

Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee

20 December 2017

A report on the operational performance of Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service 2016/17

Recommendation

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

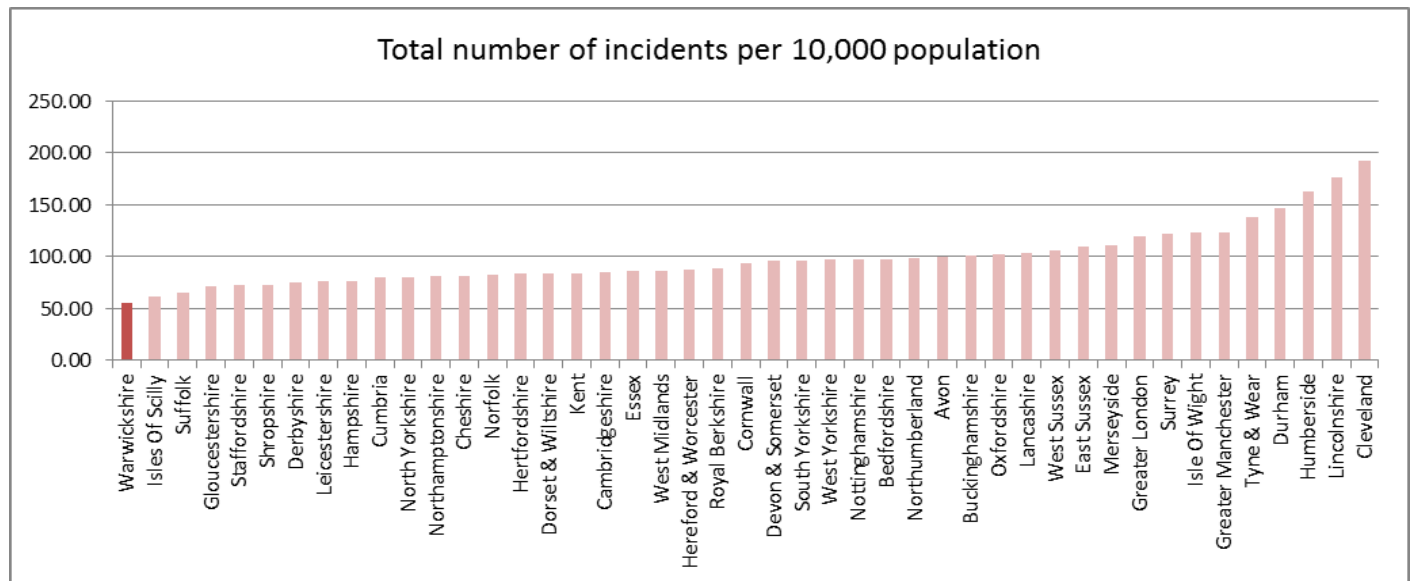
1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report summarises the performance of Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service (WFRS) against certain key incident categories in comparison to the other 44 English Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) and against a range of organisational factors where broad comparisons can be made. Incident data has been taken from the Fire Statistics Data Tables April 2016 to March 2017; population and property information has been taken from the CIPFA latest published statistics. 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 a national audit process and therefore it cannot be guaranteed that information is consistently recorded or presented from Service to Service.

2.0 Incident Activity

- 2.1 Across England, despite an increase in incidents attended during 2016/17, there has been a declining trend since 2003/04 in the number of incidents attended by Fire and Rescue Services. The longer term trend for incidents attended is also apparent within Warwickshire, however in contrast to the national increase during 2016/17 there was an overall reduction in Warwickshire of 7% compared to previous year.

2.2 Total Incidents Attended – this category includes all incidents attended by the Fire and Rescue Service including all fires, false alarms, special services including emergency medical response and road traffic collisions (RTCs).

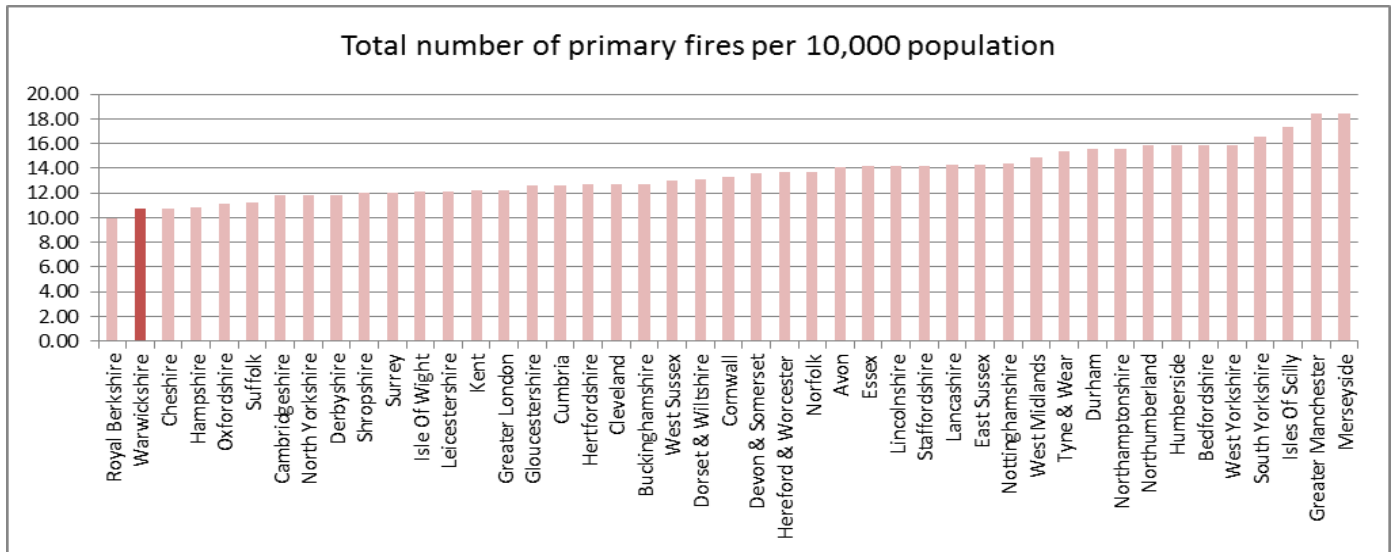


Warwickshire: 54.80
 Position: 1/45
 England: 100.92
 Average: 98.30
 5 year increase 61%

2.3 When compared with other Fire and Rescue Services, Warwickshire attends the lowest levels of incidents per 10,000 population. In part this is due to local processes of challenging the information provided by 999 callers and only mobilising to certain emergency incidents that might still be routinely attended elsewhere. However, there are also incident types which are attended and recorded by other Fire and Rescue Services that are not in place across Warwickshire. For example, in the majority of regions across the country Fire and Rescue Services provide a co-responding emergency medical response on behalf of the local Ambulance Service and explains why Lincolnshire Fire Service, for example, appears significantly higher in the table. In Warwickshire and across the West Midlands Region this is not yet the case and the response to medical emergencies is restricted to a Community First Responder pilot scheme in Southam. The overall rate for total incidents in Warwickshire per 10,000 population has changed from 60.90 in 2015/16 to 54.80 in 2016/17. The changed rate that has been experienced in Warwickshire has not been apparent at a national level with the rate increasing from 98 to 100.92.

2.4 In Warwickshire, at quarter 2 2017/18 there has been a 5.3% increase in the total number of incidents attended compared to the same period in 2016/17. This is in part due to seasonal trends but also a conscious change in policies such as non-life risk rescues and entrapments which resulted in WFRS mobilising to more incidents.

2.5 Primary Fires - These are fires that involve property or vehicles or where casualties or rescues have occurred; they also include incidents where five or more fire engines are in attendance. This category of fires includes domestic and non-domestic fires, vehicle fires and other property fires.

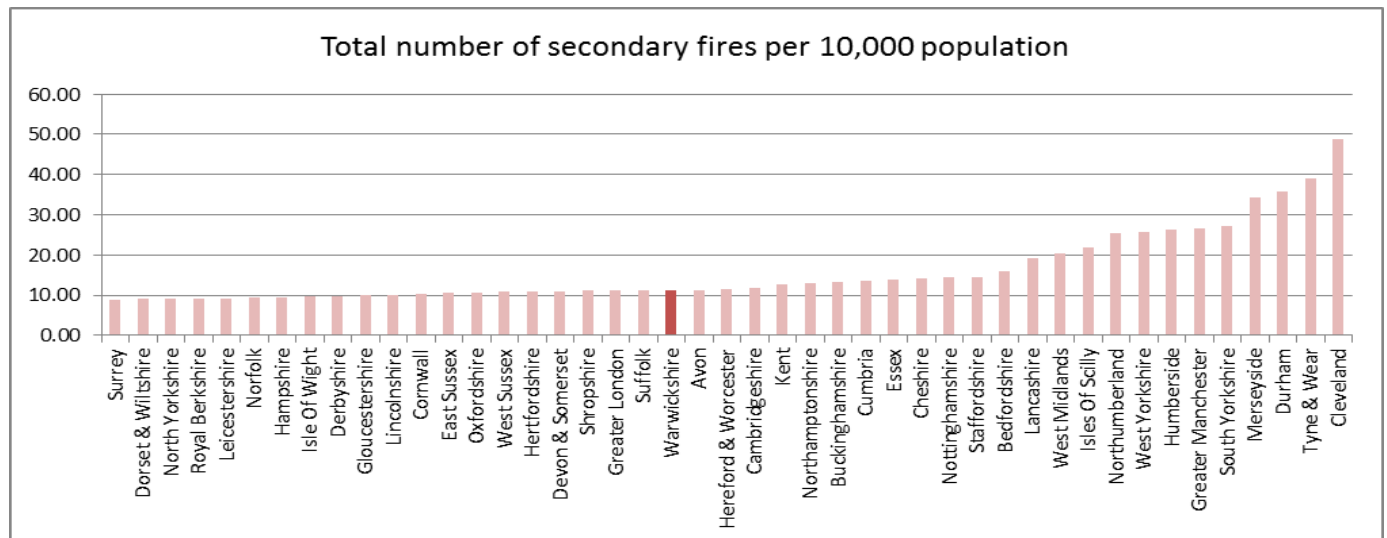


Warwickshire: 10.72
 Position: 2/45
 England: 12.12
 Average: 13.60
 5 year reduction 10.9%

2.6 Nationally there has been a decrease in the number of primary fires per 10,000 population compared to the previous year, 12.12 in 2016/17 compared to 13.52 in 2015/16. Warwickshire follows this trend with a rate of 10.72 compared to 11.15 and maintained the number two ranking position from last year.

2.7 In Warwickshire, at quarter 2 2017/18 there has been a 2.1% increase in the total number of primary fires attended compared to the same period in 2016/17. There appears to be no specific reason for this increase, however this follows the overall trend for quarter 2 across the majority of other indicators.

2.8 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.

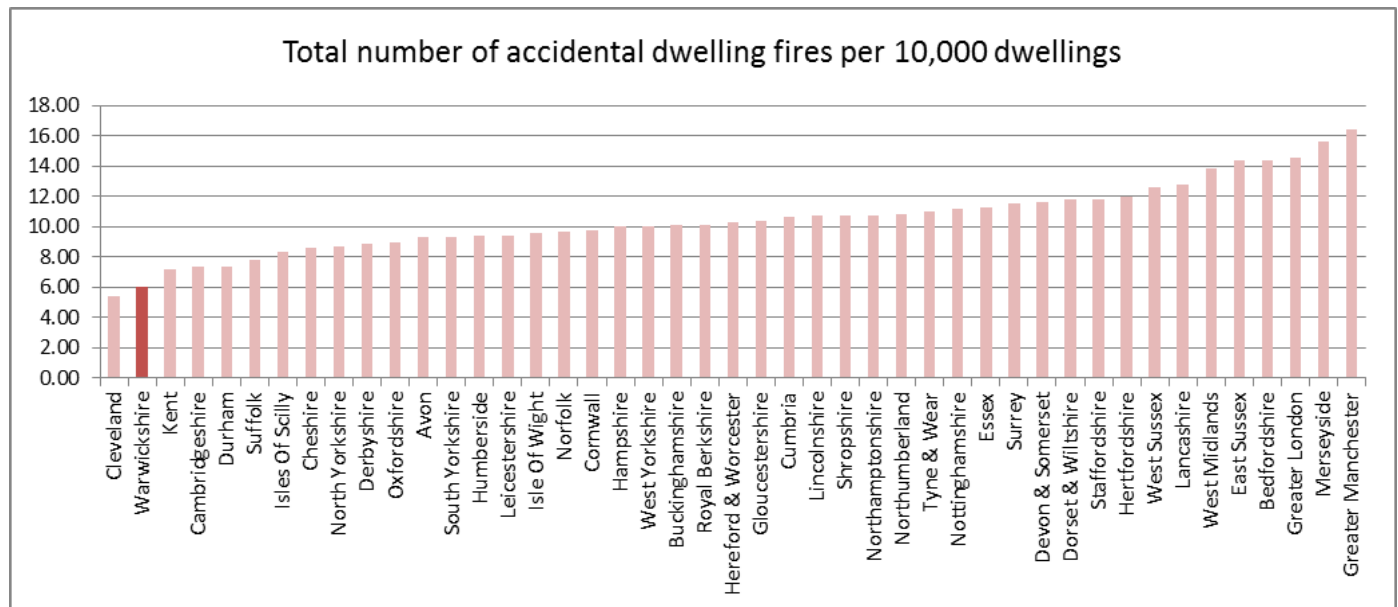


Warwickshire: 11.23
 Position: 21/45
 England: 11.99
 Average: 16.05
 5 year reduction: 6%

2.9 During 2016/17 the level of secondary fires in England reduced to 11.99 from 15.67 in 2015/16. Warwickshire levels also reduced by a smaller margin from 11.89 to 11.23 and Warwickshire improved its league position by five positions.

2.10 In Warwickshire at quarter 2 2017/18 levels of secondary fires have increased by 1.6% compared to the same period in the previous year. This appears to be predominantly due to the period of hot, dry weather that has been experienced over the reporting period.

2.11 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 and where the cause of the fire has been accidental or not known. These types of fire are a sub category of primary fires.



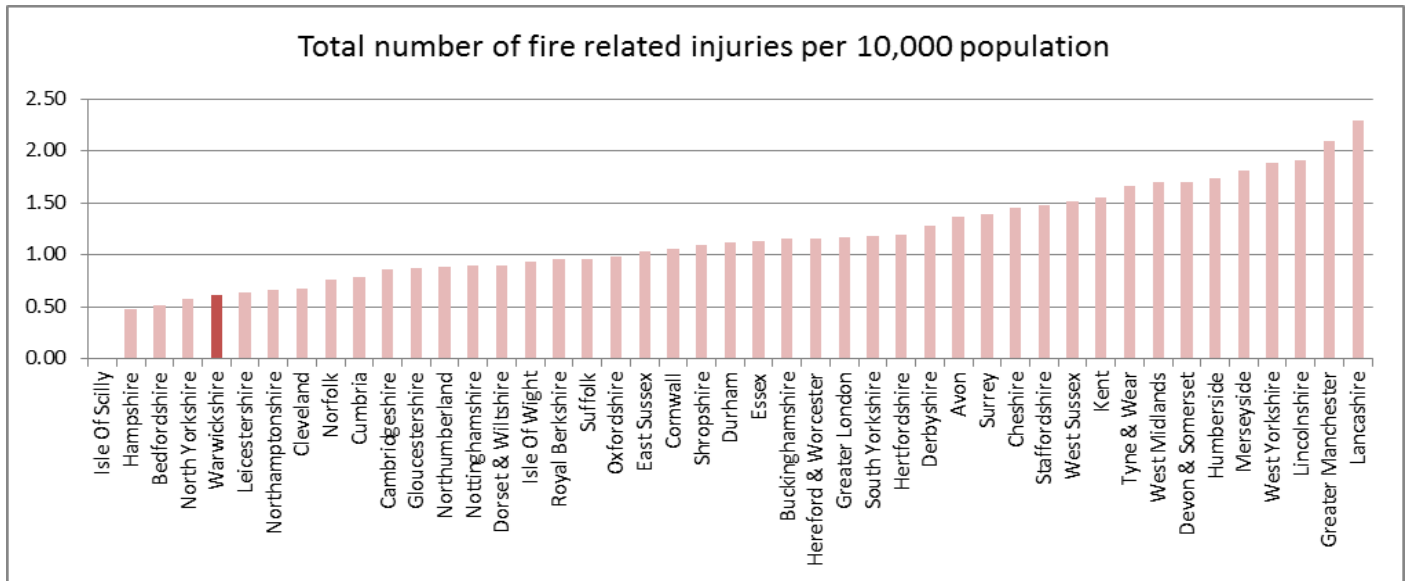
Warwickshire: 6.00
 Position: 2/45
 England: 11.50
 Average: 10.50
 5 year reduction 7.59%

2.12 The rate of accidental dwelling fires per 10,000 dwellings reduced at a national level during 2016/17 compared to 2015/16. Warwickshire continues to be one of the best performing Services for the rate of accidental dwelling fires per 10,000 dwellings, maintaining its second position from 2015/16 and by further reducing the rate of accidental dwelling fires from 6.21 to 6.0. For Warwickshire at quarter 2 of 2017/18 the low levels of accidental dwelling fires remain at a similar level to 2016/17.

2.13 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 and also includes any precautionary checks. The measure includes both members of the community and WFRS personnel.

2.14 WFRS has historically experienced very low numbers in terms of fire related deaths however during 2016/17 there were 3 fire related deaths, full investigations have been undertaken to understand the circumstances behind these tragedies. Please note a chart has not been included for this measure as such low levels of fire related deaths occur nationally.

2.15 In Warwickshire at quarter 2 2017/18 there have been 2 fire related deaths both in the same aircraft incident.

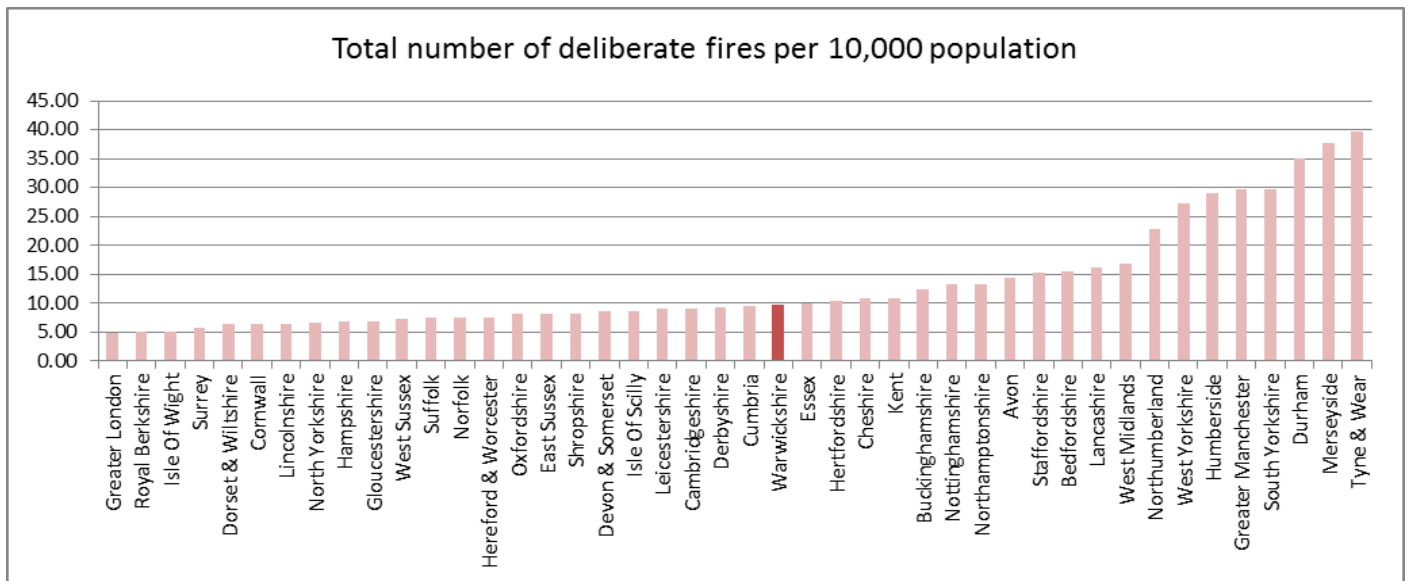


Warwickshire: 0.61
 Position: 5/45
 England: 0.98
 Average: 1.16

2.16 Warwickshire’s performance in terms of fire related casualties per 100,000 populations is consistent with last year’s levels with a recorded rate of 0.61 in 2016/17 compared to 0.58 in 2015/16 and is the fifth best performer. Nationally the levels also remained relatively consistent between the two financial years.

2.17 In Warwickshire at quarter 2 2017/18 levels of fire related injuries overall remain low however there has been an increase to 10 compared to 3 in the same period for 2016/17.

2.18 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.

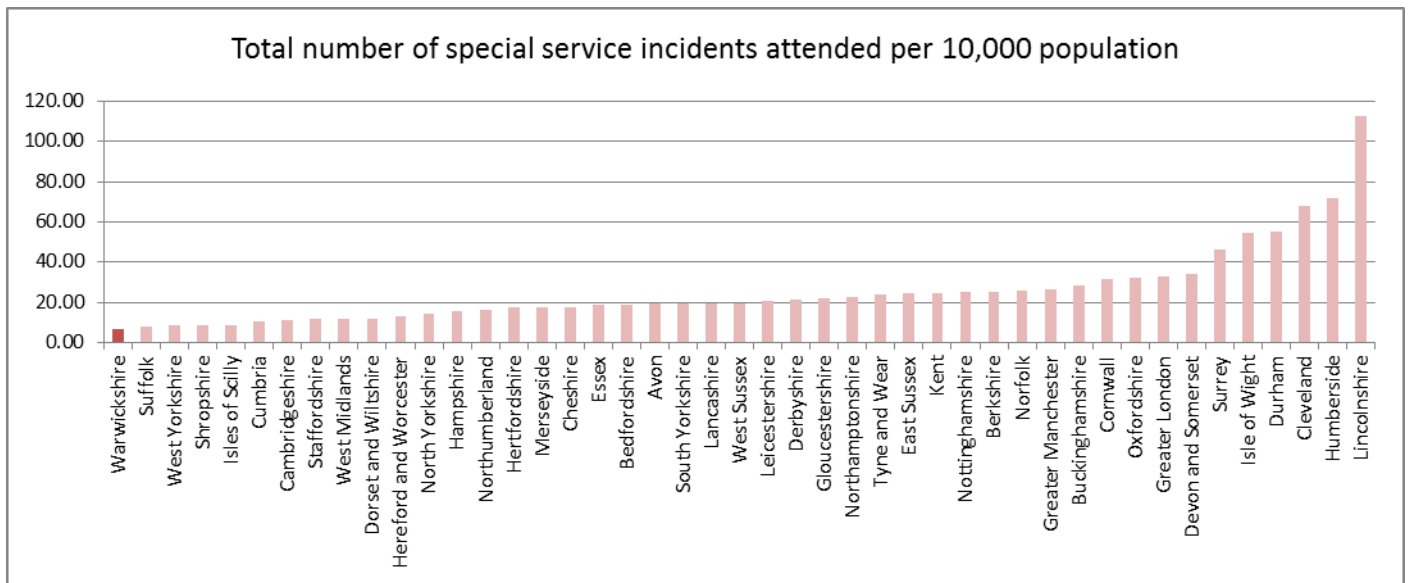


Warwickshire: 9.75
 Position: 24/45
 England: 13.89
 Average: 14.15
 5 year increase 10.6%

2.19 Across England the levels of deliberate fire setting have increased slightly from 13.64 to 13.89 during 2016/17 compared to the previous year, in terms of the overall rate. Warwickshire improved the overall league position from 29 to 24 as the rate of deliberate fires decreased from 12.15 to 9.75.

2.20 In Warwickshire at quarter 2 2017/18 levels of deliberate fires have increased by 3.4% compared to the previous year. The increase was experienced during the hot, dry period of weather that occurred during the first quarter of the year despite active intervention initiatives planned and delivered in known hot spot areas and at peak activity times; there was also an increase in deliberate vehicle fires from 34 in 16/17 to 50 in 17/18.

2.21 Special Services - This incident category includes a diverse range of incident types including emergency medical response, flooding, hazardous material, rescue or release or people.

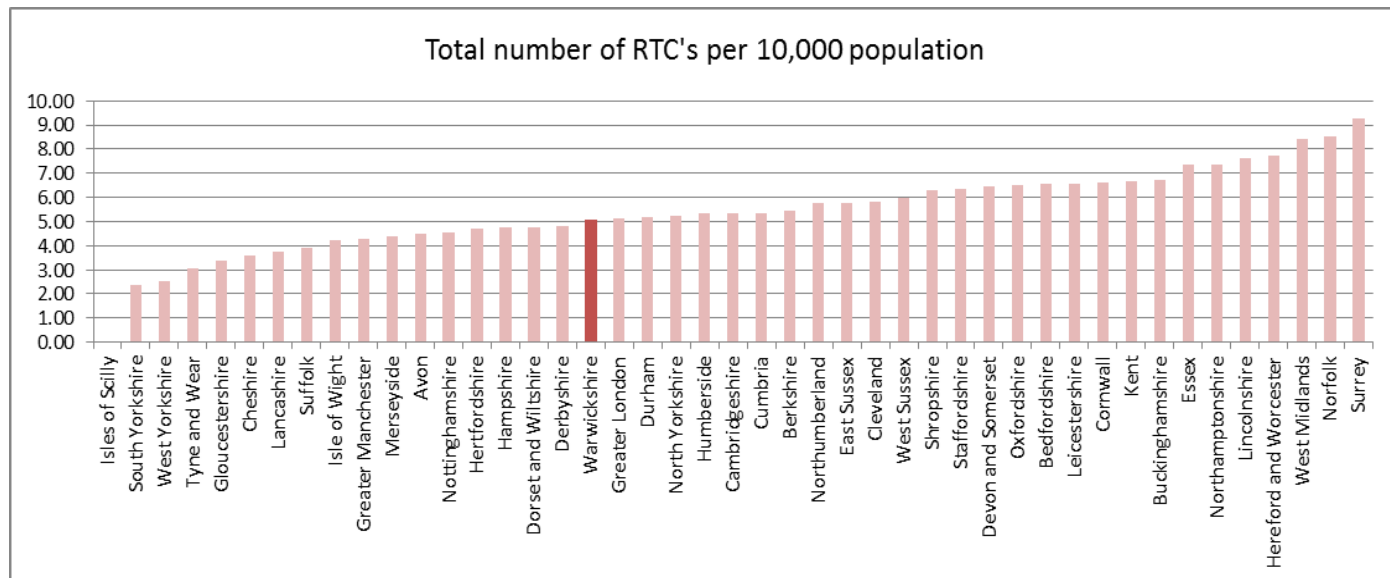


Warwickshire: 6.59
 Position: 1/45
 England: 25.14
 Average: 25.74
 5 year increase 40.6%

2.22 Warwickshire attends the lowest levels of special service incidents per 10,000 population by virtue of its challenge of 999 callers and its attendance policies, and the fact that emergency medical responding is not yet widely practised or recorded in Warwickshire unlike some other areas. Recent policy changes by WFRS have revised some previous non-attendance decisions and as attendance at emergency medical response incidents increases and are recorded it is anticipated that the Service’s position will change in line with public expectations.

2.23 In Warwickshire at quarter 2 2017/18 levels of special services have increased by 4.5% compared to the same period in 2016/17.

2.24 Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) - This incident category relates to incidents that WFRS attend where there has been a road traffic collision on Warwickshire roads. The Operational activity at such incidents will depend on the nature of the incident but regularly includes extricating injured persons from the vehicle.



Warwickshire: 5.09
 Position: 18/45
 England: 5.45
 Average: 5.42
 5 year increase 59%

2.25 Nationally the rate of RTC incidents decreased from 5.69 to 5.45 there was a corresponding decrease in Warwickshire from 5.78 to 5.09. Warwickshire improved its league position from 25th in 2015/16 to 18th in 2016/17 and performs better than the national average.

2.26 In Warwickshire at quarter 2 2017/18 the most serious category of RTCs that require casualties to be extricated from a vehicle has increased by 36% from 42 in 2016/17 to 57 in 2017/18.

3.0 Conclusions on Incident Activity

3.1 Overall performance remains consistently good in a number of key areas both in terms of the long term trend but also by comparing WFRS against other FRs. Despite improved benchmarking performance, focus needs to remain in particular on deliberate fire setting and RTCs as performance in these areas could be improved to reduce the risk and improve the safety of Warwickshire communities. There has been an increase in operational activity in the first 6 months of 2017/18, which in some cases relates to proactive decisions to attend incidents where risk or vulnerability exists in the community.

4.0 Community Fire Safety

- 4.1 WFRS has a small centralised Community Fire Safety (CFS) team that in itself delivers a range of initiatives, in addition frontline personnel deliver a number of activities to compliment the overall aim of keeping the public safe.
- 4.2 In February 2017 the County Council agreed to “invest £200K to pump prime the Fire and Rescue Services increased support for the vulnerable, including home fire safety”. Following the three fatal fires in the early part of 2017 WFRS wanted to ensure the funding was targeted to the most important areas of prevention. In July WFRS invited Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) to undertake a review of its prevention department and its activities, the conclusions from this visit were included in the OSC report 13th September 2017 titled “Fire Deaths in Warwickshire 3rd January and 24th February”.
- 4.3 The key outcomes of the SFRS visit was the recognition that WFRS delivers a range of successful activities, however SFRS recommended the Service strengthen its approach to specific areas of prevention and on this basis WFRS has sought to invest the additional funding in the following areas.
- Targeted safe and well visits for the most vulnerable members of the community.
 - The coordination of community safety in rural areas and the use of Retained Firefighters to undertake community safety activities.
 - The targeting of community safety activities to the most needed areas of the county.
 - The development of policies and partnerships for example Adult Social Care, in order to deliver community safety to the most vulnerable.
- 4.4 The Service has invested the funding into a range of fixed term appointments to deliver these activities. The following is a real example of how the additional funding has assisted in the provision of capacity and skills to support a vulnerable member of the community across a wide range of issues.
- 4.5 Part of the funding was used to provide training and enhance the community safety knowledge of the Retained Duty System (RDS) staff. Following this training an RDS firefighter observed an elderly lady fall when getting out of her car in Stratford. The lady was badly shaken and the RDS firefighter assisted her to get home safely, on arriving at her house he found the door open and house unlocked. The RDS Firefighter was also aware that the clothes she was wearing were dirty with food stains.

- 4.6 The RDS firefighter referred the lady to the Service's Community Safety Team and within a few hours two of the Service's newly appointed staff, with a local Police Community Support Officer visited the lady. They identified some worrying signs, such as a kettle had burnt out and water was being boiled on the stove, the lady was unwashed and the maintenance of the house was in need of some attention. It was apparent from the fridge that she wasn't eating correctly and when asked she said that the shopping was too heavy to bring home.
- 4.7 As a result of this visit, Fire and Rescue staff replaced her front door lock as it was broken and door could not be closed, they purchased a kettle and replaced the damaged and unsafe one which removed the potential fire hazard of boiling water on the hob. Our staff also contacted Social Services and local health teams to assess and work with the lady and set up a home delivery for shopping and also arranged for some extra help around the house. In addition further work has been undertaken with Trading Standards to investigate gardening invoices for £3,500 which the lady could not confirm had been completed.
- 4.8 This case study is an example of not only the excellent work of the Community Safety Team working in partnership with others. It also highlights the additional benefits of enhancing the skills of RDS firefighters and the immediate benefits of further investment in the Service's Community Safety actions to protect a vulnerable member of the community.

5.0 FRS fire safety initiatives

- 5.1 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 and other emergency situations. The initiatives are targeted and deployed when and where they are needed most. These initiatives include:
- **Safe and Well Checks** - 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. The visit now incorporates a wider range of risks in the home including from slips, trips and falls. The Community Fire safety team have strengthened relations with Social Care colleagues to gain referrals to people who may benefit from the service.
 - **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.

- **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 Officers (PCSOs) 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 Police.
- **Anti-Social Behaviour Intervention Team (ASBIT)** - Joint high visibility patrols with PCSOs 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 (B.I.K.E)** - 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 Checks (SSRCs)** - Joint visit to targeted premises across the county to gather premises risk information for Firefighter and Public Safety. Targeted premise lists are created based on a number of criteria including incident type, frequency and associated risks to firefighters.
- **Business Fire Safety Checks (BFSCs)** - Crews undertake visits to lower risk 'fire safety' premises with a higher 'firefighter' risk such as offices, factories and warehouses for familiarisation but also to offer advice and support.
- **Rural Crime** - Work with Rural Crime co-ordinators to visit rural victims of arson and to provide prevention advice to surrounding farms.

- **Road Safety Education** - The Service works in partnership with Warwickshire County Council (WCC) Road Safety Partnership to deliver the “Fatal Four” education sessions within secondary schools and colleges across the county. The session aims to encourage safe driving habits with inexperienced drivers. This year will see Fatal Four becoming part of the award winning ‘Driving Ambitions’ which is the larger WCC Road Safety Education programme. This is an excellent recognition of the important role that the Fire Service can play in raising road safety awareness.
- Since the Grenfell Tower tragedy in June high rise premises have been visited across the county to assess and improve fire safety practices and resident awareness.

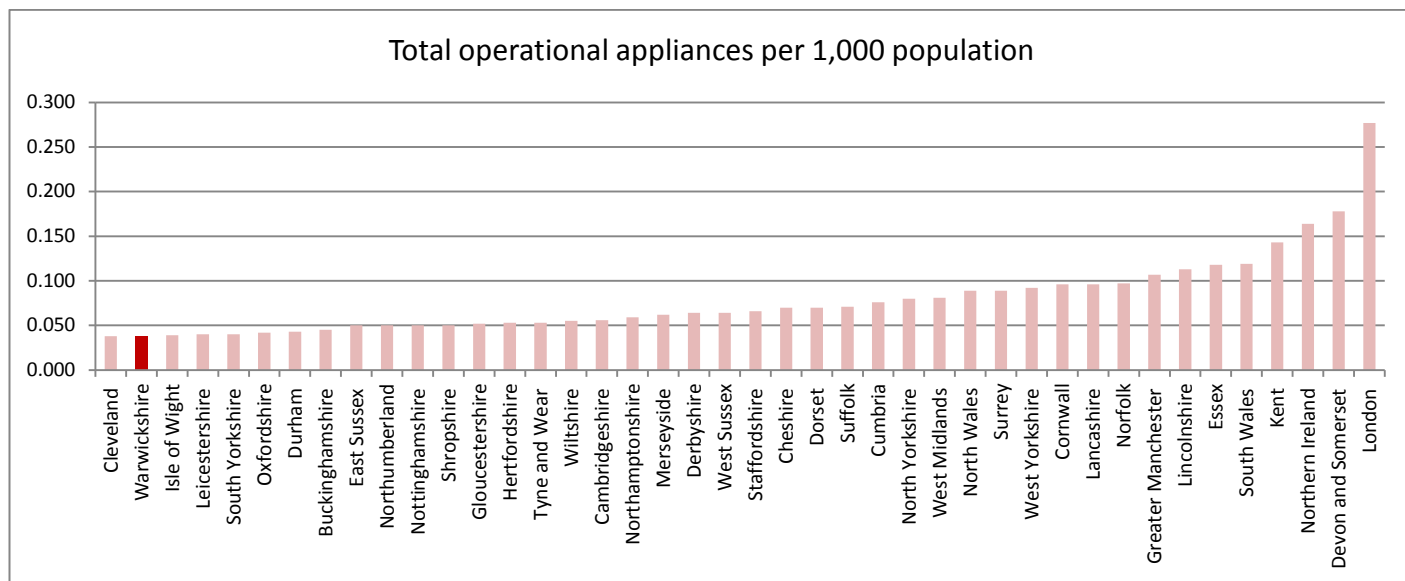
5.2 The Warwickshire Risk Profile analyses the risk across the County in greater detail and Local Risk Plans are developed and used by stations to address their local risk. There is a Management Information Dashboard that can be used to monitor incident activity at station level and by the Arson Reduction Manager. Senior managers at tactical and strategic level review and challenge performance at six weekly performance meetings.

6.0 Resources

6.1 Alongside the benchmarking of incidents, CIPFA produces comparison figures for resources for all England and Wales Fire and Rescue Services. This section provides an overview of some of this comparison data. The data is taken from the annual CIPFA statistics for 2016-17 which are gathered nationally and based on the budgeted position. The provision of the original data is optional for individual FRSs, however, and not all Services contribute full data. In addition, WFRS are aware that there are some inconsistencies in the way that the information is compiled by different Fire and Rescue Services, and any conclusions drawn from the comparisons should be treated with a degree of caution.

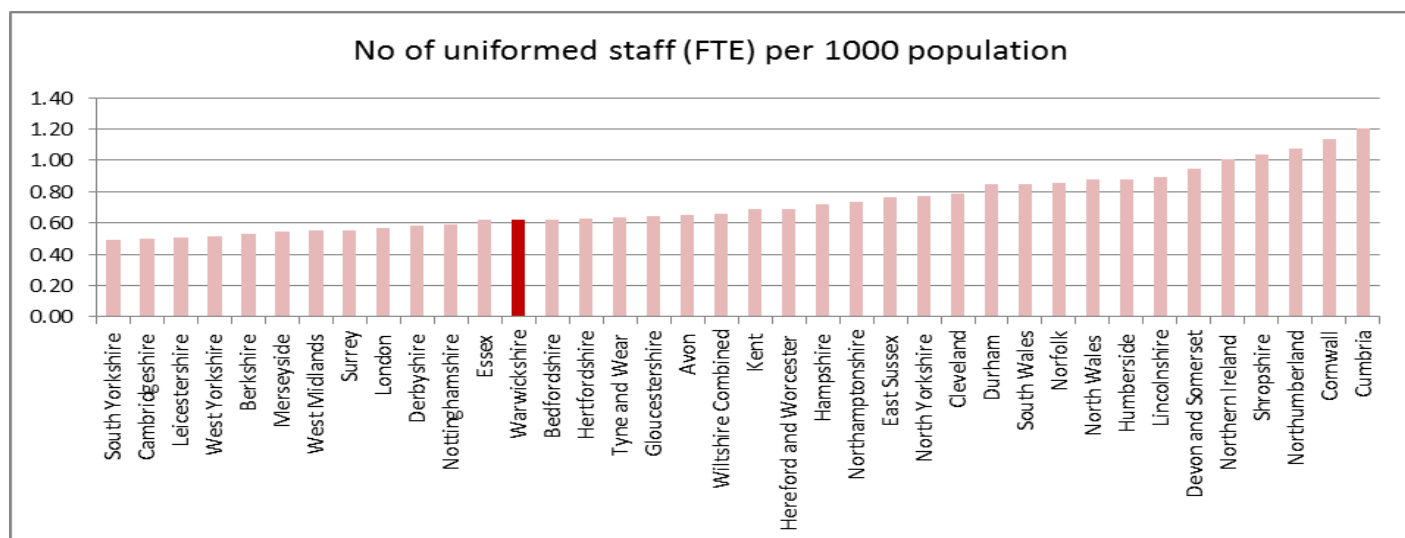
6.2 WFRS are aware, in particular, that expenditure data across Fire and Rescue Services is not produced in a consistent way, and therefore cost comparisons between Services are not reliable at present. With the new HMICFRS inspection regime imminent, work is underway at a national level, in conjunction with CIPFA, to develop a set of financial indicators which can be used for comparison purposes across the sector.

6.3 Total Operational Appliances - This category includes all frontline operational appliances and excludes any training vehicles. 42 British Fire Services provided data and this is presented per 1,000 population in order to be consistent across Services.



Warwickshire: 0.038
 Position: 2/42
 Authority Total: 3.35
 Average: 0.079

6.4 Total Uniformed Staff (Full Time Equivalent) - This category includes all full and part time firefighters, officers and Control Room staff and is calculated as a full time equivalent rather than as head count. Non uniformed staff have not been included in the comparison, because a proportion of WFRS Fire and Rescue staff are part of Resources Group and therefore this figure would not be comparable to other FRSs (e.g. standalone services).



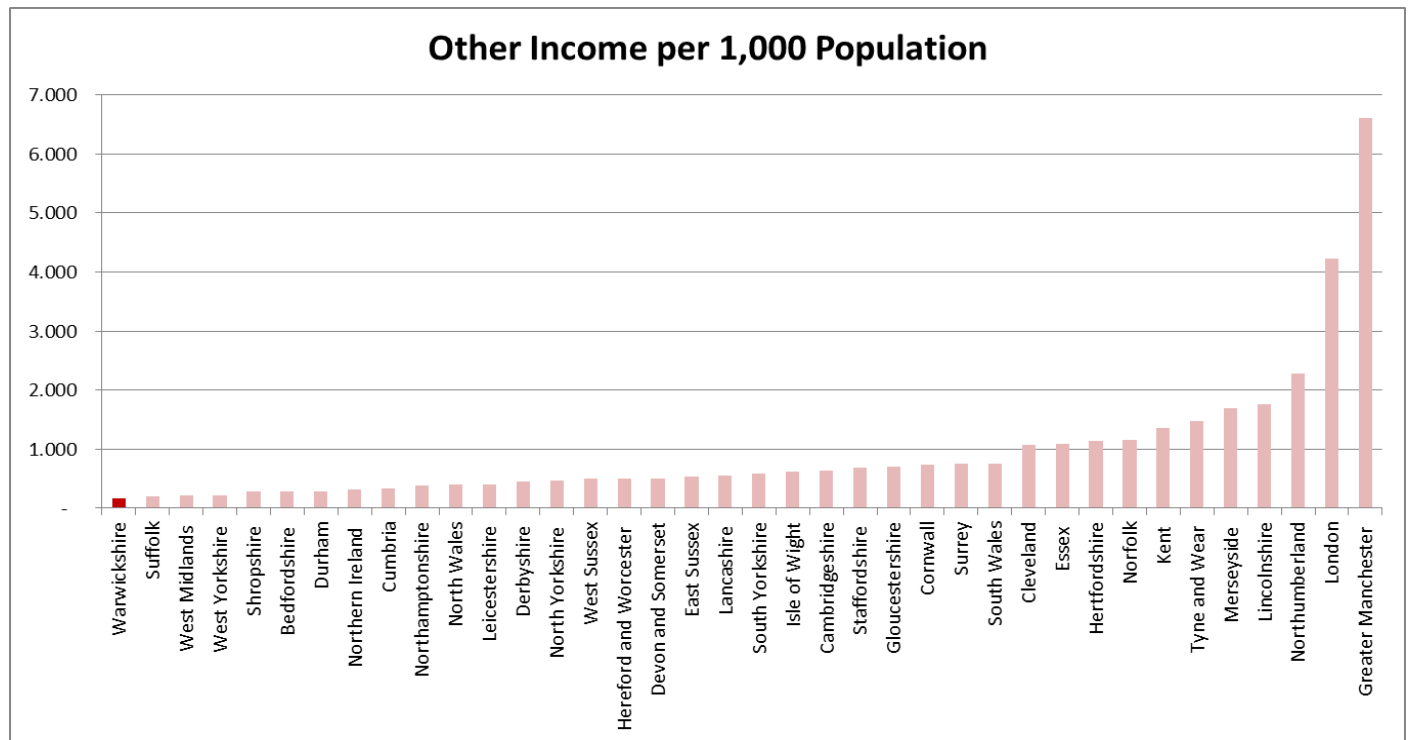
Warwickshire: 0.62
 Position: 13/38
 Authority Total: 0.73
 Average: 0.68

6.5 Only 38 FRs provided this data. Warwickshire sits slightly below the average for all respondents but not to a significant level.

6.6 Reduction in Establishment Levels - In addition to the CIPFA data the Home Office publishes comparative data regarding headcounts by role for each English Fire and Rescue Service. The table below illustrates the changes in headcount by role for Warwickshire compared to England as a whole between 2010/11 and 2016/17. This period covers various organisational changes implemented through the Improvement Plan that followed the Atherstone on Stour Fire, as well as more recent changes that arose through the WCC One Organisational Plan. It can be seen that compared to the national figures WFRS has reduced the number of senior officers at Brigade Manager, Area Manager and Group Manager level in excess of the overall national figure. The number of Firefighters has been reduced by similar levels compared to the national figure; however the number of middle and junior officers at Station Manager and Crew Manager level has increased. Locally the Crew Manager increase was deliberate and was associated with new crewing patterns being introduced at stations that reduced Firefighter and Watch Manager levels to the figures indicated below. Across all operational roles in Warwickshire the number of staff has reduced by a total of 16.06% throughout the period, whereas across the rest of England the overall number of operational roles has reduced by 20.89%.

		Brigade Manager	Area Manager	Group Manager	Station Manager	Watch Manager	Crew Manager	Firefighter	Total
England	2010/11	158	195	638	1,569	4,481	3,903	18,073	29,018
Warwickshire		3	4	10	12	44	41	160	274
England	2016/17	121	166	470	1253	3731	3313	13904	22957
Warwickshire		2	3	6	14	31	51	123	230
England reduction		-37	-29	-168	-316	-750	-590	-4,169	-6,061
%		-23.42	-14.87	-26.33	-20.14	-16.74	-15.12	-23.07	-20.89
Warks reduction		-1	-1	-4	2	-13	10	-37	-44
%		-33.33	-25.00	-40.00	16.67	-29.55	24.39	-23.13	-16.06
% diff Warks v England		-9.92	-10.13	-13.67	36.81	-12.81	39.51	-0.06	4.83

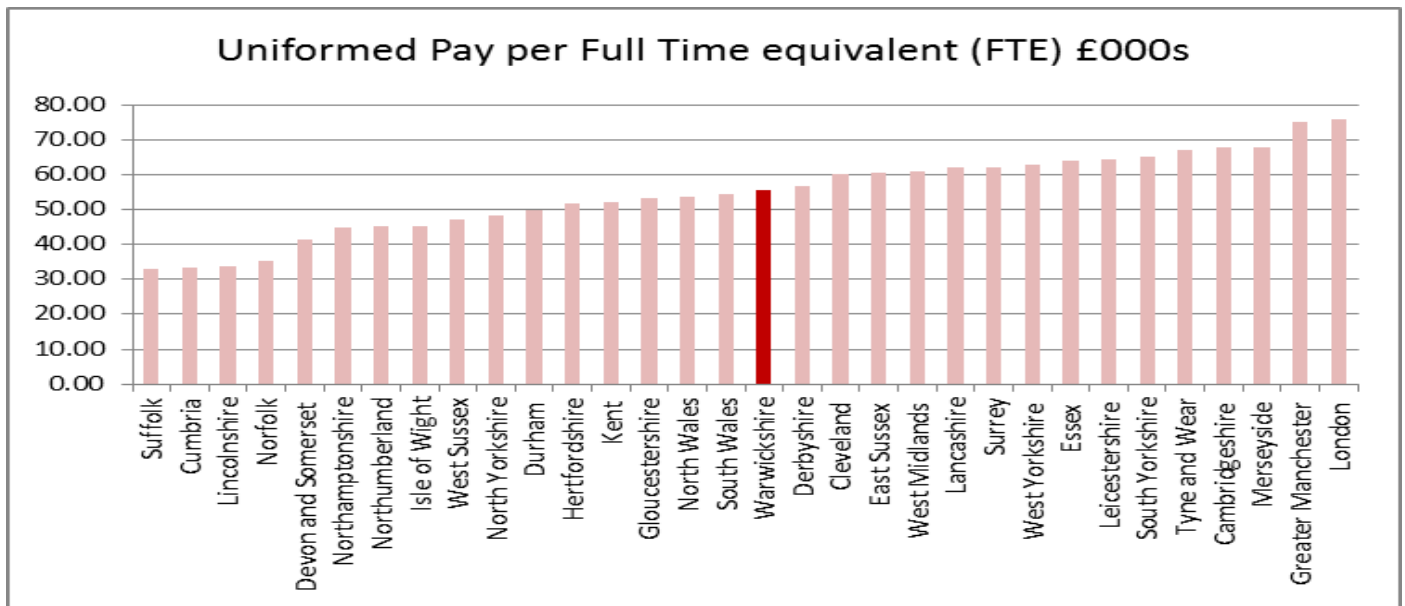
6.7 Other Income per 1000 Population - This reflects the income that is generated by Fire and Rescue Services which is not related to specific grants. It will reflect, for example, income charged for special services, and third party contributions for emergency medical response first responder and co-responder activity.



Warwickshire: £162
 Position: 38/38
 Average: £955

6.8 Warwickshire generates the least other income of all Fire and Rescue Services who submitted data. While details of the type of income being generated by other Services is not available, and the definition of what is deemed to be “income” in other services appears to vary considerably, the evidence suggests that there is scope to do further investigation with other Services to identify the nature of their income and to increase this source of funding for Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service.

6.9 Uniformed Pay per Full Time Equivalent (£000's) - This provides the average pay per uniformed member of staff (operational and support).



Warwickshire: 55.64
 Position: 17/32
 Authority Total: 54.69
 Average: 55.12

6.10 WFRS has slightly above average employee spend per uniformed FTE and this was anticipated when the revised operational response model was agreed in 2015. This sees Warwickshire having a higher number of uniformed staff on shift patterns that attract a supplement above the otherwise nationally agreed pay levels. The wholetime staffing model at Stratford Fire Station, for example, now has 12 wholetime firefighters employed in place of the previous establishment of 28, but these 12 remaining staff earn an additional allowance for providing extended cover thereby increasing average pay for a reduced overall number of staff.

Supporting Documents

OSC report 13 September 2017 titled "Fire Deaths in Warwickshire 3rd January and 24th February"

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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Councillor Howard Roberts - Portfolio Holder for Fire and Community Safety
Councillor Heather Timms - Chair for Resources and Fire & Rescue OSC
Councillor Parminder Singh Birdi - Vice Chair for Resources and Fire & Rescue OSC
Councillor Sarah Boad - Party Spokesperson for Resources and Fire & Rescue OSC
Councillor Maggie O'Rourke - Party Spokesperson for Resources and Fire & Rescue OSC
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