from Northamptonshire County Council to Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. This came into effect from 1st January 2019.

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

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

- 5.3 For the period 1 January to 31 March 19, the Authority has prepared an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) which is subject to Internal Audit and remains open until the Accounts are audited and signed. The Statement includes:

- § an acknowledgement of responsibility for ensuring there is a sound system of governance and system of internal control;
- § a brief description of the key elements of the governance arrangements including explicit areas such as internal audit and risk management;
- § a brief description of the process that has been applied in maintaining and reviewing the effectiveness of the governance arrangements;
- § an evaluation of the level of assurance that the systems and processes that comprise the governance arrangements can provide an outline of the actions taken, or proposed, to deal with significant governance and internal control issues.

- 5.4 The 2018/19 Annual Governance Statement for the Authority for the 3 month period is included in the Statement of Accounts and can be found by accessing the link above.

- 5.5 Fire and rescue is incorporated within the Governance Statement for Northamptonshire County Council for the period 1 April to 31 December 2018.

6. Operational Assurance

6.1 The Northamptonshire Commissioners Fire and Rescue Authority has carried out its functions in accordance with the defined statutory and policy framework in which it is required to operate. The key documents setting this out are:

- [the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004](#)
- [the Civil Contingencies Act 2004](#)
- [the Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#)
- [the Fire and Rescue Services \(Emergencies\) \(England\) Order 2007](#)
- [the Localism Act 2011](#)
- [the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England](#)
- [the Health and Safety Act at Work etc Act 1974](#)

6.2 Whilst the Authority is primarily a locally based service, mutual aid arrangements are in place with other services to provide resilience for large scale or complex incidents where additional resources need to be called on. The Authority contributes to national resilience and can make a number of its assets available to support a national emergency.

6.3 The Authority has robust Business Continuity Management (BCM) plans in place which are integral to our strategy in managing corporate risk and to provide, in the event of a major disruption, a fire and rescue service to the community.

6.4 The Authority publishes an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) that sets out details of its operational service provision and improvement plans at a local, regional and national level, together with individual delivery plans. The current Plan covers the period 2019 – 2022.

6.5 A copy of the Current IRMP, and related documents can be found on our website at: <http://www.northantspfcc.org.uk/fire-and-rescue-plan/>

6.6 The service was subject to an inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service (HMICFRS) in November 2018. The report findings were:

Effectiveness	Requires Improvement
Efficiency	Requires Improvement
People	Requires Improvement

6.7 Understanding the risk of fires and other emergencies, as well as promoting the rights values and cultures were both graded as Good.

6.8 Two areas (responding to fires and other emergencies and getting the right people with the right skills) were graded inadequate and were therefore subject to a revisit in June 2018. The inspectorate found that encouraging signs of progress were there on both areas in the revisit.

6.9 The full inspection report can be found at:
<https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/frs-assessment/frs-2018/northamptonshire/>

7. Overall Assurance Arrangements

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

8. Recommendations

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

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