

Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee

21 January 2016

A report on the operational performance of Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the contents of this report.

Summary

The Service is successful in protecting the public through operational response and community safety. Periodically the Chartered Institute of Public Finances and Accountancy (CIPFA) publishes a set of benchmarking figures comparing the performance of all 46 Fire and Rescue Services across a number of indicators. Overall performance is good in a number of key areas both in terms of the long term trend but also by comparing WFRS against other Fire and Rescue Services. In 2014/15 WFRS were the best performing Service and had the lowest level of accidental dwelling fires per 10,000 dwellings, the Service also had the second lowest number of non-domestic fires per 1000 properties and are in the top quarter for the lowest level of fire related injuries per 100,000 of population.

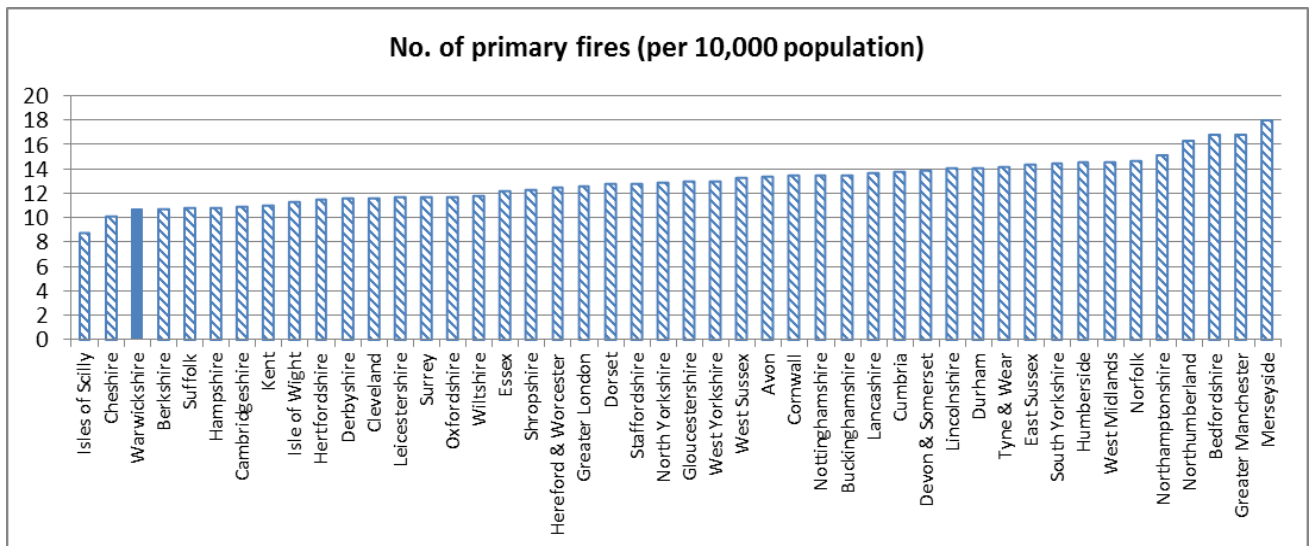
1.0 Background

- 1.1 This report summarises Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service (WFRS) performance against key incident categories in comparison to the other 45 English Fire and Rescue Services (FRS). Incident data has been taken from the Fire Statistics monitor April 2014 to March 2015, population and property information has been taken from the CIPFA latest published stats. Incident data is collated using the national Incident Recording System used within each FRS. It should be noted that FRS supplied data is no longer subject to audit process and therefore it cannot be guaranteed that data is completely like for like.
- 1.2 The information detailed within this report provides further context to the quarterly performance reporting which the Committee scrutinises on a quarterly basis.

2.0 Analysis

In Great Britain, the number of fires and false alarms attended by FRS's has declined significantly, more than 50%, over a 10 year period. WFRS is in line with this trend with a decrease of **67%** across all incident types.

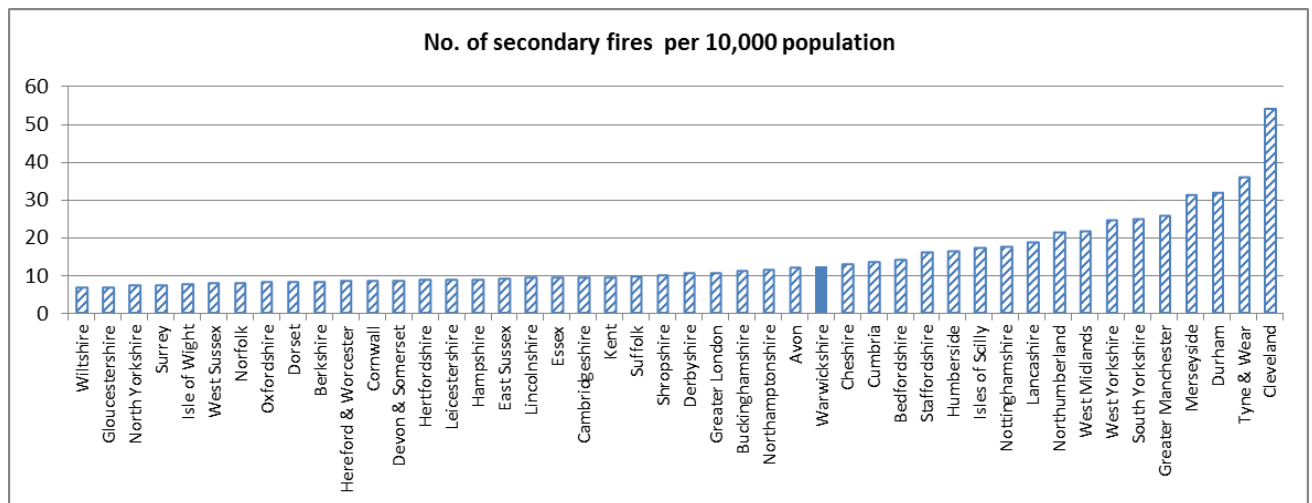
- 2.1 Primary fires – these are fires that involve property or vehicles or where casualties or rescues have occurred, they also include incidents where 5 or more fire engines are in attendance. This category of fires includes domestic and domestic fires, vehicle fires and other property fires.



Warwickshire: 10.66
 Position: 3/46
 England: 13.16
 Average: 12.99
 10 year reduction 57%

To date this year levels of primary fires are slightly ahead of the levels for the previous year.

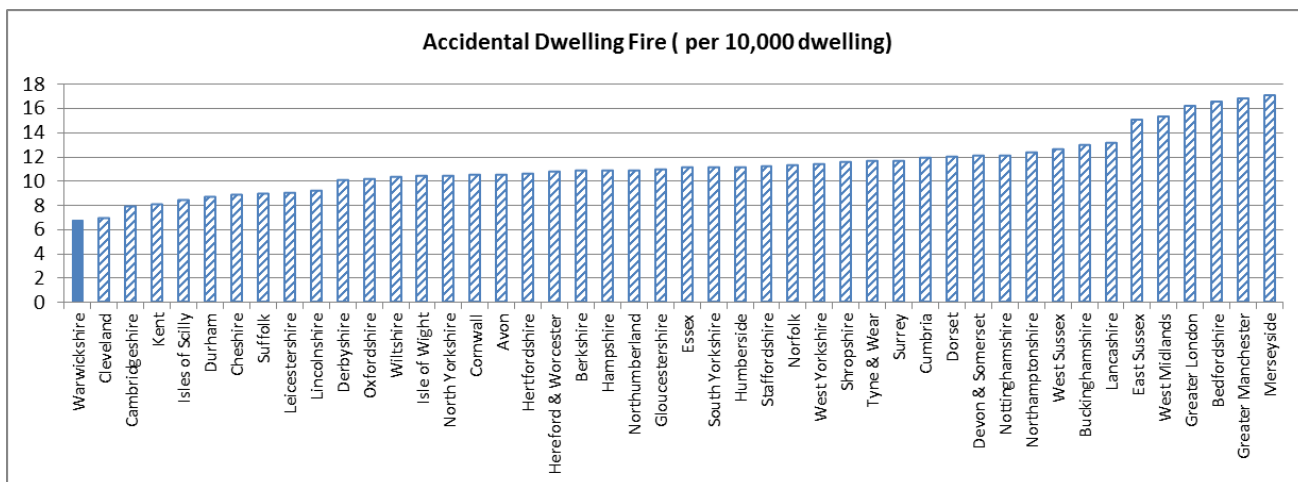
2.2 Secondary fires – these are fires that do not involve property, vehicles or life risk and are mostly outdoor fires, such as refuse and grassland fires. Derelict property and vehicles and fires confined to a chimney structure are also included in this incident type.



Warwickshire: 12.36
 Position: 29/46
 England: 14.60
 Average: 14.32
 10 year reduction 60%

To date this year levels of secondary fires have increased by 25% compared to the previous year and the year-end forecast is set to miss the target. This category is heavily influenced by deliberate secondary fires and as the number of deliberate fires has increased so has this measure.

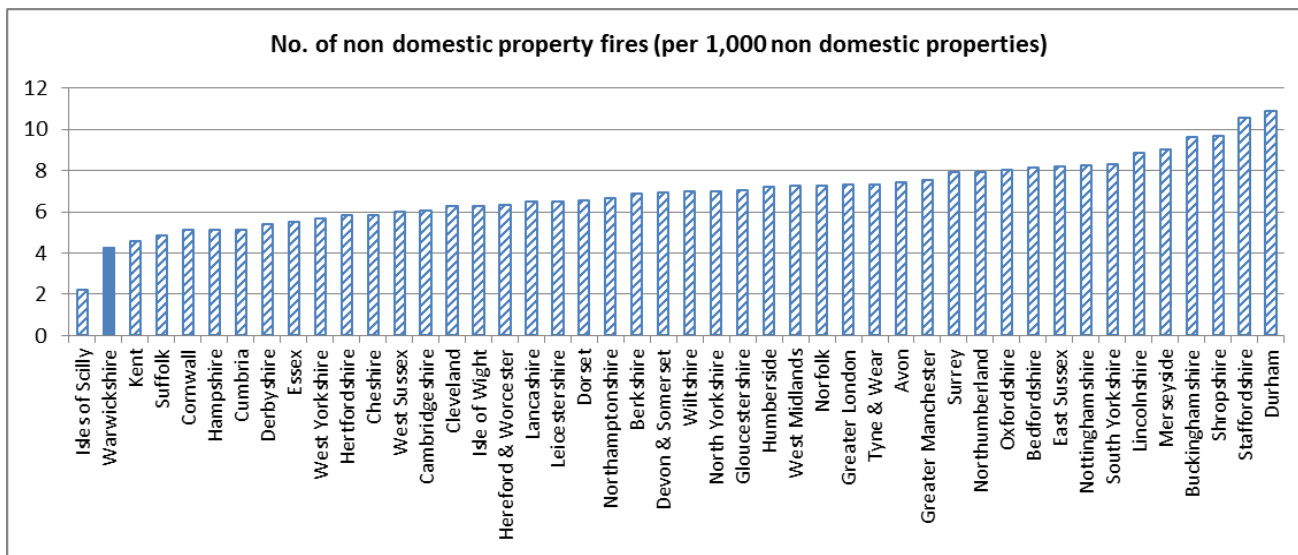
2.3 Accidental dwelling fires – this category covers various types of domestic residences: houses, flats, bungalows, care homes as well as caravans and houseboats used as permanent dwellings, where the cause of the fire has been accidental or not known. These types of fires are a sub category of primary fires.



Warwickshire: 6.80
 Position: 1/46
 England: 12.39
 Average: 11.29
 10 year reduction 33%

To date this year levels of accidental dwelling fires are remaining at the same level as the previous year and the year-end forecast is set to achieve the target.

2.4 Non domestic fires – these fires involve property and premises that are business related and will include both accidentally and deliberately started fires.

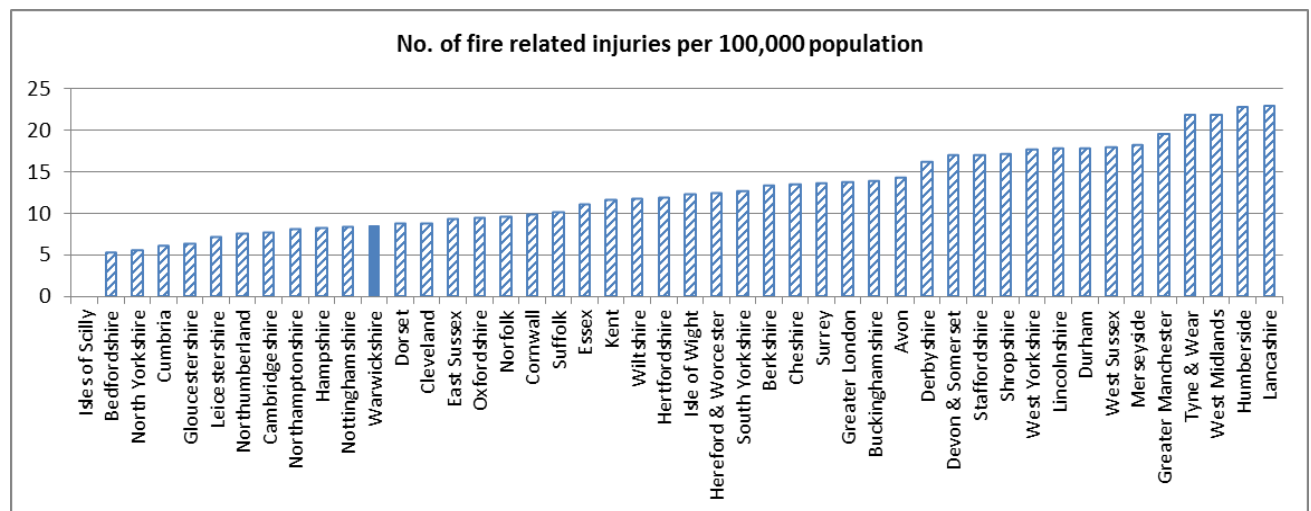


Warwickshire: 4.26
 Position: 2/46
 England: 5.82
 Average: 6.93

A 6 year reduction of 42% (please note that the category changed in 08/09 so comparable information is only available from that time). To date this year's levels of non-domestic property fires remain at the same levels as the previous year with the year-end forecast set to achieve the target.

- 2.5 Fire related deaths and injuries – fire related deaths and injuries are primary incidents where either the cause of death has been recorded by the Coroner as fire related, or where a sustained injury has been fire related, such as smoke inhalation or burns. The measure includes both members of the community and fire and rescue personnel.

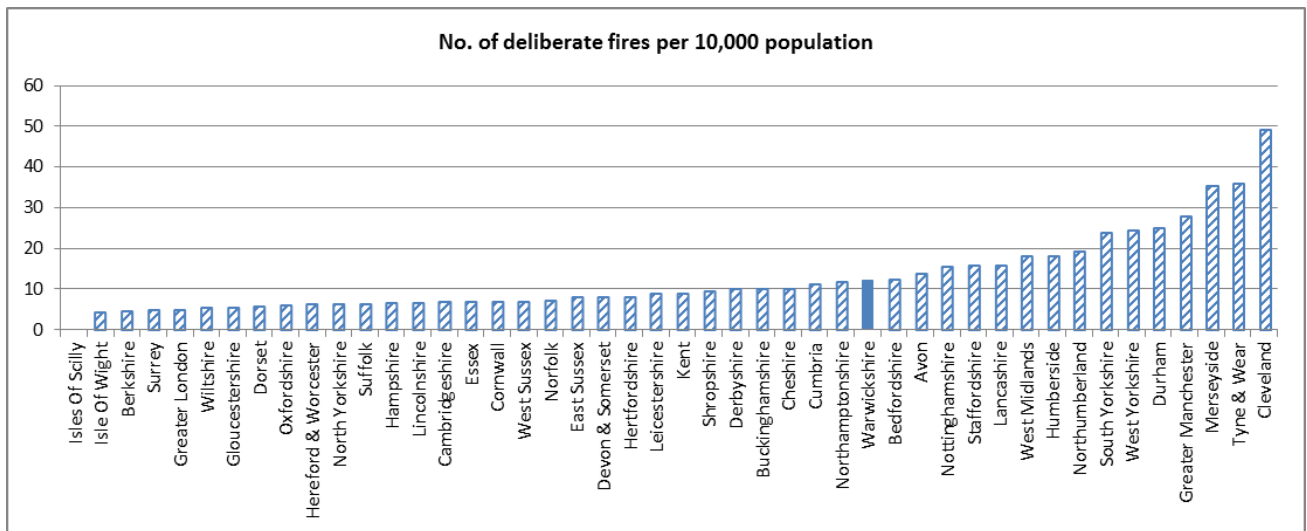
WFRS has always experienced very low numbers in terms of fire related deaths with only 2 recorded last year, only 1 of which was considered to be preventable where conceivably WFRS may have been able to help prevent the death through fire safety initiatives. NB no chart is included for this measure as such low levels of fire related deaths occur nationally.



Warwickshire: 8.57
 Position: 11/46
 England: 14.01
 Average: 12.53

To date this year levels of fire related injuries remain below recorded levels as the previous year and the year-end forecast is set to achieve the target.

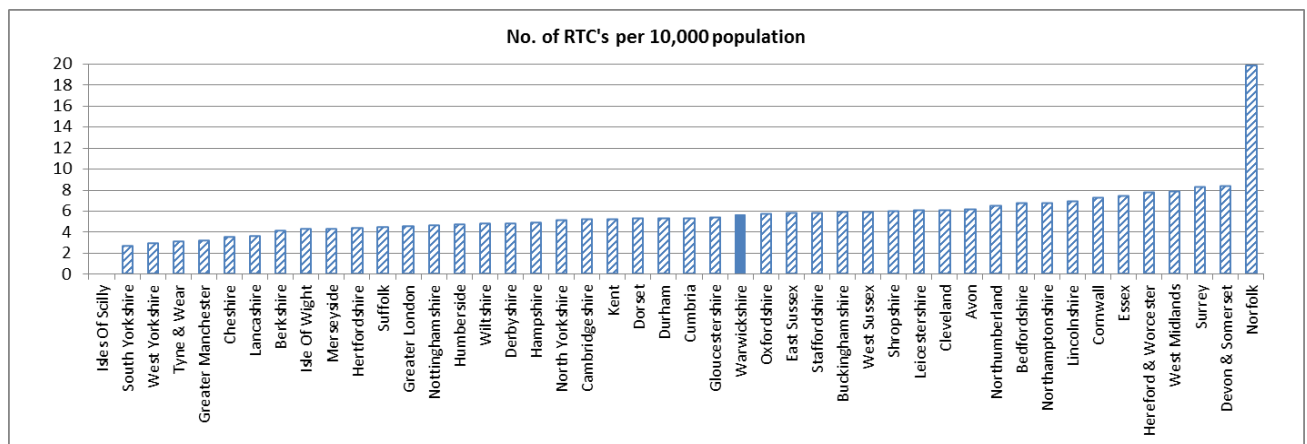
- 2.6 Deliberate fires – this category is related to incidents of deliberate fire setting, where the source of ignition is believed to be deliberate. It includes fires of a primary and secondary nature, but is mostly comprised of secondary fires.



Warwickshire: 12.16
 Position: 31/46
 England: 12.70
 Average: 12.44
 10 year reduction 71%

So far this year deliberate fire setting has increased by 25% compared to the previous year. The increase was experienced across the relatively long, dry summer despite active intervention initiatives planned and delivered in known hot spot areas and at peak activity times.

2.7 Road Traffic Collision's (RTC's) – this incident category relates to incidents that WFRS attend where there has been a road traffic collision on Warwickshire roads. Activity will depend on the nature of the incident but regularly includes extricating injured persons from the vehicle.



Warwickshire: 5.65
 Position: 26/46
 England: 5.39
 Average: 5.56

An overall 10 year reduction, however the number of RTCs attended by WFRS has increased slightly this year. This was as a result of a mobilising policy change introduced by the new Chief Fire Officer on his arrival in 2013 and it was expected that the number of

incidents of this type would increase. At the end of Quarter 2, 52 RTC extrications had been performed by WFRS.

3.0 FRS fire safety initiatives

Within WFRS there are a number of established fire safety initiatives and strategies which help keep the communities of Warwickshire safer from the risk of fire. The initiatives are targeted and deployed when and where they are needed most. These initiatives include:

- **Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSCs)** – these are visits into the homes of those people who may be at greater risk of having fires in the home, to offer guidance and advice and in some cases to fit smoke detectors.
- **Schools programme** – visits take place to children in Primary Schools in Years 1 and 5. Our aim is to develop the children’s knowledge and understanding of fire safety behaviour and to provide them with survival skills in the event of a fire. Secondary schools also have visits to reinforce the “FIRE!” Scheme which is used by teachers in Schools during Personal, Social and Health Education / Citizenship lessons; pupils will have worked through the scheme before they receive a visit by a Community Fire Safety Officer and so have some knowledge of fire safety and arson awareness.
- **Fatal Four RTC reduction programme** – This programme is delivered to young adults of driving age and is designed to educate them on the dangers of driving amongst other things under the influence of drink or drugs.
- **Targeted campaigns** throughout the year – national campaigns such as the Tick-Tock-Test will be supported locally. In addition, local bespoke campaigns such as the Chimney Fire awareness which is based on our own historical information around when and where incidents occur.
- **Small Fires Unit (SFU)** - Joint high visibility patrol with Police Community Support Officer's (PCSO's) in Deliberate Small Fire hotspots in Nuneaton and Bedworth. The SFU will challenge Anti-Social Behaviour; provide fire safety education and messages to young people. They are directly based on intelligence from Arson Reduction and the Police.
- **Anti-Social Behaviour Intervention Team (ASBIT)** - Joint high visibility patrols with PCSO's to challenge anti-social behaviour and provide fire safety/ASB education. Schemes run at peak times (school holidays, exam results time and Halloween and Bonfire).
- **Bicycle Intervention, Knowledge and Education (BIKE)** - High visibility patrols of wooded areas and recreational grounds to engage and educate young people in Nuneaton and North Warwickshire areas. This scheme runs on a peak demand basis
- **Fire safety audits** - The audit is an examination of the business premises and relevant documents to ascertain how the premises are being managed regarding fire safety. Advice and information is offered during the visit as well as any improvement action required.
- **Site Specific Risk Check's (SSRC's)** - joint visit to targeted premises across the county to gather premises risk information for firefighter and public safety. A targeted premise list is created based on a number of criteria including incident type, frequency and associated risks to firefighters.
- **Business Fire Safety Check's (BFSC's)** - crews undertake visits to lower risk 'fire safety' premises with a higher 'fire fighter' risk, such as offices, factories and warehouses, for familiarisation but also to offer advice and support.
- **Rural Crime** - working with rural crime co-ordinators to visit rural victims of arson and to provide prevention advice to surrounding farms.

The [Warwickshire Risk Profile 2015](#) analyses the risk across the county in greater detail and Local Risk Management Plans are developed and used by stations to address their local risk. The Management Information Dashboard is used to monitor incident activity at stations and by the Arson Reduction Manager. Group Commanders review and challenge performance at fortnightly performance meetings while Senior Managers review and challenge performance at the Monthly Performance Review meetings.

4.0 Conclusion

Overall the performance of WFRS is good and the Service continues to be one of the best performing Services across the country. However, the operational environment continues to pose a high risk to both the public and fire service personnel. Although within Warwickshire WFRS activity has enabled to make the public safer, the ongoing austerity and the impact this will have on our ability to continue delivering the same level of service both operationally and within community safety will become more challenging.

All areas of the Service contribute to the protection of the public, be it the operational frontline staff, the staff within fire control or the support staff that develop policy, train our firefighters and support them in community safety. As the Service looks at what it can deliver within its budget, it will need to consider what impact this will have on its overall performance.

Background Papers

None

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|--------------------|-------------------|--|
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