

<b>Report title: Essex County Fire and Rescue Service Performance Report - Quarter 2 2019/20</b>	
<b>Report to:</b> Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel	
<b>Report author:</b> Police Fire and Crime Commissioner Roger Hirst	
<b>Date:</b> 13 February 2020	<b>For:</b> Noting and comment
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<b>County Divisions affected:</b> All Essex	

## 1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service's progress in delivering the priorities set out in the Fire and Rescue Plan 2019 – 2024 and the Integrated Risk Management Plan 2016-2020, based on data and other information to September 2019.

The attached quarterly report, produced by the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and scrutinised at the monthly Performance and Resources Board chaired by the Commissioner, provides highlight reporting against service priorities.

## 2. Recommendations

That members of the Panel note and comment / seek clarity as appropriate on the content of the report and attached appendix.

## 3. Context / Summary

This quarter, highlights with regard to performance include:

- The number of Accidental Dwelling Fires reduced slightly (from 191 to 186) compared with the same quarter the previous year. The number of deliberate fires also fell by 7%, from 619 in Quarter 1 to 575 last quarter.
- There were no fatalities from fires, and the number of injuries was fewer than during the same period last year.
- By utilising both station staff and volunteers, the service has undertaken more Home Safety and Safe, Well and Secure Visits during the first half of the year than it did during the same period the previous year. This in

turn has increased the number of onward referrals made to other services.

- First attendance to potentially life threatening calls has been steadily improving over the past year. Work is still ongoing to reduce call handling times in order to improve further on this figure.
- The number of false alarms fell by 9% (from 1,839 to 1,674) in Quarter 2 of this year, compared with the same time the previous year. Most false alarms continue to be raised through good intent.

In terms of areas requiring the continued focus of the service:

- The Technical Fire Safety team carried out 228 audits of non-residential properties during Quarter 2, of which around half were unsatisfactory. TFS officers continue to implement regulatory action following audits to comply with the Fire Safety Order. During Quarter 2, 110 Notifications of Deficiencies were issued and two Prohibition Notices were served. Going forward, 11.4 FTE Inspection Officers have been recruited, which will increase the service's auditing capacity. In addition, a new Protection Strategy has been drafted and is due to be launched shortly. This will inform the development of a new risk based inspection programme for the service based on historic incident data and known risk profiles. A training programme has also been developed for operational crews to enable them to carry out Fire Safety Checks in lower risk premises.
- Whilst first attendance to potentially life threatening calls has been steadily improving, the time taken to attend all calls improved during July but worsened slightly in August and September compared with the previous year. This is attributable to an increase in call volumes and reductions in both on-call and whole-time availability on account of factors including the peak summer holiday period; abstractions for training; the secondment of whole-time firefighters into specialist roles and posts connected with operational training, and on-call firefighters joining whole-time stations. Ongoing recruitment campaigns should improve availability going forward. Development of the new IRMP will also include a review of the key stations, to ensure that the availability of those stations most vital to ensuring countywide attendance times is maximised. Policies relating to leave and time off in lieu will also be reviewed in due course in order to ensure maximum availability and ridership.
- Whilst the number of false alarms continues to reduce, the volume of unwanted fire signals (false alarms caused by automatic fire detection in non-domestic premises) rose by 12% (from 246 to 274) in Quarter 2 of 2019/20 compared with the same time the previous year. Despite this period including the school summer holidays, a large proportion of these signals occurred in education buildings, particularly primary schools and especially within the Orsett station ground area.

#### **4. Appendices**

ECFRS Quarterly Performance Summary - Quarter Two 2019/20