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| Report title: Fire and Rescue Plan Performance Measures – Quarter 4 2022/23 | |
| Report to: Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel | |
| Report author: Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority | |
| Date: 20 July 2023 | For: Noting and comment |
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| County Divisions affected: 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 2020 – 2024 during Quarter 4 of 2022/23.

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

To put into context the circumstances in which these levels of performance were achieved:

- The total number of incidents attended during 2022/23 (17,568) was higher than during any of the previous four years and 14% higher than during 2021/22 (15,426).
- Within this, the total number of fires attended during the year (5,229) rose after showing a declining trajectory for the previous three years, surpassing the 2021/22 figure (3,727) by over 40%. The number of deliberate fires attended during the whole financial year (1,382) rose after showing a declining trajectory in the previous two years and exceeded the 2021/22 figure (1,119) by nearly 24%, largely due to the high number of deliberate outdoor fires seen during the heatwave period of Quarter 2.
- During Quarter 4 specifically, ECFRS attended fewer incidents than the previous quarter (3,516 compared with 3,964) but more than the five-year average for the period (3,367).
- Within this, the number of accidental dwelling fires (200) was higher than both the previous quarter (194) and the five-year average for the period (187).

During Quarter 4, highlights with regard to performance included:

- Despite the overall increase in the number of fires attended throughout the year, Quarter 4 saw fewer fires (748) than both the previous quarter (756) and the five-year average for the period (799).
- Similarly, although the year as a whole saw a slight increase in the number of non-domestic fires (at 422, compared with 415 the previous year), Quarter 4 (at 86) saw very slight reductions compared with both the previous quarter (87) and the five-year average for the period (89).
- Likewise, although the total number of deliberate fires rise in 2022/23 compared with 2020/21 (see above), the volume experienced in Quarter 4 (200) was lower than the five-year average for the period (236).
- The number of injuries sustained in primary fires during the whole of 2022/23 (43) was lower than for any of the previous four years, representing a reduction of 43% compared with the outturn for 2021/22 (75).
- More than 30 road and water safety events were held, reaching more than 3,000 people. A new, multi-agency Water Safety Forum has also been established, under the auspices of Safer Essex, to progress one of the key themes of ECFRS's Prevention Strategy.
- The staff absence rate due to sickness continued to fall, dipping below the five-year average.

In terms of areas for continued focus:

- Global availability, core station coverage and attendance times were all better than the previous quarter, but below both the targets and the five-year averages for the period. Within this, the average call handling time was better during Quarter 4 than for the rest of the year, however average turnout time worsened. Control teams already move resources around the county as required to meet risks and ensure that strategic stations are covered. Work is ongoing across strategic on-call stations to improve their availability, including by moving people rather than appliances.
- During 2022/23, ECFRS attended 8.5% more road traffic collisions (RTCs) than the previous year, with the figure for Quarter 4 (320) being below the previous quarter's (331) but significantly surpassing the five-year average (258). In addition, the RTCs attended in Quarter 4 resulted in more serious injuries (32) compared with both Quarter 3 (25) and the five-year average for the period (24). At the RTCs attended by ECFRS, the most common action carried out was making the scene and / or vehicles safe, with extrication or release of persons and the provision of medical advice also frequently required of crews.
- Staff turnover (at 12.6%) increased slightly compared to the previous quarter (12.3%) and was significantly above the five-year average of 10.2%. Most leavers were on-call firefighters, particularly in the north-east, with family reasons and career progression most commonly cited as the reasons for leaving. A team dedicated to supporting on-call crews has been established to address recruitment, retention and response within the retained duty system, supported by the development of relevant data dashboards.

4. Appendices

Appendix 1 – ECFRS Quarterly Performance Report – Quarter 4 2022/23