

COUNTY DURHAM AND DARLINGTON FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

At a **MEETING** of the **PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE** held at Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, **Monday, 24 June 2019 at 10.00am**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR C Carr in the Chair

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL: Cllrs J Bell, R Manchester, J Shuttleworth and D Stoker

DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL: Cllr G Lee

OFFICERS: K Wanley, K Metcalfe and S Wharton
R Turnbull and J Parry (presentation only)

Item

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr B Avery (Cllr Shuttleworth attended)

2 Minutes of the previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 7 March 2019 were noted as a true and accurate record.

3 Personal Accidents

RT and JP gave a brief presentation on Personal Accidents 2018/19 covering the following:

- Personal accident statistics over the last seven years
- The national picture
- 2018/19 incidents
- What have we been doing?
- What's next?

Cllr Lee congratulated the service on the small number of days lost to accidents and members asked for clarification on how the number of days lost in 2018/19 compared with those lost in previous years. Following the meeting JP advised that, though more accidents had been reported, the service had seen a reduction of 19 days, which represents a reduction of 45%.

Following a query from Cllr Lee, JP confirmed that work is ongoing to address the inconsistencies in reporting nationally.

Cllr Stoker congratulated RT and JP on the quality of their presentation.

ACTION: Members **noted** the presentation.

4 Unwanted Fire Signal Trial

KW reported that as at close of play on Friday, 21 June 2019, there had been a total of 145 AFAs of which 84 were UwFS. He advised that the vast majority of these had been single calls and an initial letter had been sent. Eleven of these premises have had a second letter and two, both of which were student premises, have received an invoice/s. There has been no impact on the performance indicator to date though it is anticipated that this will be noticeable later in the year as fire safety management practices in premises are improved.

ACTION: Members **noted** the update.

5 Performance Report Quarter 4

The organisational performance indicators for quarter four were presented to the Committee.

The Committee noted that 66% of the strategic PIs maintained or improved when compared to performance last year.

Both primary and secondary fires are above target for the quarter but have reduced on the same period last year. The trend of vehicle fires remains high some of which is due to lower level criminal incidents on the East Coast (known as “taxing”) and organised crime on the A19 corridor. CRM continue to work closely with partners to address these issues, with the service sitting on (amongst others) a regional organised crime taskforce.

Work continues with partner agencies to address fly tipping and refuse issues, along with ASB and examples of initiatives and resources include streetgames, “Enough is Enough” and Firestoppers.

There was one confirmed fire fatality in June 2018 and there have been a further two fatalities which are still waiting to go to inquest.

The number of Safe and Wellbeing Visits (SWVs) was 20,124 for the year which is 2,124 above target and, although the number of accidental dwelling fires has increased slightly during 18/19, injuries (which tended to be minor in nature) have reduced. There has been improved targeting of visits with the introduction of a 12 month revisit programme for those individuals which are deemed to be at high or very high risk.

The number of fires in non domestic properties has increased significantly from the same period last year though no significant trends have been identified. Business Fire Safety continue to work closely with businesses to offer advice and conduct fire safety audits, taking appropriate enforcement action where necessary. It must be noted, however that, although they continue to work closely with and offer advice to the prisons, as Crown premises they do not fall under any regulatory powers the service has under the Fire Safety Order.

The number of automatic fire alarms (AFAs) in student accommodation continues to be an issue but Business Fire Safety are working closely with the university and managing agents in order to address this issue. It is pleasing to note that there has been a significant decrease in AFAs in schools compared to last year following the work undertaken by Business Fire Safety.

Three of six response standards were met at the end of Q4. In the main, the failed response standards have been due to RDS daytime availability and travel distance to incidents in rural remote areas. Emergency response continue to work to address issues though it was noted that RDS availability is a national concern.

The number of vehicle accidents, although over target, has reduced from the same period last year and a number of additional control measures, such as banksperson lights and reversing cameras, have been implemented following the ongoing trend of slow speed manoeuvring accidents and the service recently hosted a “Driving for Better Business” event with the Highways Agency. Further control measures may be considered dependent on the findings from the event.

ACTION: Members **noted** and **commented** on the report.

6 Sickness Report Quarter 4

KM gave a brief update on sickness absence performance for the year. Overall KPIs are above target and performance has regressed in comparison with last year.

The WT rider category has seen a 28% increase in shifts loss in comparison with last year. No trends can be identified in terms of days of the week or day/night shift for absence. Musculoskeletal (MSK) absences remains the main cause accounting for 57% of overall shifts lost. The RDS category has seen a further 20% increase in shifts lost in comparison with last year and continues the upward trend. Most of this absence has been longer term and there has been a decrease in short term absence. As with WT, 65% of shifts lost were due to MSK issues.

FDO absence has seen a reduction in absence levels from last year and these have been predominantly short term however, a recent case of longer term absence will continue into the new reporting year. Unlike the FDO category, the majority of absences in the day duty category have been longer term and following low sickness last year, has increased significantly this year.

It was pleasing to note the downward trend in Control absence has continued with a 45% reduction on previous years.

Non uniformed staff absence has increased by 40% with most shifts lost in quarter 2 and 3 due to mental health which attributed for 57% of shifts lost, most being longer term.

The service continues to perform well, when compared to other FRS nationally, in the Control, WT and non-uniformed categories. Unfortunately, absence within the RDS is high however, the comparative data for this category is not wholly accurate with significant differences within the number of RDS employees within each service.

ACTION: Members **noted** and **commented** on the position regarding sickness absence performance – Q4.

7 Letters of appreciation

The Committee considered the various letters of appreciation that had been submitted to the Service. Nineteen letters, covering the full remit of what the Service does, have been received. This is a significant increase on previous quarters and is in line with previous years.

ACTION: Members **noted** the report.

PART B

8 Complaints

There have been no complaints received by the Service in the reporting period. No complaints had been forwarded to the Local Government Ombudsman.

ACTION: Members **noted** the report.

8 AOB

The dates of the next meetings were circulated, being:

24 June 2019

10 September 2019 – to be amended to 11 September 2019.

25 November 2019

2 March 2020