

Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Meeting 19 September 2018

Operational Performance of Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service 2017/18

Recommendation

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

1.0 Introduction

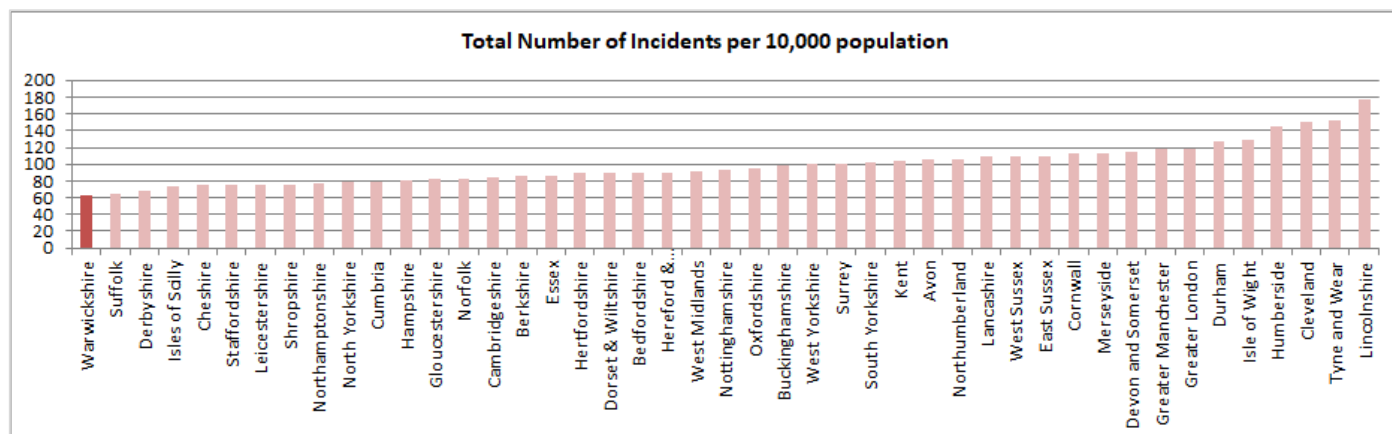
- 1.1 The Home Office has recently published the annual Fire Statistics Data Tables for the period April 2017 to March 2018, and the full report is available here <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/fire-and-rescue-incident-statistics-england-year-ending-march-2018>. This report highlights some key comparative performance information that this publication presents about how Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service (WFRS) performs against certain key incident categories in comparison to the other 44 English Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs). Incident data is collated using the national Incident Recording System used within each FRS.

2.0 Incident Activity

- 2.1 Across England, whilst a steady decrease in the level of incidents attended by Fire and Rescue Services had been seen previously, in more recent years there has been a year on year increase in levels of incidents attended, and that trend has continued in 2017/18. This pattern is also apparent within Warwickshire with a 13.4% overall increase in the levels of incidents attended has been seen when comparing 2017/18 to 2016/17.

Details on specific incident types, including comparative information is provided below:

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

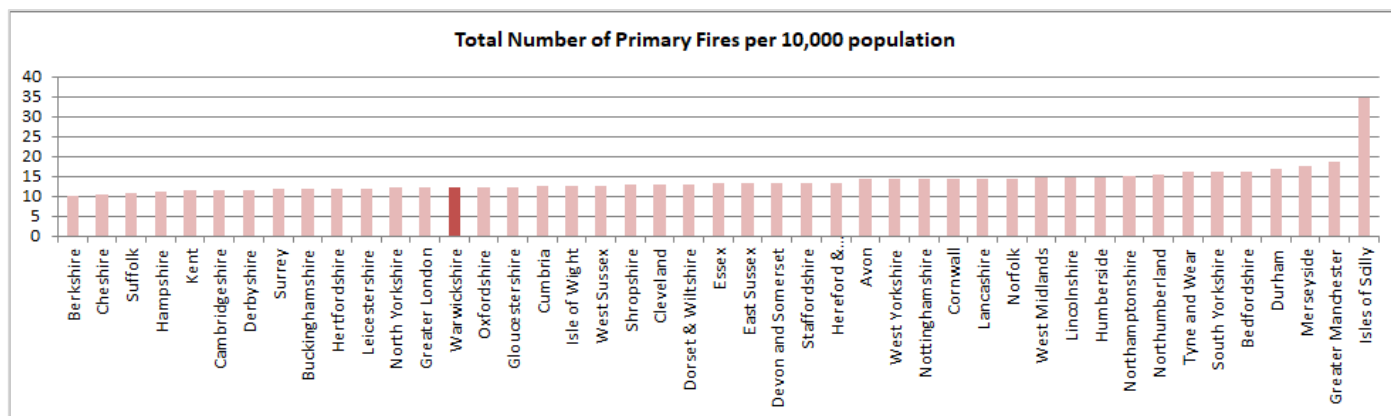


Warwickshire:	63.36	Average:	98.98
Position:	1/45	WFRS 5 year increase	17.5%
England:	102.20	England 5 year increase	7.2%

2.3 When compared with other Fire and Rescue Services, Warwickshire attends the lowest levels of incidents per 10,000 population. In part, the low level can be attributed to differences in local operational policies between fire services. Warwickshire has an established, robust call challenge policy where information provided by 999 callers is challenged and as a result the Service will sometimes not send a fire engine to emergency incidents that might still be routinely attended elsewhere, for example attendances to activations of fire detection apparatus are only made locally in certain circumstances rather than automatically.

In addition, there are also incident types which are attended and recorded by other Fire and Rescue Services on a routine basis that are not attended on that basis in Warwickshire. For example, many Fire and Rescue Services provide a co-responding emergency medical response on behalf of the local Ambulance Service and this 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 currently restricted to a Community First Responder pilot scheme in Southam. The overall rate for total incidents in Warwickshire per 10,000 population has increased from 60.90 in 2015/16 to 63.36 in 2017/18. A similar increase in the number of incidents has been experienced at a national level with an increase from 98 in 2015/16 to 102.20 in 2017/18.

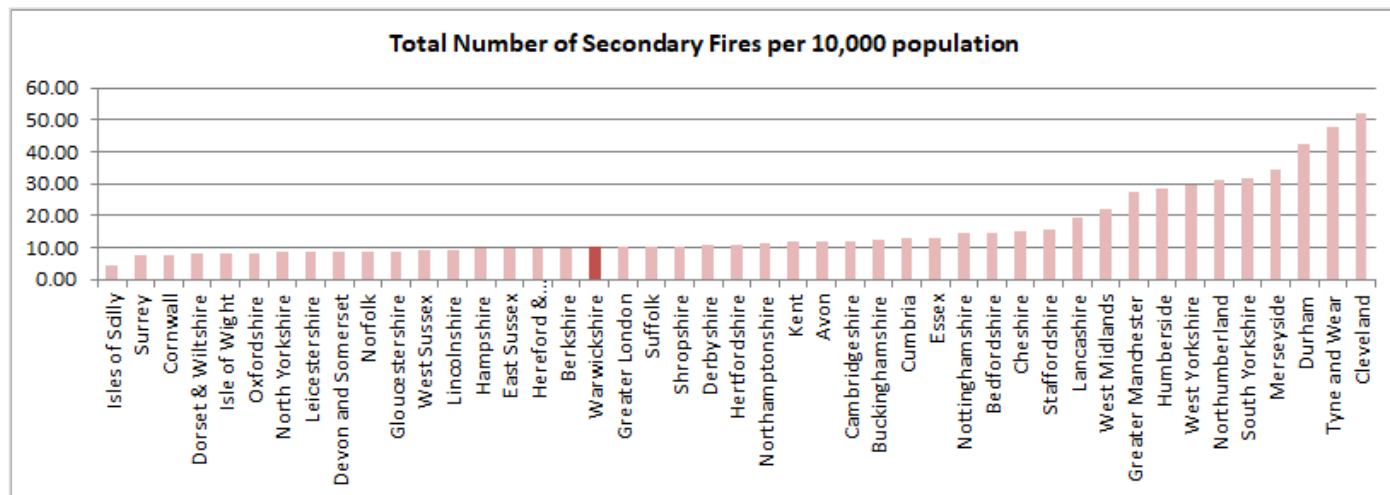
2.4 **Primary Fires** - These are fires that involve property or vehicles or where casualties or rescues have occurred; they also include incidents where five or more fire engines are in attendance. This category of fires includes domestic and non-domestic fires, vehicle fires and other property fires.



Warwickshire:	12.14	Average:	13.86
Position:	14/45	WFRS 5 year increase	18.3%
England:	13.41	England 5 year increase	1.22%

2.5 Nationally there has been an increase in the number of primary fires per 10,000 population compared to the previous year, 13.41 in 2017/18 compared to 12.12 in 2016/17. Warwickshire follows this trend to a degree but with a larger increase with a rate of 12.41 compared to 10.72 and so has moved down in the rankings from position 2 to 14. This increase is likely to be partly due to ongoing refinements to local incident recording standards across the service as a key management assurance exercise ahead of the HMICFRS inspection earlier this year.

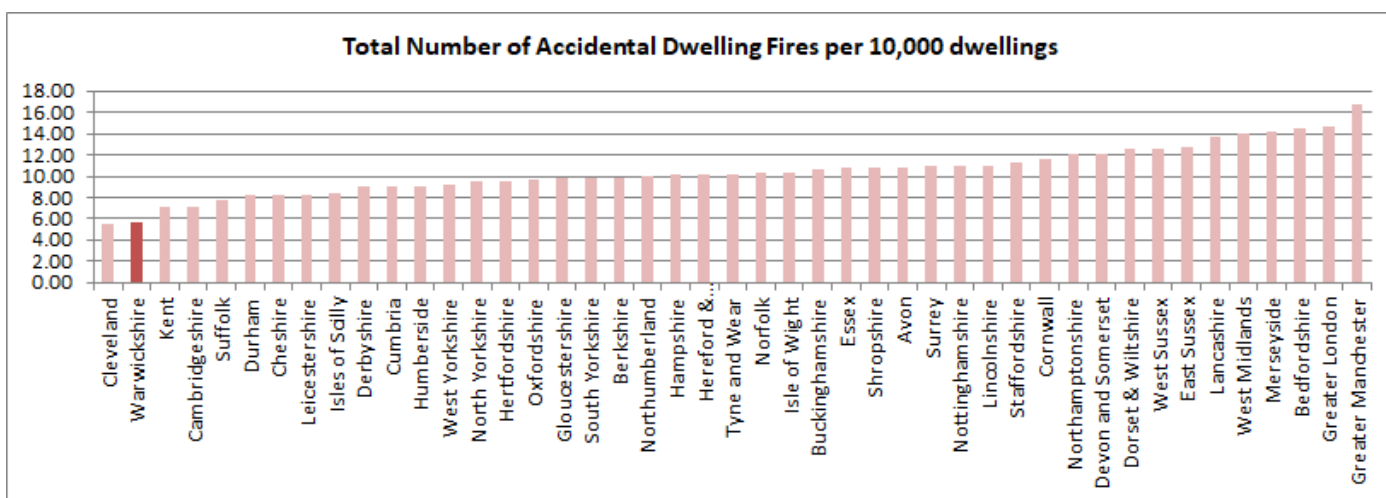
2.6 **Secondary Fires** - These are fires that do not involve property, vehicles or life risk and are mostly outdoor fires, such as refuse and grassland fires. Derelict property or vehicles and fires confined to a chimney structure are also included in this incident type.



Warwickshire:	10.04	Average:	15.95
Position:	18/45	WFRS 5 year increase	13.5%
England:	16.11	England 5 year decrease	3.38%

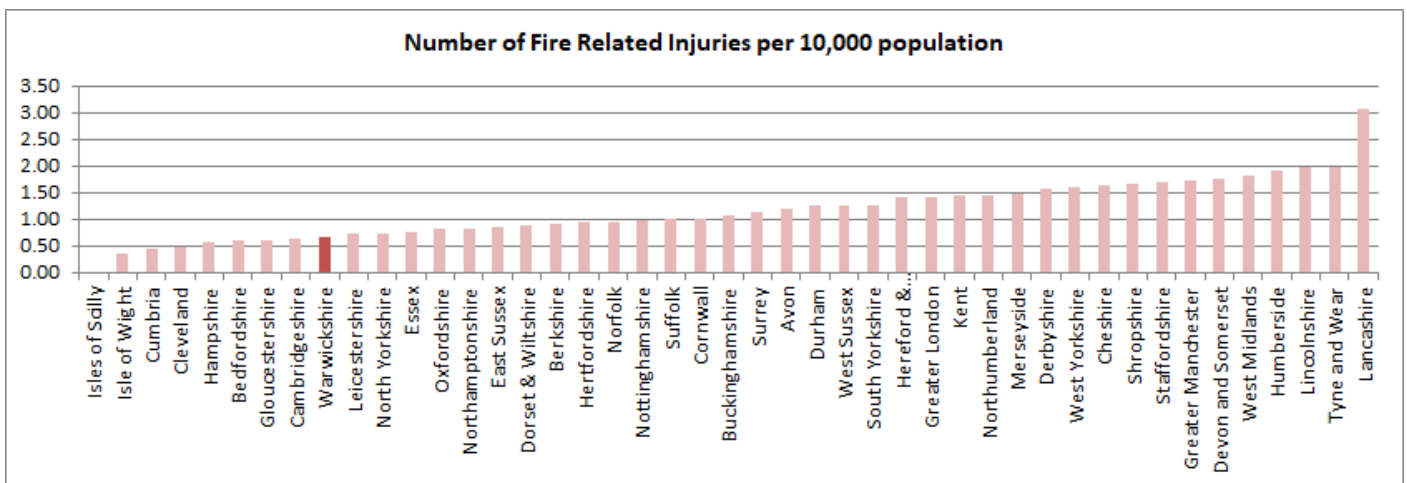
2.7 During 2017/18 the level of secondary fires in England increased to 16.11 from 11.99 in 2016/17. However Warwickshire levels reduced from 11.23 to 10.04 and Warwickshire improved its national position for the second year in succession.

2.8 **Accidental Dwelling Fires** - This category covers those primary fires within section 2.4 above that occur in various types of domestic residences, namely houses, flats, bungalows and 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.



Warwickshire:	6.00	Average:	10.46
Position:	2/45	WFRS 5 year reduction	2.95%
England:	11.46	England 5 year reduction	3.64%

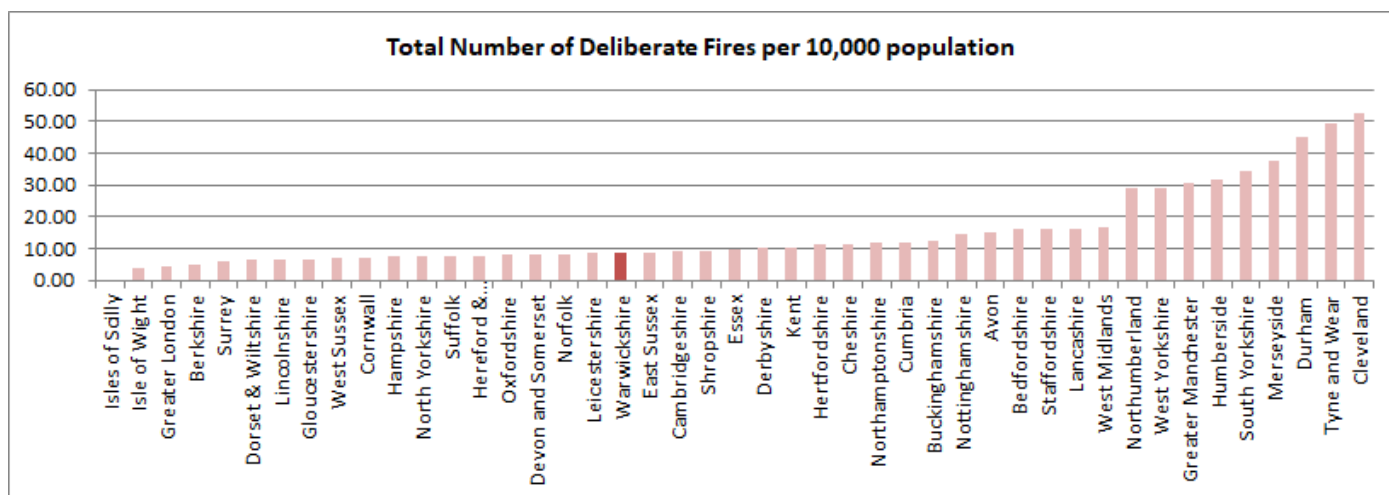
- 2.9 The rate of accidental dwelling fires per 10,000 dwellings reduced at a national level during 2017/18 to 11.46 compared to the rate of 12.37 in 2015/16. Warwickshire continues to be one of the best performing Services for the rate of accidental dwelling fires per 10,000 dwellings, maintaining its second position from 2015/16 and by further reducing the rate of accidental dwelling fires from 6.21 to 6.00.
- 2.10 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.
- 2.11 WFRS has historically experienced very low numbers in terms of fire related deaths however during 2017/18 there were two fire related deaths as a result of an aircraft accident. Full investigations are always undertaken to understand the circumstances behind these tragedies and identify any improvement activities for targeting of fire safety campaigns, including formalised case reviews with key partners such as Adult Social Care. Please note a chart has not been included for this measure as such low levels of fire related deaths occur nationally.



Warwickshire:	0.65	Average:	1.16
Position:	9/45	WFRS 5 year increase	2.85%
England:	1.32	England 5 year decrease	6.73%

- 2.12 Warwickshire's performance in terms of fire related casualties per 10,000 population is consistent with last year's levels with a recorded rate of 0.65 in 2017/18 compared to 0.61 in 2016/17. This remains significantly better than both the England and average position although Warwickshire's league position has slipped from 5th to 9th across the 2 years. Over the last few years Warwickshire levels have been increasing slightly year on year and this is similarly reflected in the national figures with an increase to 1.32 in 2017/18 from 0.98 in 2016/17.

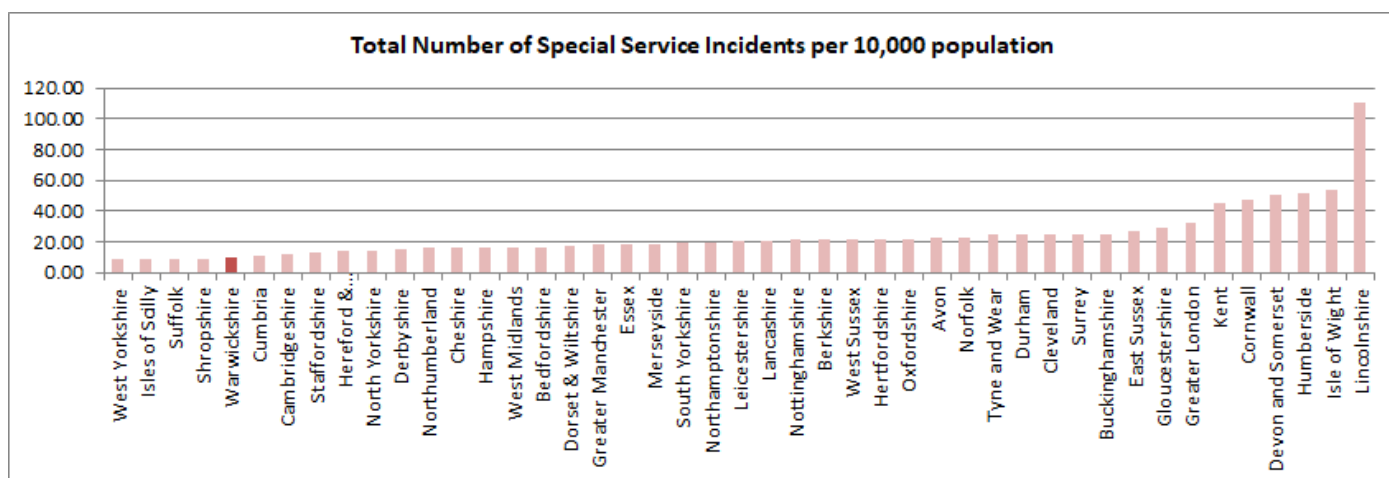
2.13 **Deliberate Fires** - This category is related to incidents of deliberate fire setting, where the source of ignition is believed to be deliberate. It includes fires of a primary and secondary nature, but is mostly comprised of secondary fires.



Warwickshire:	8.82	Average:	15.03
Position:	19/45	WFRS 5 year decrease	15.9%
England:	14.61	England 5 year increase	3.97%

2.14 Across England the levels of deliberate fire setting have increased slightly from 13.89 in 2016/17 to 14.61 during 2017/18, in terms of the overall rate. Warwickshire improved the overall league position from 24 to 19 as the rate of deliberate fires decreased from 9.75 to 8.82.

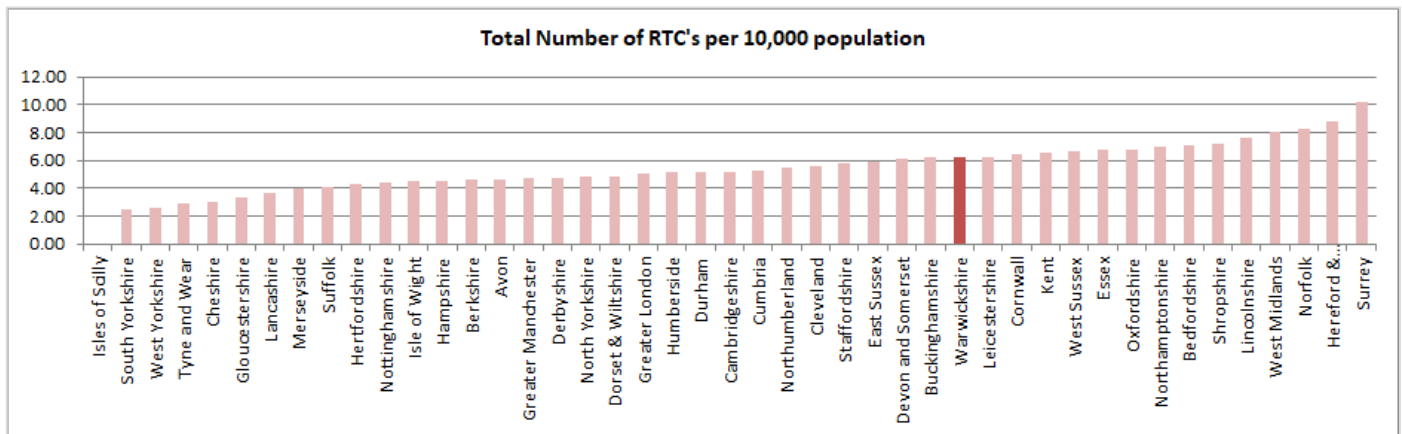
2.15 **Special Services** - This incident category includes a diverse range of incident types including flooding, hazardous materials, the rescue or release of people from incidents other than fires or road traffic collisions as well as any support given to other emergency services such as assisting with missing person searches or emergency medical responding. Some of these incidents involve events that the FRS has a power, but not necessarily a statutory duty, to respond to therefore there is a degree of policy discretion available to the Fire Authority.



Warwickshire:	10.13	Average:	24.06
Position:	5/45	WFRS 5 year increase	192.6%
England:	24.50	England 5 year increase	38.7%

2.16 Warwickshire attends lower levels of special service incidents per 10,000 population compared to some other Services, largely by virtue of its challenge of 999 callers and its attendance policies, and the fact that emergency medical responding is not yet widely practised in Warwickshire unlike some other areas. As a result of some recent policy changes by WFRS to attend more special services when vulnerable people are involved, as well as attendance at some emergency medical response incidents by the Southam Community First Responder initiative, there has been an increase in the number of incidents of this type attended locally. This has contributed to an increase to 10.13 in 2017/18 from 6.59 in 2016/17 and Warwickshire has moved from the number 1 position to number 5. Nationally levels of this type of incident have remained relatively static between 2016/17 and 2017/18.

2.17 Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) - This incident category relates to incidents that WFRS has a statutory duty to 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, immediate medical care, and making vehicles safe from fire risk.



Warwickshire:	6.23	Average:	5.41
Position:	31/45	WFRS 5 year increase	57.9%
England:	5.41	WFRS 5 year increase	6.34%

2.18 Nationally the rate of RTC incidents decreased from 5.45 to 5.41, however there has been an increase in Warwickshire from 5.09 to 6.23. Warwickshire's league position has declined from 18th in 2016/17 to 31st in 2017/18 and performs lower than the national average.

3.0 Conclusions on Incident Activity

3.1 Overall our local 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 FRSSs. These areas include overall levels of incidents, accidental dwelling fires and fire related deaths and injuries. Attention is naturally being given to those incident types that are showing an increase and modifications to prevention activity will be developed accordingly, including where partnership working is key to improvements.

4.0 Community Fire Safety

4.1 The Fire Authority has a statutory duty to make provision for promoting fire safety in its area. This duty is delivered by the Community Fire Safety (CFS) team who deliver a range of initiatives, either by delivering services directly or by providing the policy and support necessary to allow frontline fire station personnel deliver a number of activities to compliment the overall aim of keeping the public safe. A summary of the main activities are as follows which, in total, typically see some 40,000 members of the public having a direct face to face contact with a member of WFRS each year:

- **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, smoking cessation, home security and winter warmth. The Community Fire Safety team have strengthened relations with Social Care colleagues to further develop the referral process to maximise information sharing between key agencies.
- **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** are delivered throughout the year - National campaigns such as smoke alarm 'test it Tuesdays', white goods safety 'register my appliance', health initiatives 'no smoking day' and water safety campaign 'drowning prevention' 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)** - This provides both fire fighting capability at specific times and a joint and 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 (e.g. school holidays, exam results time and Halloween and the Bonfire Night period)
- **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.
- **Hospital To Home (HTH)** - is a commissioned service providing a transportation and settling service for the over 65s. This is a 12 month pilot that started in August 2018 providing a home transport service from Warwick and George Eliot Hospitals between the hours of 10:00 - 00:00. On arrival at the service users home address the HTH team

will also ensure basic welfare needs are met and undertake a hazard spotting exercise and fit smoke alarms if appropriate. If the customer consents to a Safe & Well check the HTH team will forward a referral to the Prevention department. In the majority of cases this should be completed within 5 days.

- **Nursery boxes** - Are an available resource for childminders and early years settings. They contain a selection of early years resources that fit in with the early years educational framework. All children who access the boxes receive accident prevention and fire prevention information to take home. The Nursery Boxes are working in partnership with public health to help with the reduction of unintentional injuries to the under-fives and reduce childhood obesity with healthy food packs.
- **Heart Shield** - Is a collaboration between Warwickshire Public Health and Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service. The initiative is delivered to secondary school pupils and covers skills such as, emergency life support, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and how to use a Public Access Defibrillator. The sessions also include information on key heart health messages to help reduce the risk of them having heart related issues associated to lifestyle in later life.
- **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.
- **Rural Crime** - Work with Rural Crime coordinators to visit rural victims of arson and to provide prevention advice to surrounding farms.
- **Road Safety Education** - WFRS works in partnership with Warwickshire County Council (WCC) Road Safety Partnership to deliver the “Driving Ambitions” and “Fatal 4” education sessions within secondary schools and colleges across the county. The session aims to encourage safe driving habits with inexperienced drivers.
- **Biker Down** - The Service works in collaboration with the ‘Safer Roads Partnership’ working with Warwickshire Police and West Midlands Ambulance Service to deliver safety awareness sessions to motorbikers of all ages. The sessions cover accident scene safety, basic first aid and the science of being seen.
- **Highrise Building Fire Safety** - Since the Grenfell Tower tragedy in June 2017 all high rise premises have been visited across the county to assess and improve fire safety practices and resident awareness in close liaison with the relevant local authority housing department.

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