



**Hampshire  
& Isle of Wight**  
FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

## HIWFRA Full Authority

Purpose: **Noted**

Date: **14 JUNE 2022**

Title: **2021/22 END OF YEAR PERFORMANCE AND SAFETY PLAN REPORT**

Report of **Chief Fire Officer**

### SUMMARY

1. The End of Year Performance Report (**Appendix A**) explores how the Service has achieved our core purpose over the last year of making life safer. Performance is described against each of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire Authority's Safety Plan priorities. The report explores how the Service performed against a range of measures, with comparisons made against previous years and to national trends, where relevant and applicable.
2. This report explores how Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service performed against key operational and corporate health measures in the period 1 April 2021 through to 31 March 2022, our first year as the new combined fire authority.
3. We use performance and assurance reporting to assess our effectiveness, efficiency, and financial position. Our performance measures help us find areas for improvement, as well as identify successes and good practice to be shared, where applicable, across public services and the fire sector. We also assess progress against our Safety Plan improvements and the national fire standards.

## HIGHLIGHTS – SERVICE PERFORMANCE 2021/22

4. Staff sickness increased from 10.7 average shifts/days lost in 2020/21 to 11.9 shifts/days lost in 2021/22. This is owing to increases in musculo-skeletal, mental health, and respiratory sickness. Despite Covid-19 still being a leading absence type, this declined compared to 2020/21 when the pandemic was at peak levels. However, it is important to emphasise that sickness has returned to 2019/20 levels.
5. Sickness absences, staff turnover and other factors, such as our provision of support to partners, have affected availability levels, which reduced compared to 2020/21. Whole-time availability decreased to 89.3% (a decrease of 4.3% points from 2020/21) owing to our planned move in degradation procedure; and on-call availability was 62.4% - down 18% points versus 2020/21 when availability was at unprecedented high levels, partly owing to the furlough periods in the early pandemic. As we resume more normal activity (and sickness levels) following Covid-19 we anticipate on-call availability will improve over the year ahead, moving closer to pre-pandemic levels (2019/20 on-call availability: 75%).
6. Our average critical response time in 2021/22, with a refined set of critical call types, was 7 minutes 35 seconds - up 26 seconds, from 7 minutes 9 seconds in 2020/21. Response times increased towards the latter half of this year, driven by rises in some Road Traffic Collision (RTC) response times in more remote (rural) or difficult to access locations. We have seen increasing response times over the last 2 years, although improvements overall over a 3-to-5-year period. It is also important to note that our response time performance when compared nationally remains strong. National figures are split by incident types and by urban/rural locations. Home Office statistics (February 2022) showed that predominately rural Services had an average response time (including call handling) for dwelling fires of 9 minutes 18 seconds compared to 7 minutes 57 seconds in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. We also compare favourably versus the non-metropolitan average response time of 8 minutes 39 seconds for this incident type.
7. In terms of a core part of our Prevention activity, the number of Safe and Well visits completed was 9,247, a significant increase (+29%) compared to 2020/21, while the proportion of visits where we were refused entry or could not contact the individual remained stable (around a quarter) compared to last year. This is reflective of our extensive and ongoing focus on prevention activity.
8. Following the easing of Covid-19 restrictions we have also been able to increase our protection activity, including fire safety audits - of which we

undertook 1,351 between April 2021 and March 2022, significantly more (+753, 126%) compared to the previous year when 598 audits were completed. Similarly, following the easing of lockdown restrictions, we have seen a significant increase in business regulation and licensing consultations – maintaining high levels of performance in this area.

#### HIGHLIGHTS – SAFETY PLAN IMPROVEMENTS AND FIRE STANDARDS ASSURANCE

9. The five-year HIWFRS Safety Plan was launched in April 2020, setting out our priorities, values, how we will build on our strengths, and how we will address the areas that require more focus and improvement.
10. For Year 2, we originally committed to completing 34 improvements. We have completed 28 of these activities, as detailed in **Appendix B**. However, whilst the planning and preparation has been completed, owing to Covid-19, sickness and our support to partners, the implementation of four Year 2 activities will now take place in 2022/23. Furthermore, 2 other improvement activities have of been delayed and will both be completed by the end of July 2022.
11. The Fire Standards Board has published 10 national fire standards, covering a wide range of areas, with a total 119 requirements ('desirable outcomes') underneath the 10 standards. The Service has undertaken a significant amount of assurance activity to assess our compliance with the standards, which has shown that we have 'reasonable' or 'substantial' assurance in 97% (116) of the 119 desirable outcomes. One of the remaining three desirable outcomes is also not applicable to HIWFRS.

#### SUPPORTING OUR SAFETY PLAN AND PRIORITIES

12. The End of Year Performance report provides a view of performance in all the Safety Plan priority areas, with specific progress against the Safety Plan improvements reported in Appendix B. We regularly check and report progress against the Safety Plan – across our Directorates and within our Executive Group.

#### CONSULTATION

13. There has been a wide range of internal consultation and collaboration to help develop this report. External consultation has not been required.

## RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

14. The cost associated with the production of the End of Year Performance report is within existing resources.

## IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

15. This report does not lead to any change activity, so no impact assessments are required. However, we have ensured we utilise dyslexia and colour-blind friendly fonts and colours in our appendices to ensure the reports are as accessible as possible.

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

16. There are no legal implications resulting from this report.

## RISK ANALYSIS

17. Failure to regularly report on and scrutinise our performance and progress against our Safety Plan could result in no action being taken to address reducing deficient performance which may affect the outcomes for our communities and our people. The information may, in some cases, show increasing (or reducing) risks for the Authority.

## EVALUATION

18. Monitoring and assessing performance and progress against the Safety Plan are a key part of various evaluation activity that the Service carries out – it also used by the Service to identify areas for continuous improvement and to flag and share good practice across public services and the fire sector.
19. Evaluating performance, and change activity more widely, are core activities of the Integrated Performance and Assurance Group and of Directorate Boards and management teams across the Service. This is aided by an increasing amount of data and reporting available, with the breadth and depth of real-time performance and assurance information accessible to our staff increasing.

## CONCLUSION

20. The last two years of the pandemic has had a significant impact on our people, our communities, and on our partnership working; and we also combined to become Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.

21. We are incredibly proud of what the Service has achieved over this last year – even with increased staff sickness – improving performance or returning to pre-Covid levels many areas. We have also supported partners through a wide range of activities, including:
  - ambulance driving;
  - falls and cardiac arrest response;
  - vaccinating (150,000+ vaccines and an estimated 200 lives saved) at Basingstoke; and
  - ongoing pop-up vaccination clinics at stations – with over 2,800 vaccines administered between January 2022 and the end of March 2022 – while maintaining their operational response capacity.
22. We have also delivered various Year 2 Safety Plan improvements; and demonstrated strong compliance against the new national Fire Standards and National Operational Guidance.
23. As we now emerge from the pandemic, we have seen a slight reduction to our incident volumes, but the balance of incident types has changed. Following the trend identified in the mid-year performance report of December 2021, we have seen a reduction in fires and Special Service Calls, but an increase in false alarms. However, there are early signs the cost-of-living crisis is impacting our demand, with a slight increase in domestic fires, particularly in the latter part of 2021/22 – we will continue to monitor, mitigate and manage this risk in the year ahead.
24. There was also a significant increase (29%) in the number of Safe & Well visits we delivered, and we have undertaken detailed risk analysis and mapping using a wide range of internal and external data to support the introduction (on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022) of a new risk-based Safe & Well programme. Excellent Protection work also continues with our High- Risk Residential Inspection, Risk Based Inspection and Local Based Inspection Programmes and we continue to exceed targets in licensing consultations, fire safety audits and building regulation consultations.
25. We recognise that we have seen a reduction in on-call availability, increases in critical response times, and increases in fire fatalities and casualties. However:

- Our response performance is still below 8 minutes for critical incidents, remaining very strong compared to national benchmark data.
- Increases in casualties is owing to reduced lockdown restrictions, pandemic-related behaviour change and emerging risk factors, such as post-pandemic health challenges, home-working and increased use of electrical devices, and rising energy/cost of living impacting behaviours. We will continue to monitor these closely and flow any data and insights into our ongoing strategic assessment, and management, of risk.
- Most casualties have slight (not severe) injuries or are treated on scene.

#### RECOMMENDATION

26. That the 2021/22 End of Year Performance Report be **noted** by the **HIWFRA Full Authority**
27. That the 2021/22 Safety Plan Year 2 Improvements Report be **noted** by the **HIWFRA Full Authority**

#### APPENDICES ATTACHED

28. [Appendix A – 2021/22 End of Year Performance Report](#)
29. [Appendix B – 2021/22 Safety Plan Year 2 Improvements Report](#)

Contact: Shantha Dickinson, Deputy Chief Fire Officer,  
[Shantha.dickinson@hantsfire.gov.uk](mailto:Shantha.dickinson@hantsfire.gov.uk), 07918 887986