

Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee

18 December 2019

Operational benchmarking performance report of Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service 2018/19

Recommendation

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

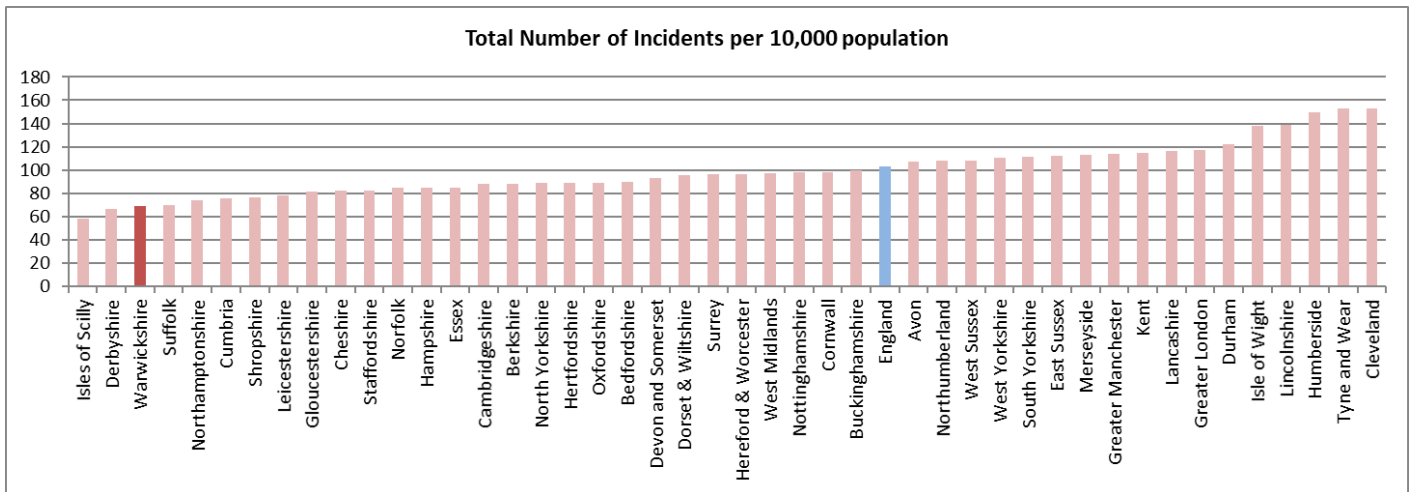
1.0 Key Issues

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 and population data has been taken from the Fire Statistics Data Tables April 2018 to March 2019, published by the Home Office in August 2019; the number of dwellings 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, when compared to levels of incidents attended by Fire and Rescue Services 5 years ago, there has been a significant reduction. However, in the last 2 years there have been year on year increases in levels of incidents attended, that trend continued in 2018/19. This pattern is also apparent within Warwickshire, with a 5-year reduction of 49.7%. However, between 2018/19 and 2017/18 there is a 14.5% overall increase in the levels of incidents attended.

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



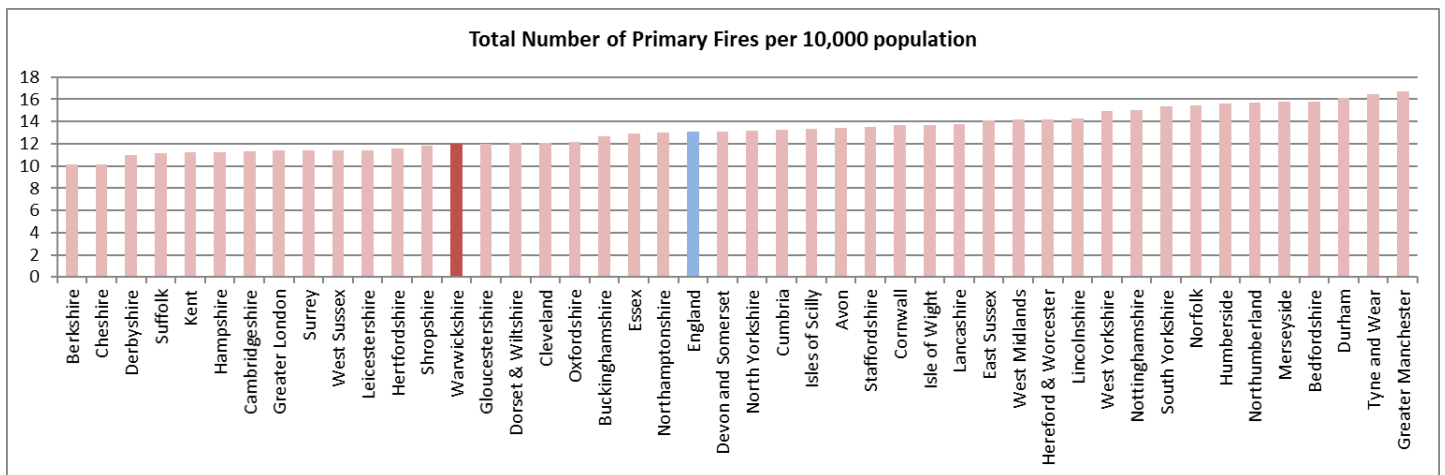
Warwickshire: 69.37
 Position: 3/45
 England: 102.91
 Average: 99.22
 Significantly Rural: 94.04

2.3 When compared with other FRSs, Warwickshire attends the 3rd lowest level of incidents per 10,000 population. In part, the low level can be attributed to differences in local call challenge, mobilizing and attendance policies between fire services.

The overall rate for total incidents in Warwickshire per 10,000 population has increased from 63.36 in 2017/18 to 69.37 in 2018/19. In comparison a smaller increase in the number of incidents has been experienced at a national level with an increase from 102.20 in 2017/18 to 102.91 in 2018/19. Warwickshire moved from 1st to 3rd position in terms of rankings.

Warwickshire's rate of incidents per 10,000 population remains significantly lower than the England rate of 102.91, the overall average of 99.22 and all other significantly rural English Services of 94.04.

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.

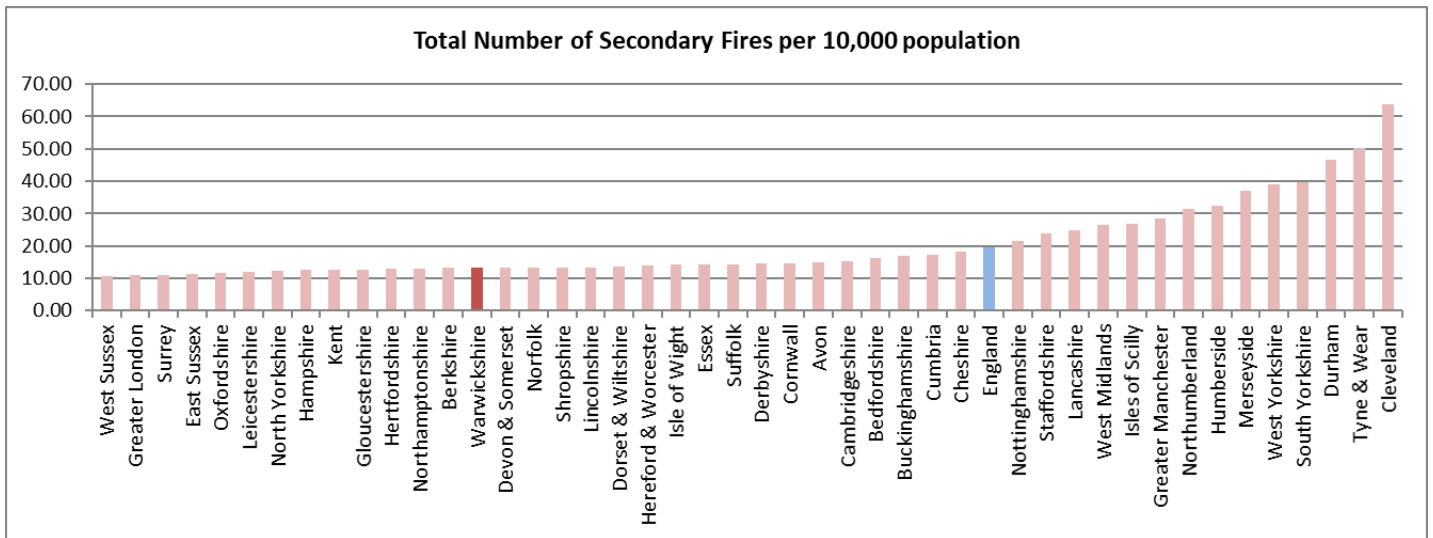


Warwickshire: 11.96
 Position: 14/45
 England: 13.08
 Average: 13.22
 Significantly Rural: 12.52

2.5 Nationally there has been a decrease in the number of primary fires per 10,000 population compared to the previous year, 13.08 in 2018/19 compared to 13.41 in 2017/18. Warwickshire follows this trend to a degree but with a smaller decrease with a rate of 11.96 compared to 12.14 but has remained static in terms of the rankings at position 14.

Warwickshire's rate of primary fires per 10,000 population remains significantly lower than the England rate of 13.08, the overall average of 13.22 and all other significantly rural English Services with 12.52.

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 and vehicles and fires confined to a chimney structure are also included in this incident type.

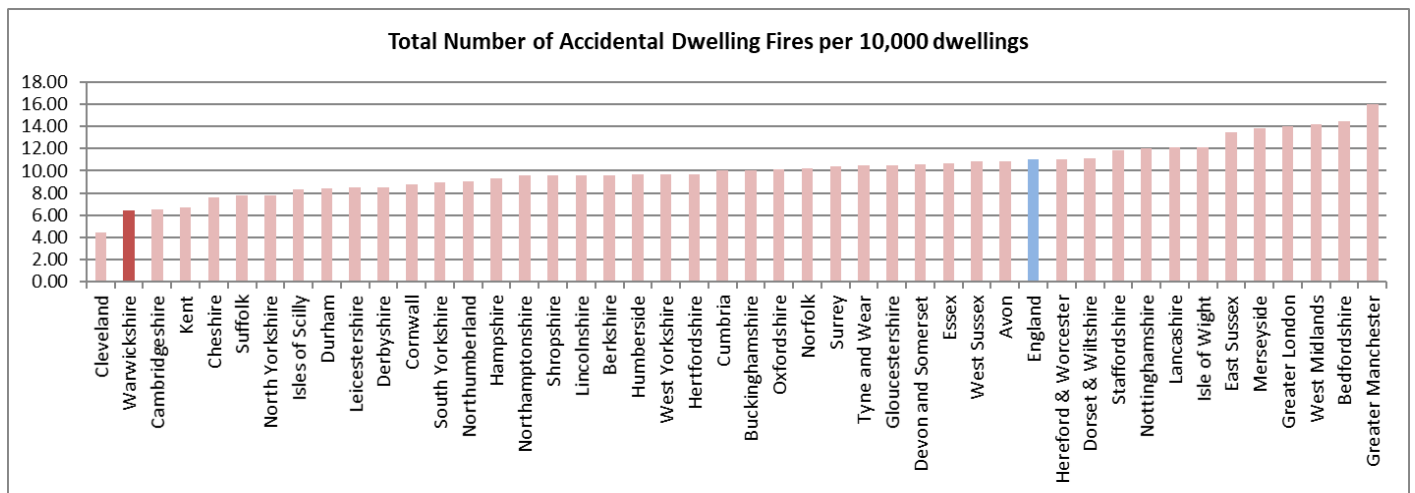


Warwickshire: 13.33
 Position: 14/45
 England: 18.09
 Average: 20.31
 Significantly Rural: 15.53

2.7 During 2018/19 the level of secondary fires in England increased to 18.09 from 16.11 in 2017/18. Warwickshire levels also increased, by a slightly bigger margin, from 10.04 to 13.33. Warwickshire improved its league position by 4 positions from 18th to 14th, this is the third year in succession where an improved position has been achieved.

Warwickshire's rate of secondary fires per 10,000 population remains lower than the England rate of 18.09, the overall average of 20.31 and all other significantly rural English Services with 15.53.

2.8 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 subcategory of primary fires.



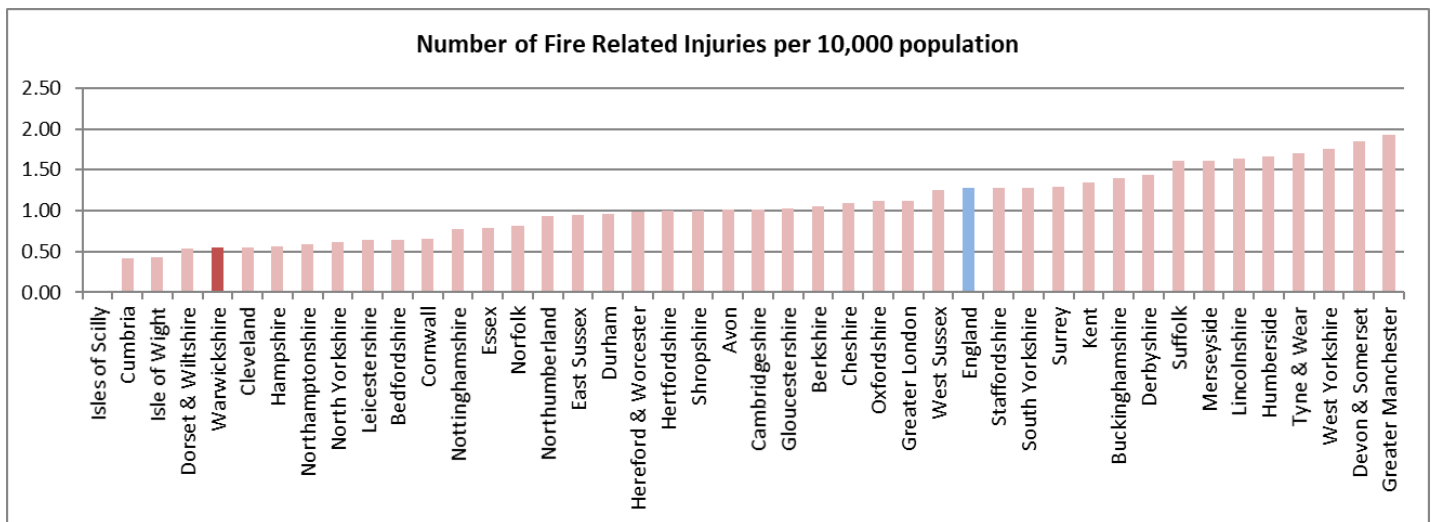
Warwickshire: 6.41
 Position: 2/45
 England: 11.00
 Average: 10.12
 Significantly Rural: 9.89

2.9 The rate of accidental dwelling fires per 10,000 dwellings reduced at a national level during 2018/19 to 11.00 compared to the rate of 11.46 in 2017/18. 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 2017/18, however the rate of accidental dwelling fires increased from 6.00 in 2017/18 to 6.41 in 2018/19.

Warwickshire’s rate of accidental dwelling fires per 10,000 dwellings remains significantly lower than the England rate of 11.00, the overall average of 10.12 and all other significantly rural English Services with 9.89.

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 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 2018/19 there were 6 fire related deaths, which is a high level for Warwickshire. Full investigations are always undertaken to understand the circumstances behind these tragedies and identify any improvement activities for targeting of fire safety campaigns. Please note a chart has not been included for this measure as such low levels of fire related deaths occur nationally.

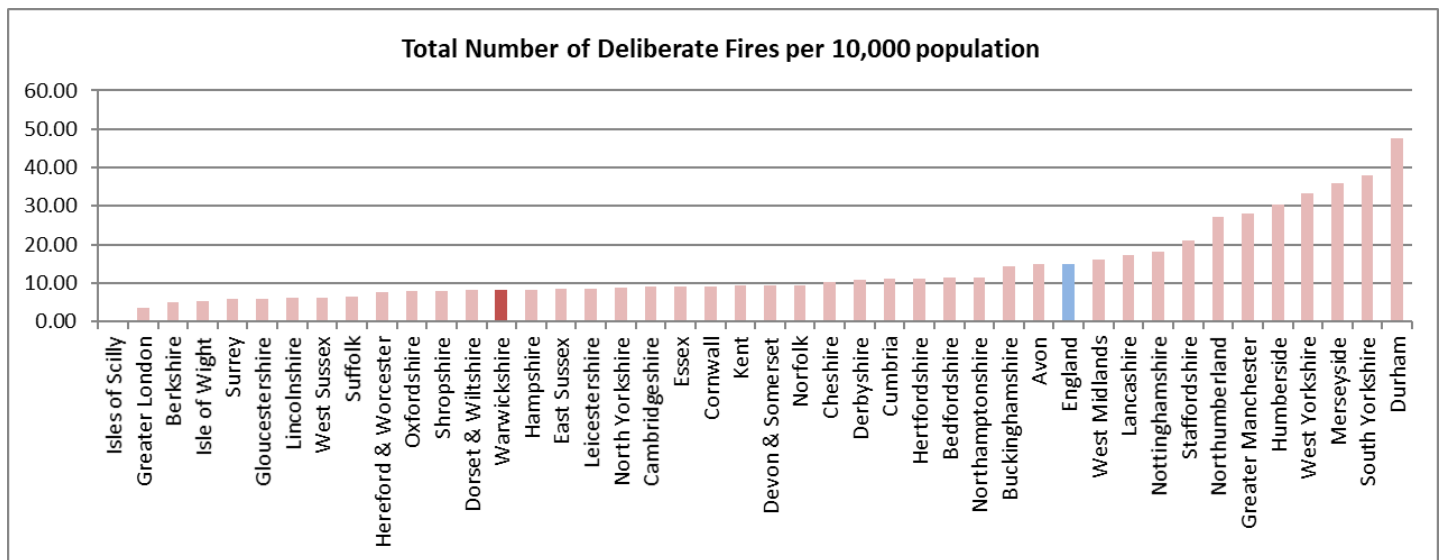


Warwickshire: 0.54
 Position: 5/45
 England: 1.28
 Average: 1.13
 Significantly Rural: 1.02

2.12 Warwickshire’s performance in terms of fire related injuries per 10,000 population has improved with a recorded rate of 0.54 in 2018/19 compared to 0.65 in 2017/18. Similarly, at a national level the rate of fire related injuries per 10,000 population has reduced slightly from 1.32 in 2017/18 to 1.28 in 2018/19.

Warwickshire’s rate of fire related injuries per 10,000 population remains significantly lower than the England rate of 1.28, the overall average of 1.13 and all other significantly rural English Services with 1.02.

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.

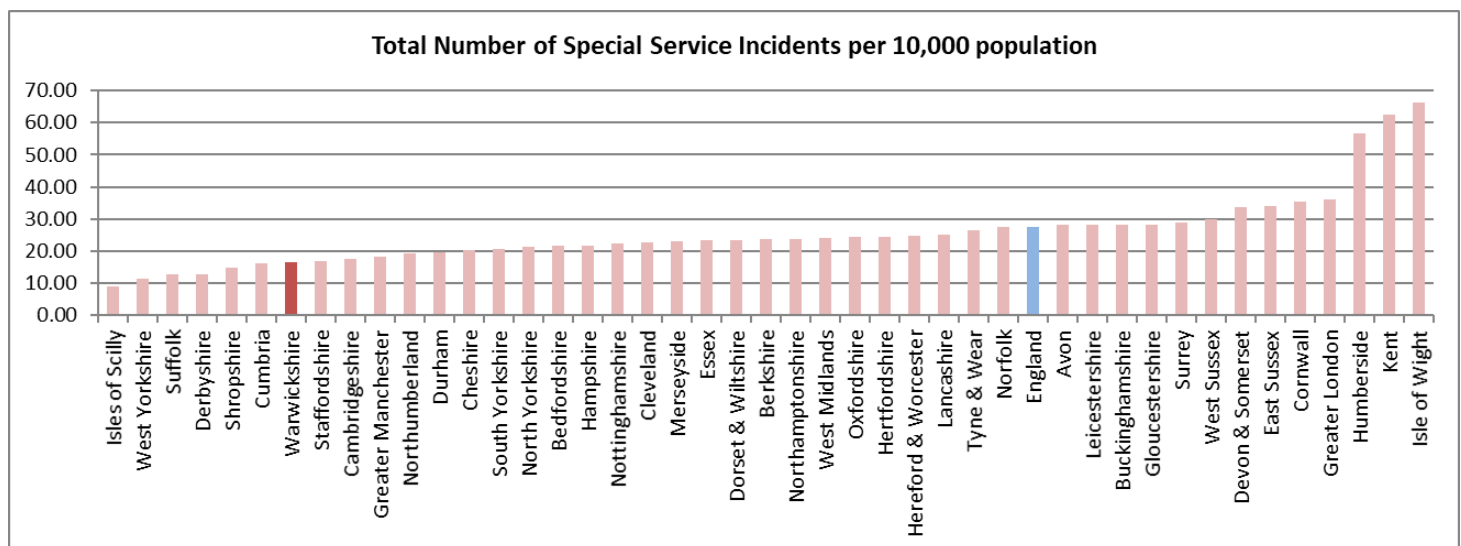


Warwickshire: 8.16
 Position: 14/45
 England: 14.87
 Average: 15.51
 Significantly Rural: 11.29

2.14 Across England the overall rate of deliberate fire setting has increased slightly from 14.61 in 2017/18 to 14.87 during 2018/19. Warwickshire improved the overall league position from 19th to 14th as the rate of deliberate fires decreased from 8.82 to 8.16.

Warwickshire's rate of deliberate fires per 10,000 population remains significantly lower than the England rate of 14.87, the overall average of 15.51 and all other significantly rural English Services with 11.29.

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

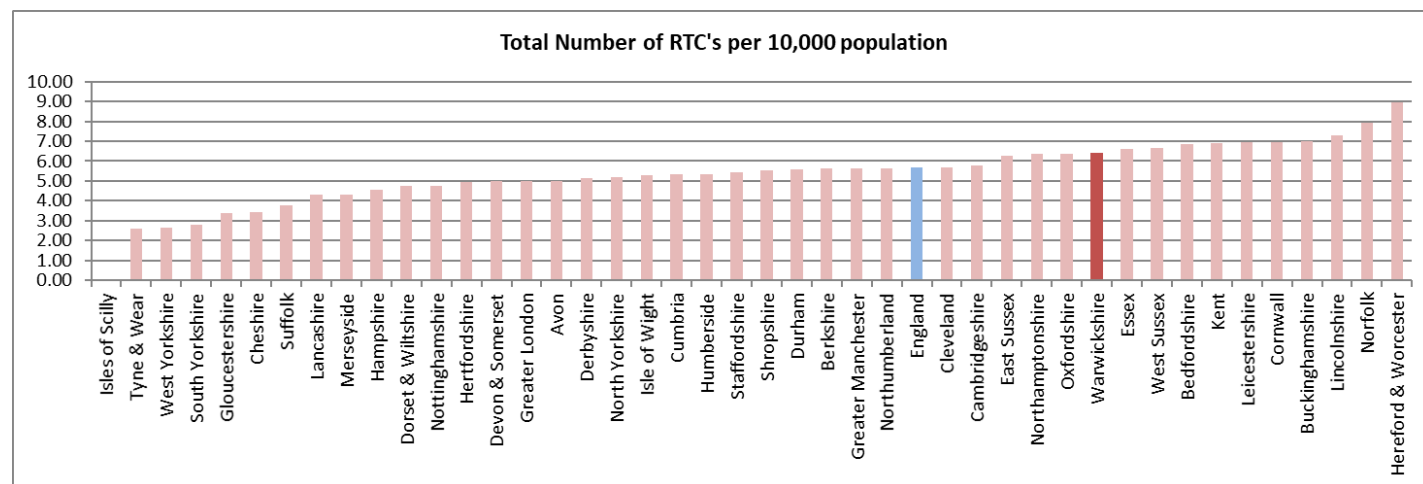


Warwickshire: 16.51
 Position: 7/45
 England: 27.67
 Average: 26.76
 Significantly Rural: 29.80

2.16 Warwickshire attends lower levels of special service incidents per 10,000 population compared to some other Services in part due to its challenge of 999 callers and its attendance policies. Because of some historical policy changes by WFRS and the revision of some previous non-attendance decisions there has been an increase in the number of incidents of this type attended. There has been an increase to 16.51 in 2018/19 from 10.13 in 2017/18 and Warwickshire has moved from the number 5 position to number 7. Nationally levels of this type of incident have also increased to 27.67 in 2018/19 from 24.06 in 2017/18.

Warwickshire's rate of special service incidents per 10,000 population remains significantly lower than the England rate of 27.67, the overall average of 26.76 and all other significantly rural English Services with 29.80.

2.17 Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) - This incident category relates to incidents that WFRS attend where there has been a road traffic collision on Warwickshire roads, please note that there will be other RTC's in the County that WFRS will not have been called to. The Operational activity at such incidents will depend on the nature of the incident but regularly includes extricating injured persons from the vehicle.



Warwickshire: 6.39
 Position: 33/45
 England: 5.68
 Average: 5.54
 Significantly Rural: 6.02

2.18 Nationally the rate of RTC incidents increased from 5.41 in 2017/18 to 5.68 in 2018/19, there

has been a similar increase in Warwickshire from 6.23 to 6.39. Warwickshire's league position has slipped from 31st in 2017/18 to 33rd in 2018/19 and performs significantly lower than the national average.

Warwickshire's rate of RTC incidents per 10,000 population remains significantly higher than the England rate of 5.68, the overall average of 5.54 and all other significantly rural English Services with 6.02.

2.19 Conclusions on Incident Activity

2.20 Overall performance remains consistently good in several key areas both in terms of comparing WFRS against other FRSs and other FRSs that are considered to be significantly rural as Warwickshire is. These areas include overall levels of incidents, accidental dwelling fires and fire related deaths and injuries. Despite improved benchmarking performance, focus needs to remain on deliberate fire setting. Levels of RTCs across the County remain a concern as performance has deteriorated against all comparator series and prioritising activity to reduce the risk and improve the safety of Warwickshire communities is recommended.

2.21 Community Fire Safety

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 and directly or by providing the policy and support necessary to allow frontline fire station personnel deliver a number of activities to complement 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, there are 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 firefighting 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) – This is a commissioned service providing a transportation and settling service for the over 65s. It was initially a 12 month pilot that started in August 2018, due to its initial success, WFRS have now secured further funding to support until March 2020. The service provides 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, undertake an initial hazard spotting exercise and fit smoke alarms if appropriate. If the customer consents to a full 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 year's 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 WFRS. 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.

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.

2.22 Community Fire Protection

The WFRS Fire Protection team regulates fire safety standards of premises within the communities of Warwickshire by inspecting, monitoring and reviewing businesses under the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. The team works hard to raise awareness to business owners and managers of the risk of fire in the workplace. The enforcement and advisory activities help those responsible to develop and implement appropriate fire safety processes which will ensure the safety of employees and premises.

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 that may be required. The Protection team targets higher risk premises for audit by employing a risk and intelligence based principle which can be adapted to address both local and national trends. The management team will also apply professional judgement based upon local knowledge and national advice when tailoring the inspection programme.

Highrise Building Fire Safety - Following the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower the Fire Protection team have been working very closely with the local authority and private sector landlords to ensure that high rise buildings within Warwickshire are compliant with fire safety standards. This has been completed in conjunction with visits by operational fire crews to residents to offer and complete Safe and Well Checks further raising safety.

Business Fire Safety checks (BFSC) - A BFSC is an information gathering process relating to a premises fire protection requirements and potential non-compliance within the standards. This work is carried out by operational fire crews on behalf of the Fire Protection department during other routine visits to premises. This allows the Fire Protection department to check a greater proportion of business premises in the county, reduce burdens on business from multiple visits from the Fire Service whilst identifying and reducing risk to the community.

In addition to the full fire safety inspections the fire protection team undertakes a range of fire

protection activities which includes, post fire audits, building regulation consultations; enforcement/ prohibition action; event safety and sports ground safety as well as inspecting under other legislation such as the Housing Act, Marriage Act and Licensing Act.

2.23 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.

3.0 Financial Implications

3.1 Not applicable for the purposes of this performance report.

4.0 Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

4.1 Not applicable.

Background Papers

None.

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