



Safest People, Safest Places

Local Government Act 1972

A Meeting of the Combined Fire Authority for County Durham and Darlington Human Resources Committee will be held in the County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters on Thursday 23 May 2024 at 10.00 am to consider the following business:-

PART A

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of the previous meeting - 20 February 2024 (Pages 3 - 6)
3. Sickness Absence Performance Quarter Four 1 April 2023 - 31 March 2024 - Report of the Director of People and Organisational Development (Pages 7 - 18)
4. Health and Safety Performance Quarter Four 1 April 2023 - 31 March 2024 - Report of the Director of Emergency Response (Pages 19 - 28)
5. Additional Health Care Benefit Report of the Director of People and Organisational Development (Pages 29 - 30)
6. Values and Culture in Fire and Rescue Services Spotlight Report Action Plan Update - Report of the Director of People and Organisational Development (Pages 31 - 48)
7. Such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration
8. Any resolution relating to the exclusion of the public during the discussion of exempt information

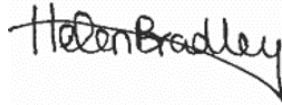
PART B

Items during which it is considered the meeting will not be open to the public (consideration of exempt or confidential information)

9. Employee Relations Update Report of the Director of People and Organisational Development (Pages 49 - 54)

10. Such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration

PURSUANT to the provisions of the above named Act, **I HEREBY SUMMON YOU** to attend the said meeting

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Helen Bradley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Helen Bradley
Clerk to the Combined Fire Authority
for County Durham and Darlington

County Hall
Durham
DH1 5UL

**TO: The Members of the Combined Fire Authority for County Durham
and Darlington Human Resources Committee**

Durham County Councillors:

Councillors C Marshall, A Batey, J Cairns, J Quinn and C Martin

Darlington Borough Councillors:

Councillors D Ray

County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service

Minutes of a meeting of the **Human Resources Committee** held at Fire HQ on **Tuesday 20 February 2024** at **1000 hours**.

Present: Cllr C Martin in the Chair

Durham County Council: Cllrs A Batey and J Quinn

Darlington Borough Council: D Ray

Officers: K Metcalfe
J Parry (for items 4 and 7 only)
D Hodgson (for item 4 only)

Part A

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs C Marshall and J Cairns.

2 Minutes of previous meeting – 21 November 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2023 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

3 Sickness Absence Performance Quarter Three 1 April 2023 to 31 December 2023

K Metcalfe introduced the report which provided an update on sickness absence performance for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 December 2023.

Cllr J Quinn questioned whether sickness through injury were from incidents at work. K Metcalfe confirmed they were from activities outside of work.

Cllr J Quinn queried service procedures for staff returning to work from injuries. K Metcalfe confirmed that the modified duties procedure had been formalised recently and staff were no longer given this option unless they have a return to work window. The change to process has meant sickness absence can be managed more effectively.

Cllr A Batey commented on sickness relating to mental health and possible links to Covid. Discussion took place around what the service are doing to help and support staff who's physical resilience may be compromised through the effects of Covid. K Metcalfe noted that there was no evidence that cases were directly linked to Covid but confirmed that welfare provisions were in place and were advertised to all staff regularly. Following discussion it was agreed that K Metcalfe would provide a breakdown of mental health absence data at year end.

ACTION: K Metcalfe to provide a breakdown of mental health absence data at year end.

Cllr D Ray commented on people being more open about their mental health and questioned whether the data shows staff taking up support returning to work faster. K Metcalfe confirmed that EAP and Benenden were confidential reporting lines so the data isn't available to make that link.

Cllr A Batey queried Service insurance liabilities for staff returning to work from injuries such as broken limbs. K Metcalfe confirmed that full risk assessments were carried out.

The Committee **noted** the report.

4 Health and Safety Performance Quarter Three 1 October 2023 to 31 December 2023

D Hodgson introduced the report which provided Members with a summary of the Service's health and safety performance for the end of the third quarter of the 2023/24 reporting period.

Cllr J Quinn commented on the vehicle accidents and queried whether the LGV driver had made an insurance claim. D Hodgson confirmed no insurance claim had been made.

Discussion took place regarding the near miss incidents relating to BA set failures and Cllr A Batey suggested that wording be considered to adjust timescales for investigations when external parties are involved to accommodate their lead in times. It was agreed that JP would review the narrative for the PI.

ACTION: J Parry to review the narrative for PI73 regarding investigations incomplete after 28 days.

Cllr D Ray questioned whether the BA set failures were the same issue reported previously and asked if there were any concerns around the manufacturer. D Hodgson confirmed that they were new issues and that the service did not have concerns around the manufacturer. The manufacturer had carried out appropriate investigations including a site visit where drying room procedures had been highlighted. Configuration of the drying room and store were now being reviewed by the Service to restrict access, introduce dehumidifiers and consider the airflow.

Cllr C Martin questioned when the failures had taken place. D Hodgson confirmed that the incidents were from training sets only and was likely due to the high turnover of sets. J Parry assured the committee that health and safety was tightly governed with strict measures in place for all kit.

Cllr A Batey queried the issue regarding drill yard lighting at Sedgefield and questioned whether light visors had been considered. J Parry confirmed that flood lighting was required.

The Committee **noted** the report.

5 Values and Culture in Fire and Rescue Services Spotlight Action Plan Update

K Metcalfe introduced the report which provided an update on the progress made towards completion of the Action Plan relating to HMICFRS Values and Culture Report and the recommendations made.

Discussion took place around the procedure change for DBS checks. Members noted that although it was a challenging task it would be greatly beneficial to the Service and Fire sector.

K Metcalfe noted that the two outstanding actions relating to HMICFRS assurances had been discussed with the SLL who advised that they were satisfied as long as the required updates were uploaded to Huddle.

The Committee **noted** the report.

6 Equality Reporting 2023

K Metcalfe introduced the report which updated the committee on the annual reports published by the Service for Public Sector Equality Duty and Gender Pay Gap.

Clr D Ray queried whether flexible working arrangements were still something the Service were open to. K Metcalfe confirmed that all requests were considered however flexibility was limited for operational staff.

The Committee **noted** the report.

7 NFCC Equality Diversity and Inclusivity Maturity Model

J Parry introduced the report which provided an update on the progress made in the implementation of the NFCC Equality Diversity and Inclusivity Maturity Model.

Members commented on the commendable work carried out by the EDI group.

The Committee **noted** the report.

8 Additional Health Care Benefit

K Metcalfe introduced the report which provided an update on the implementation of the trial of additional workforce healthcare benefit, through Benenden Health.

Members commented on the positive use to date and noted that it would be interesting to see the effects on sickness absence moving forward.

The Committee **noted** the report.

9 Staff Survey Outcomes

K Metcalfe introduced the report which informed the committee of the findings of the staff survey conducted by People Insight over September and October 2023.

Cllr D Ray queried the number of people taking up welfare provisions and whether it was because they did not know about the services available. K Metcalfe confirmed there was regular communications about service welfare provisions.

The Committee **noted** the report.

Part B

10 Employee Relations Update

K Metcalfe introduced the report which provided details of informal and formal complaints received by the Service from its workforce as well as the instigation of any disciplinary action for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 December 2023.

Members commented on the information.

Cllr D Ray queried whether the service also document external processes. K Metcalfe confirmed that any employment tribunals would be outlined in the report.

The Committee **noted** the report.

County Durham and Darlington
Fire and Rescue Authority



Safest People, Safest Places

Human Resources Committee

23 May 2024

Sickness Absence Performance

Quarter Four 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024

Report of Director of People and Organisational Development

Purpose of the report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on sickness absence performance for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

Background

2. The effective management of absence is a key performance issue for any organisation. This is particularly important when operating in a climate of reduced financial and human resources.
3. The Service places significant emphasis on the effective management and reporting of sickness absence and Members have an important role to play in providing an overview of the arrangements that are in place and the performance that is achieved.

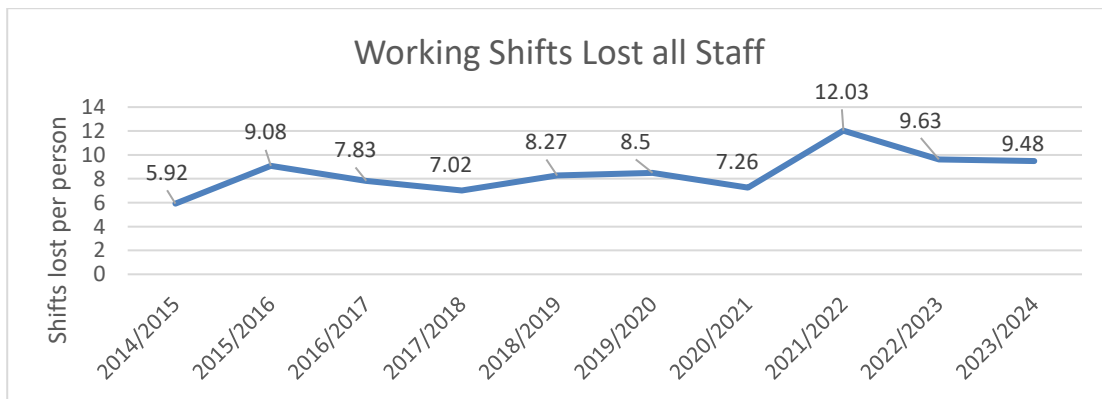
Summary of Sickness Statistics

4. The sickness statistics for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 are calculated as average shifts/days lost per person.
5. The Service compares sickness levels to the targets that have been set for the year and to previous year's performance to provide a rounded view of sickness performance, and to help to identify any trends in particular areas.
6. For the purposes of the performance indicators, all covid-19 related absence is included.
7. Table 1 sets out the sickness statistics against three key performance indicators. These indicators were measures previously used to measure performance within the best value framework and the Service continues to use these measures to enable national comparisons to be undertaken at year end.

Table 1 Key Sickness Statistics by Best Value Indicators

Performance Indicator	Apr 23 to Mar 24	Apr 23 To Mar 24 Target	Variance	Apr 22 to Mar 23 (PYR)	Direction of Travel
Working shifts / days lost for all staff .	9.48	7	+2.48	9.63	Improved
Working shifts / days lost due to sickness for all Wholetime, Control and Non- Uniformed	8.57	7	+1.57	8.86	Improved
Working shifts / days lost due to sickness for all Wholetime and Control	9.59	7	+2.59	8.95	Increased

8. All KPIs for sickness are above target at for the year however performance has improved in comparison with last year for all staff. Compared to the end of last year, sickness shifts lost overall has decreased by 1.5%. MSK and Mental Health concerns are a large contributor to absence levels with 31.7% and 35.2% respectively. Mental Health has overtaken MSK as the main reason for absence this year and has more than doubled from this time last year where it accounted for only 14% of overall absence. MSK has dropped by approx. a quarter from this time last year.
9. FDO/DD has seen a substantial increase since this quarter last year with Corporate seeing a decrease and remaining well under target for this point in the year. Control significantly increased in quarter 2 and remained high in quarter 3 and quarter 4 due to long term sickness. Almost 80% of all absence is due to long term sickness which is slightly up on last quarter, and all staff groups except corporate demonstrate that in their figures.
10. The graph below shows the shift lost for all staff over the previous 10 years.



11. Table 2 below shows a further breakdown over the specific staff groups that are employed by the Service.

Table 2 Sickness by Staff Group

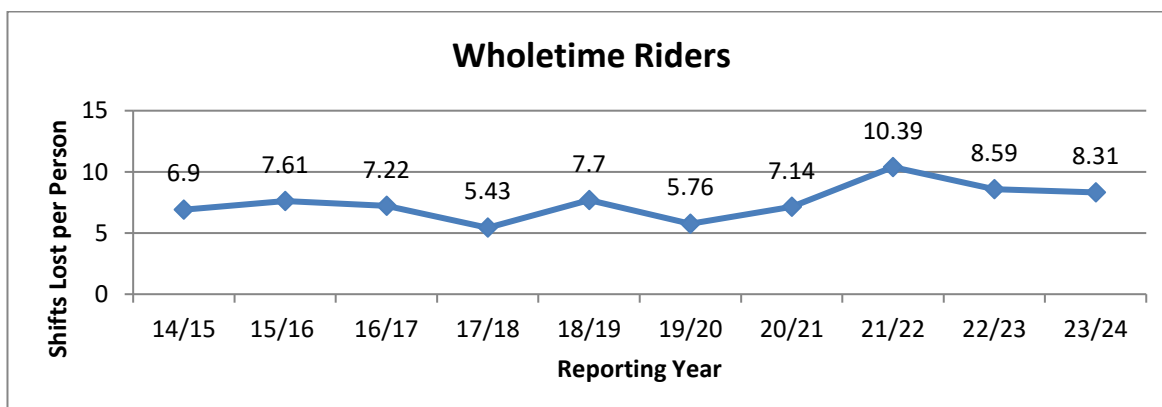
Performance Indicator	Apr 23 to Mar 24	Apr 23 To Mar 24 Target	Variance	Apr 22 to Mar 23 (PYR)	Direction of Travel
WT Riders	8.31	7	+1.31	8.59	Improved
FDO / DD	15.43	4.5	+10.93	11.62	Increased
Control	12.2	8	+4.2	8.4	Increased
RDS	12.44	9	+3.44	12.13	Increased
Non-uniformed	5.54	7	-1.46	8.55	Improved

Wholetime Station Based Firefighters (Riders)

11. The detailed sickness information relating to WT riders is summarised below.

Description	Days/cost	%/£ change from Q4 2022-23
Total shifts lost to 31/03/2024	2694	+22.57%
Long term sickness	1994 (74%)	+35.00%
Short term sickness	700 (26%)	-2.91%
Approximate cost of sickness	£509,166	+£93,744 (22.57%)

12. The WT rider category has seen a 22% increase in shifts lost when compared with the same reporting period in 2022/23. Shifts lost in Quarter 4 has been the lowest so far this year predominantly due to long- term absence dropping to 5 this quarter.



13. Mental Health currently accounts for over 43% of total absence which has severely increased since last year. This type of absence includes anxiety, low mood, work related stress, bereavement, and family related stress. Work-related stress accounts for 31% of all mental health absence in this category. Those concerned continue to receive support via the POD

Team, line managers, Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) and occupational health. Mental Health has overtaken MSK as the reason for sickness this year.

- 14. MSK accounts for over 35% of all absence this year. The absences cover the spectrum of MSK issues however lower limb accounts for over 53% of all MSK absences. The Service continue to promote the physiotherapy provision and support individuals back to work at the earliest opportunity. Those waiting for operations, however, are likely to have lengthy absences unless an intervention from Benenden Health is appropriate.
- 15. Short term absence went down in January, rose in February then down again in March. The main reasons for short term absence are still predominantly Gastroenteritis and cold/flu.
- 16. This category is over target at the end of the reporting year.

Flexible Duty Officers and Day Duty

17. The detailed sickness information relating to FDO and DD staff is summarised below.

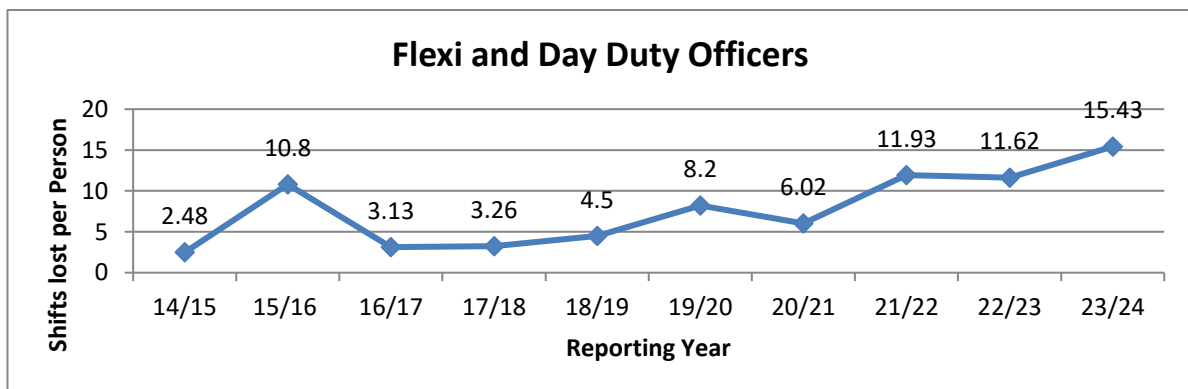
FDO

Description	Days/cost	%/£ change from Q4 2022-23
Total shifts lost to 31/03/2024	332	+77.5%
Long term sickness	291 (88%)	+142.5%
Short term sickness	41 (12%)	-38.8%
Approximate cost of sickness	£89,264	+£42,320 (+90.15%)

Day Duty

Description	Days/cost	%/£ change from Q4 2022-23
Total shifts lost to 31/03/2024	347	+30.45%
Long term sickness	294 (85%)	+50.68%
Short term sickness	53 (15%)	-56.19%
Approximate cost of sickness	£81,322	+£22,781 (+38.9%)

- 18. The FDO category and the DD category have both seen high levels of absence again this quarter predominantly linked to long term absence. The main reasons are MSK and mental health. Short term absence in both categories is low which is positive. Most of these cases have been resolved and individuals have returned to work however, one in the FDO category will continue into the next reporting year.



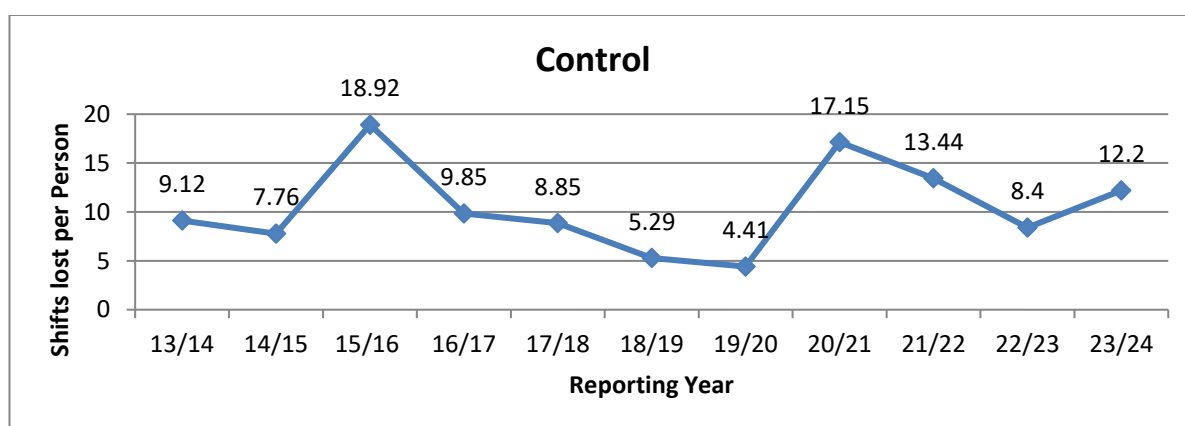
- 19. This category is over target at the end of the reporting year.

Control

20. The detailed sickness information relating to Control staff is summarised below.

Description	Days/cost	%/£ change from Q4 2022-23
Total shifts lost to 31/03/2024	240.5	+28.6%
Long term sickness	168 (70%)	+104.88%
Short term sickness	72.5 (30%)	-30.95%
Approximate cost of sickness	£43,203	+£9,611 (+28.61%)

21. The Control category of staff has lost 240 shifts this year, with the main reason being mental health (46%). Whilst 3 long term cases are back to work one will continue into quarter one of the next year. Short term absence rose considerably in quarter 4 with March having the most at 16.5 shifts. In comparison with last year's figures, there has been a 28% decrease in this category.



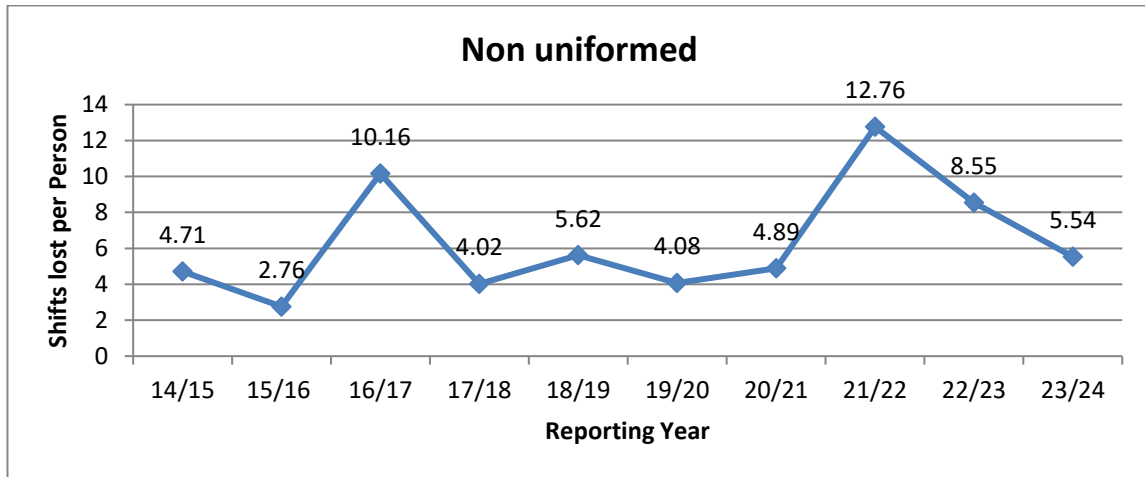
22. This category is over target at the end of the reporting year.

Non- Uniformed

23. The detailed sickness information relating to non-uniformed staff is summarised below.

Description	Days/cost	%/£ change from Q4 2022-23
Total shifts lost to 31/03/2024	568.9	-24.33%
Long term sickness	370 (65%)	-17.68%
Short term sickness	198.9 (35%)	-46.43%
Approximate cost of sickness	£54,187	-£17,422 (-24.32%)

24. This category has seen a decrease of over 24% in shifts lost when compared with the same reporting period in 2022/23. There have been two cases of long-term sickness for various reasons spanning across the first three quarter of this year. One has now left the service and one remains sick and will continue to into quarter one of next year with another possible staff member going long term sick in the next quarter as well. Overall sickness shifts have improved in this area and should continue to going forward. The main reason for short term absence were predominantly gastrointestinal related during quarter 4.



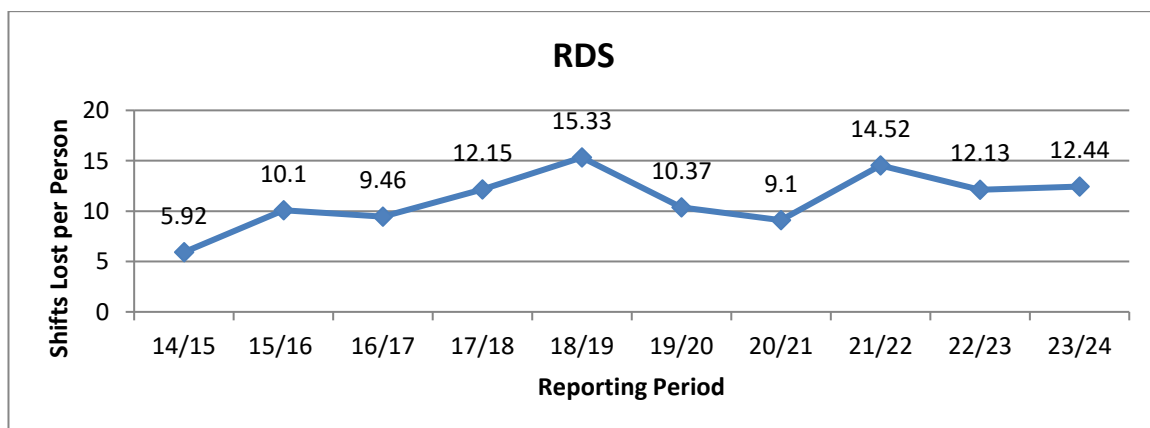
25. This category is currently under target at this point in the reporting year.

Retained Duty System

26. The detailed sickness information relating to RDS staff is summarised below.

Description	Days/cost	%/£ change from Q4 2022-23
Total shifts lost to 31/03/2024	1558.6	+3.28%
Long term sickness	1374.73 (88%)	+20.14%
Short term sickness	183.87 (12%)	-50.48%
Approximate cost of sickness	£147,287	+£4.683 (+3.28%)

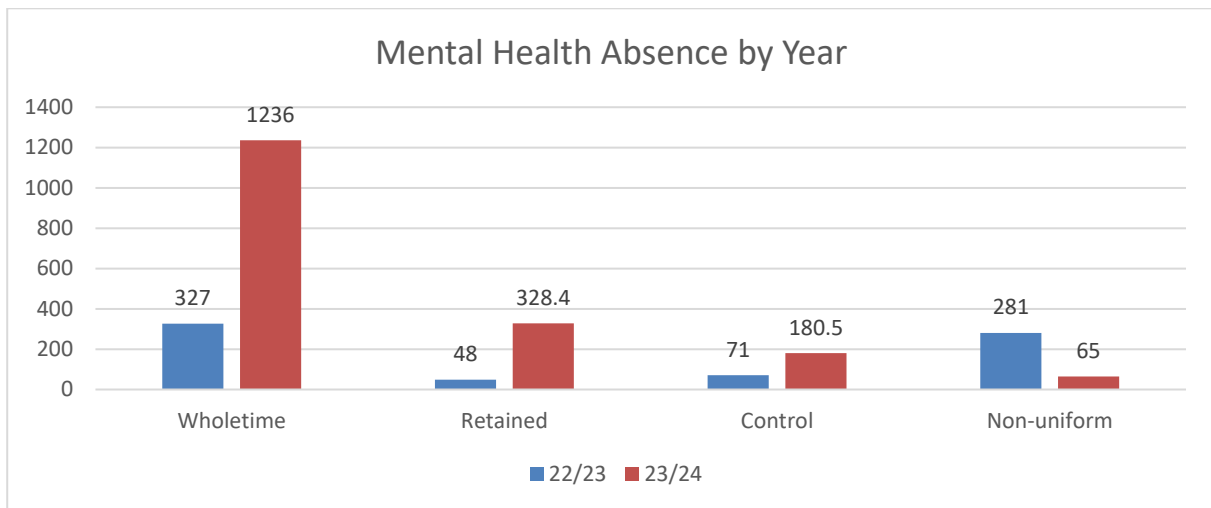
27. The RDS category has seen a small increase on shifts lost when compared with the same reporting period in 2022/23. Like WT, a rise in long term absence has been seen with 6 currently off for various reasons. Short term sickness on a positive note has decreased by 12%, like WT most of this has been due to colds / flu.



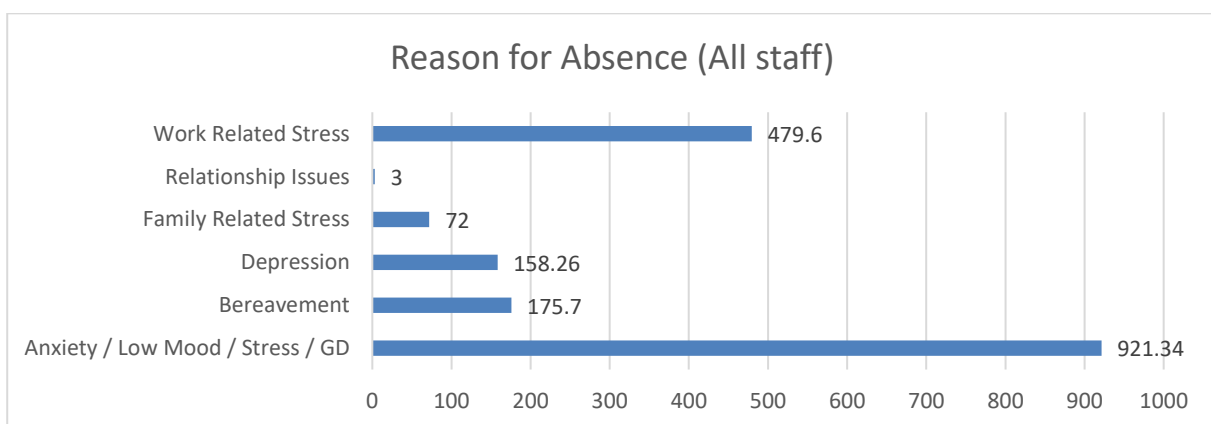
28. This category is over target at the end of the reporting year.

Mental Health related absence

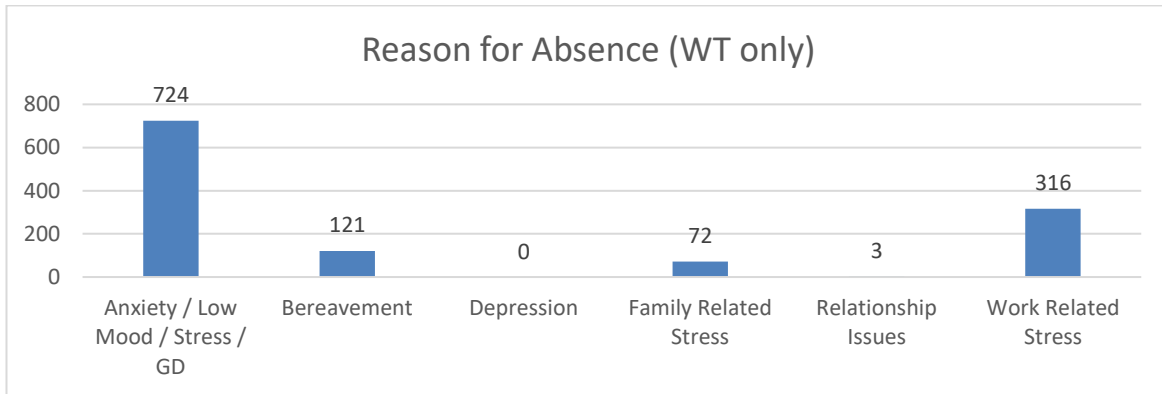
29. Mental Health related absence has seen a steep rise this reporting year across many of staff categories which can be seen in the graph below. The largest increase is noted in the WT category rising by approximately 277% on comparison with last year.
30. Nationally, Mental Health reasons for sickness absence accounted for 26% (45,632 shifts lost) of Wholetime personnel absence and is the second highest reason for absence. Stress is the highest factor within the Mental Health categories, accounting for 12.3% of all Wholetime sickness (21,911). For the same period in the previous year, Mental Health accounted for 22% of reported sickness absence.



31. The main reasons for absence are predominantly for Anxiety, low mood and stress. There has also been a substantial number of shifts lost work related stress this report year, the majority of which can be linked to employee relations reasons or reasons linked to performance. The data also shows many varied reasons for stress or low mood not related to the workplace.



32. A further breakdown of the mental health related absence across the Wholetime category can be seen below. There were 15 occasions of absence related to anxiety / low mood / stress over the reporting year, only 4 of which did not constitute long term absence and one case alone accounted for 29% of shifts lost. Similarly with regards to work related stress, 3 cases account for all absence with once case accounting for 63% of shifts lost.



33. Nationally, mental health reasons for sickness absence accounts for 30% (2,646 shifts lost) for Fire Control staff and is the main cause of sickness. Stress accounts for 14.0% (1,254 shifts) and is the main contributing cause attributed to Fire Control sickness. For the same period the previous year, Mental Health accounted for 25% of shifts therefore demonstrating that year on year the proportion of shifts lost due to Mental Health for Fire Control staff has increased by 5%. The Service saw an increase of approximately 153% compared with last year however, to add some context this was due to 6 absences, 4 of which were long term.

National Research related to Mental Health Absence

34. Research carried out by Nottingham Trent University (NTU) and commissioned by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and The Fire Fighters Charity, which surveyed more than 3,000 UK fire and rescue service (FRS) personnel found that mental wellbeing across the service is being impacted by issues such as sleep disruption, occupational stress, burnout, anxiety, and depression. The findings also suggest that increased length of career – not related to age – is associated with experiencing more mental wellbeing challenges.

35. However, wellbeing was found to be improved by work engagement, social support, resilient coping, and by both job and life satisfaction. Exercise is also positively associated to work engagement, job satisfaction, perceived social support, life satisfaction, and resilience. It is also linked to lower levels of burnout, anxiety, stress, and depression.

36. The study led to the development of 13 key priorities which have been used to inform the UK-wide fire and rescue sector health and wellbeing strategy which include areas such as supporting individuals to own their own wellbeing, taking a holistic approach from new starter, through career and into retirement and adopting an evidence-based, holistic approach to health and wellbeing, instead of treating physical, psychological and social wellbeing separately. The Service are reviewing their current support mechanisms with regards to mental health to ensure they offer a comprehensive approach and are fit for purpose.

37. According to Mental Health First Aid England, post-pandemic changes in working patterns and increased financial uncertainty are negatively impacting employee mental health in and outside of work. A recent report found that almost half of UK workers are 'running on empty,' with burnout, mental ill health, and work-related stress now costing the economy £28 billion annually. Poor mental health accounts for more than half of all work-related illnesses. Around 51% of long-term sick leave is due to stress, depression, or anxiety.

38. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) published its annual statistics on work-related ill health and workplace injuries in November 2023. The statistics reveal that 1.8 million workers reported they were suffering from work-related ill health in 2022/23, with approximately half of the cases down to stress, depression, or anxiety. In the recent years prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the rate of self-reported work-related ill health had been broadly flat, but the current

rate is higher than 2018/19. The current rate of self-reported work-related stress, depression or anxiety is higher than the pre-pandemic level.

Action Taken

39. Sickness levels will continue to be monitored closely with regular analysis for any trends and patterns and instigation of the attendance management triggers where appropriate. Monthly meetings have been put in place to discuss case management with the People and Organisational Development (POD) Business Partners and the Director of POD to ensure action can be taken quickly where appropriate and identify any longer-term risks. This allows a closer scrutiny of our case management.
40. The POD team has undertaken a piece of work to further investigate the 'other' category of sickness and ensure that those logged in the system had been appropriately. The team are also chasing any absences where no reason is entered into the system. As part of this piece of work some additional categories have been added to the system for reasons such as bereavement, post operative, migraine and viral infection which were the most common reasons for absence under this category.
41. The Service have implemented an 18-month trial of an additional health care benefit. In the first two weeks the services of Benenden have been accessed by ten members of staff which is a positive start to the trial. This included access the 24/7 GO, diagnostics, physiotherapy and one surgery has been arranged. The HRC will be kept up to date with the usage figures during the trial.
42. The Services Trauma Support Team has recruited five new members who have now been trained in partnership with Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service. This will strengthen the Services offer around mental health and peer support.
43. As part of the end of year review of performance indicators, the sickness levels have been reviewed and adjusted. Targets set should be achievable and support a direction of travel.
44. Several ill health retirements are being progressed which should alleviate some of the long-term absence moving into the next reporting year.

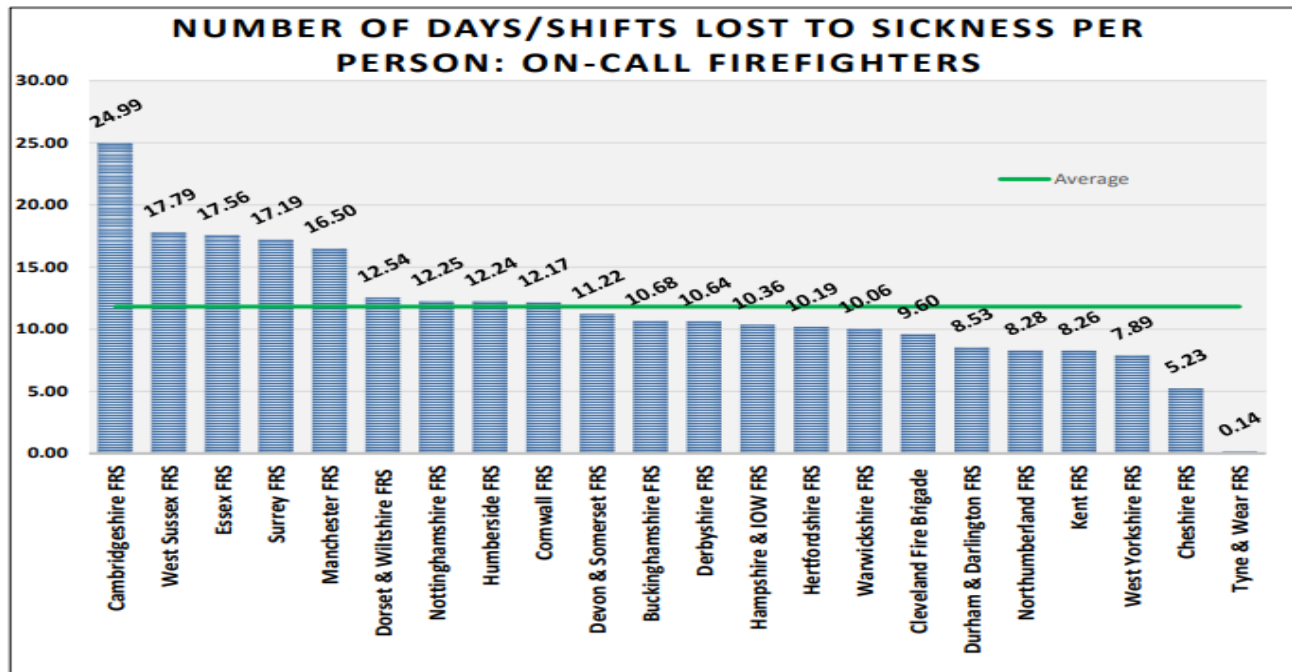
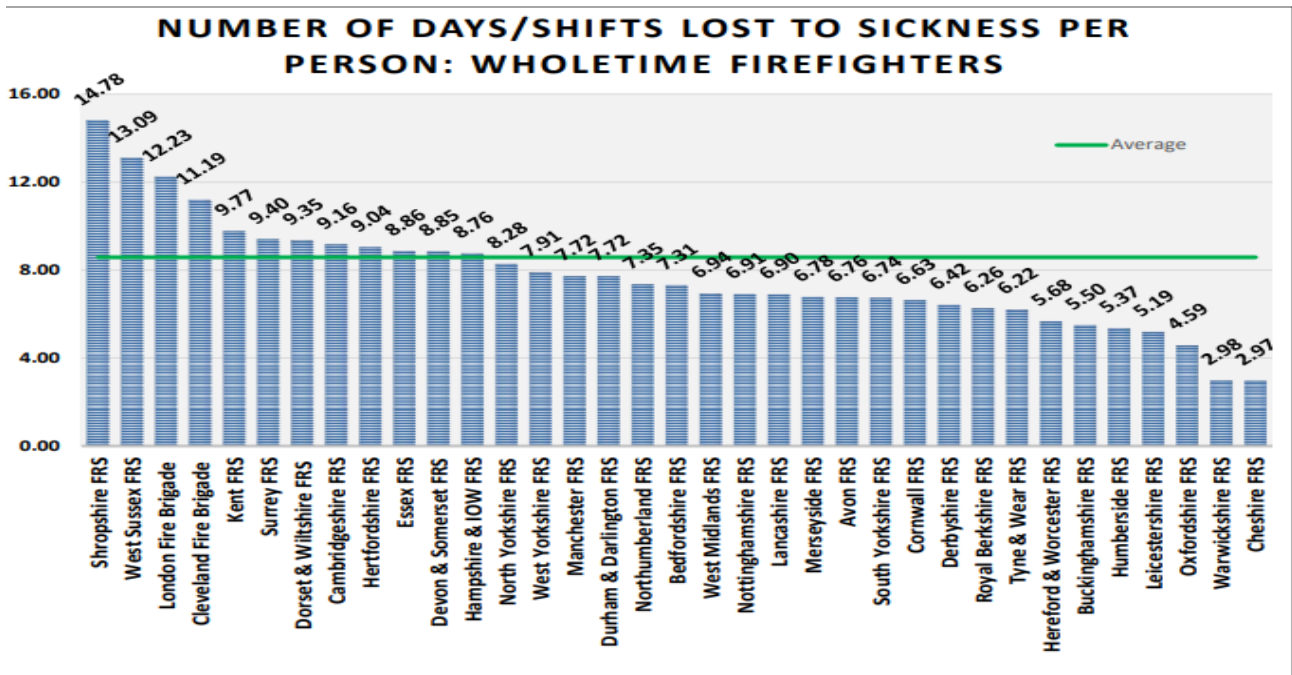
National Fire Service Data Comparison

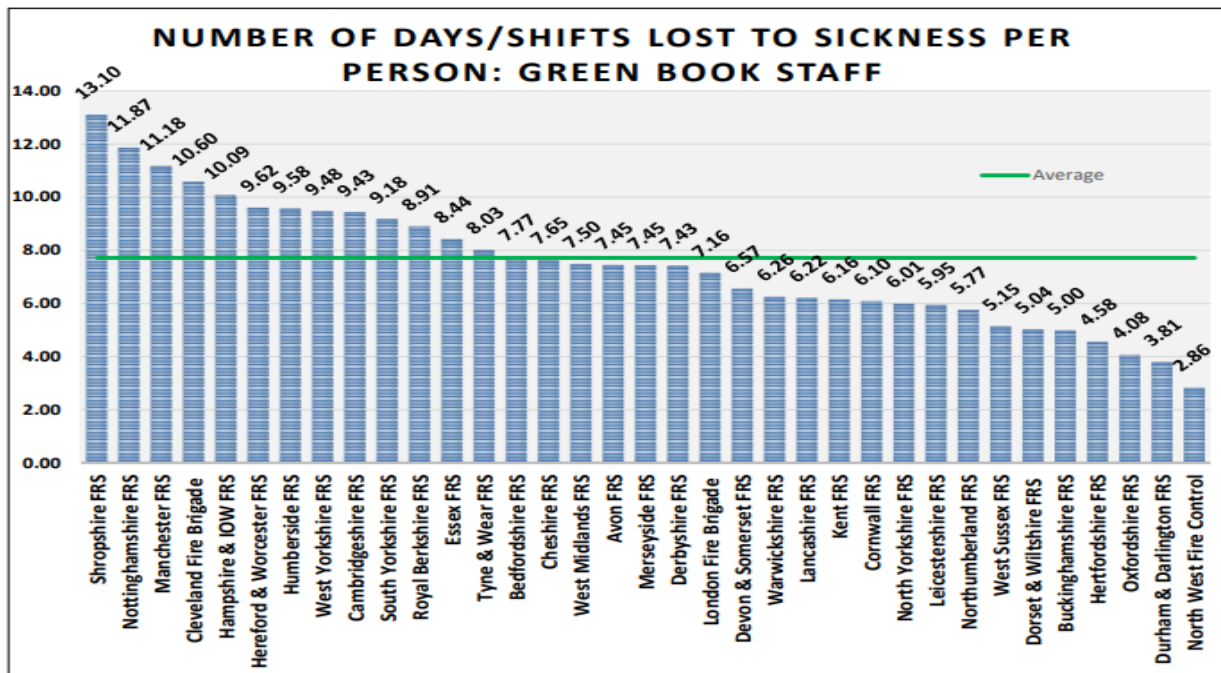
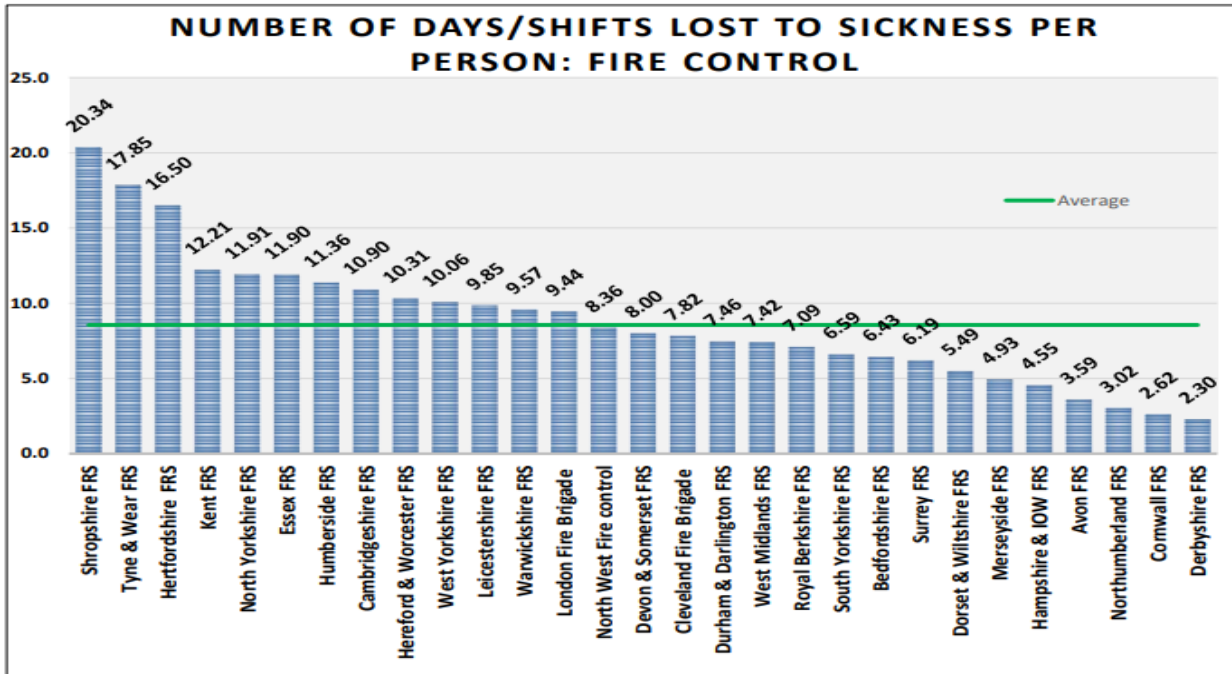
45. This data is supplied via the National OH Performance Report which is compiled by Cleveland Fire Brigade (CFB). All fire and rescue services (FRS) are asked to supply data for the main categories of employees; WT, Control, RDS and Non-uniformed.
46. There is a set calculation which all FRS supplying information must adhere to, to ensure the data can be used to give an accurate comparison, however this varies to our own reporting. The data helps our Service benchmark against other FRS in terms of sickness absence rates. The data range is for April to December 2023 (Quarter 3).
47. It should be noted that due to recording mechanisms and sickness absence policies within the various FRS' Covid 19 Sickness for some FRS' has not been included. This must therefore be borne in mind when comparing sickness levels.
48. Performance across indicators (Appendix A) is below the national average which is positive in comparison with other FRS's.
49. Thirty-six FRS' submitted data for the period April – December 2023. During this period, from the Fire Services who submitted data, there has been 304,635 shifts lost to sickness absence arising from 30,471 separate occurrences for all staff groups equating to 8.90 shifts per

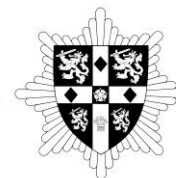
member of staff. The main causes of sickness absence for all staff groups are: • Musculo-Skeletal absences (99,471 shifts), accounting for 33% of all sickness absence; • Mental Health absences (76,365 shifts), accounting for 25% of sickness absence; • Respiratory reasons (27,022 shifts), which accounts for 9% of all sickness absence.

Recommendation

50. Members are asked to note and comment on the contents of this report.







Human Resources Committee

23 May 2024

Health and Safety Performance

Quarter Four 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY RESPONSE

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to present a summary of the Service's health and safety (H&S) performance for 2023/24 reporting year.

2. Introduction

- 2.1. The H&S team form part of the Emergency Response Directorate and report against four performance indicators (PIs), which are:

- PI 69 Number of accidents to personnel.
- PI 72 Number of vehicle accidents (CDDFRS contributory).
- PI 73 Number of local H&S investigations incomplete after 28 days.
- PI 74 Number of H&S investigation actions overdue their specified completion date.

- 2.2. These PIs are managed through the Performance Board where they are reported on monthly, throughout the year.

3. PI 69 Number of accidents to personnel

- 3.1. The Service recorded a total of 7 accidents to personnel during 2023/24. During the first 8 months there were only 2 accidents to personnel recorded which is the best performance recorded since the introduction of an electronic H&S management system within the Service (Table. 1).

Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	7

Table. 1 - Number of personal accidents recorded each month during 2023/24.

- 3.2. The performance recorded during 2023/24 is an improvement on the previous years performance where we recorded a total of 9 (+2) accidents to personnel and was below the Service target of 12 (chart. 1).

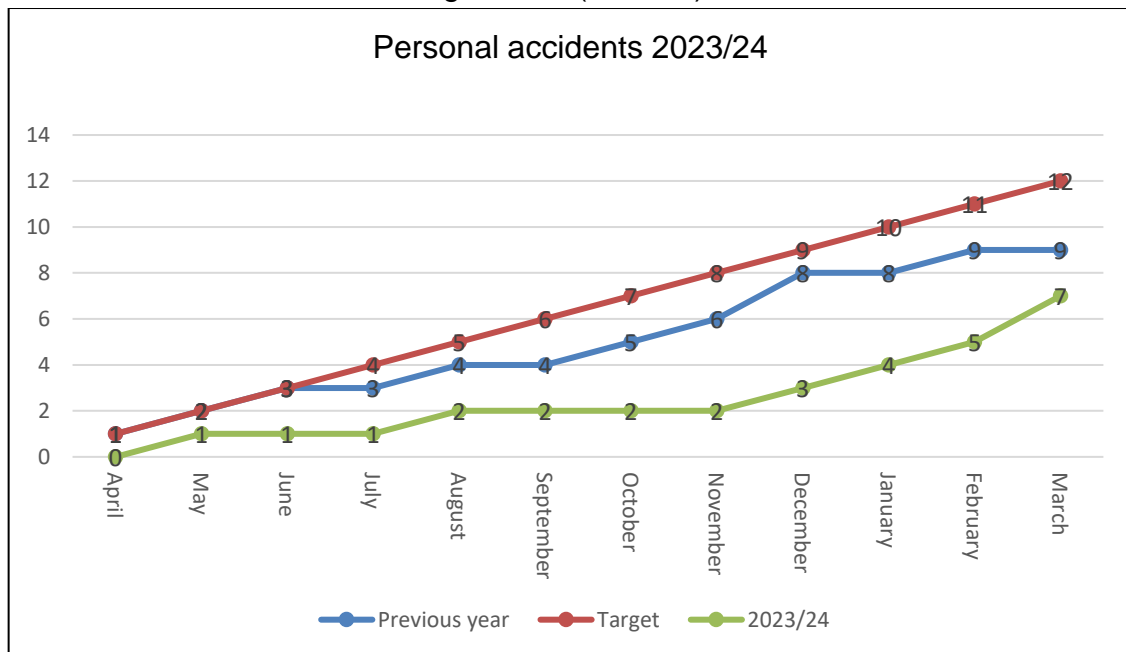


Chart. 1 - Number of accidents to personnel previous year, target and current year.

- 3.3. When looking back at the previous 4 years performance, 2023/24 is noted as being significantly better than previous years (Table. 2).

Reporting year	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
PI 69 Number of accidents to personnel	16	12	13	9	7

Table. 2 - Number of personal accidents recorded each year during 2019 - 2023/24.

- 3.4. In line with Service policy, H&S Investigations were carried out on all reported accidents to personnel where the intention was to establish the 'immediate', 'root' and 'underlying' causes and were applicable, implement suitable preventive measures to minimise the likelihood of these occurrences in the future.
- 3.5. It is worth noting that 2 accidents to personnel reported during 2024/25 were reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), due to them qualifying under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) as they resulted in over 7-days absence from work.
- 3.6. The Service continuously analyses adverse health and safety incidents to identify and react to any trends which are identified. Personal accidents are categorised in line with seven HSE reporting categories.
- 3.7. The accidents to personnel recorded during 2023/24 were as a result of slips trips and fall, struck (by or against) and cut (Table. 3).

Accident causation	Frequency
Cut	1
Musculoskeletal disorders	0
Struck (by or against)	2
Burn	0
Slips, trips and falls	4
Injection / Puncture	0
Exposure to Hazardous Substance	0
Total	7

Table. 3 accidents to personnel 2023/24 grouped by HSE reporting categories.

- 3.8. The Service also report their annual H&S performance (operational staff only) to the Home Office. During 2023/24 operational staff recorded 6 of the 7 accidents to personnel and these were evenly distributed between occurring at an operational environment, training environment at whilst conducting routine duties (Table. 4).

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Operational incidents	6	2	2	7	2
Training	3	3	10	0	2
Routine duties	7	3	1	1	2
Total	16	8	13	8	6

Table. 4 accidents to personnel 2023/24 grouped by Home Office environment categories.

4. PI 71 Number of vehicle accidents (CDDFRS-contributory)

- 4.1. The Service recorded a total of 20 vehicle accidents (CDDFRS-contributory) during 2023/24. May was the highest month with 4 vehicles and there were 6 months with 1 or less vehicle accidents recorded (Table. 5).

Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
0	4	2	0	3	3	1	1	2	0	1	3	20

Table. 5 - Number of vehicle accidents (CDDFRS-contributory) recorded each month during 2023/24.

- 4.2. The performance recorded during 2023/24 is an improvement on the previous year's performance where we recorded a total of 24 (+4) vehicle accidents (CDDFRS-contributory) but was above the Service target of 18 (chart. 2).

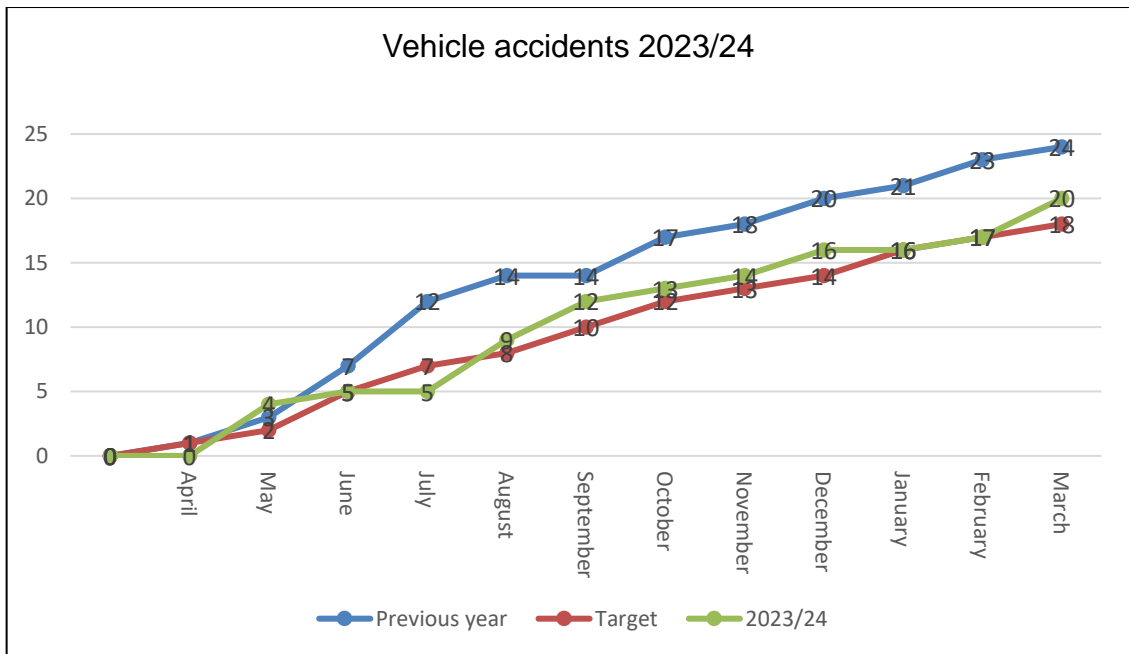


Chart. 2 - Number of vehicle accidents (CDDFRS-contributory) previous year, target and current performance.

- 4.3. It is noteworthy that there were an additional 8 vehicle accidents recorded on the H&S management system which were classed as the fault of third party drivers.
- 4.4. When looking back at the previous 4 years performance, 2023/24 is noted as being significantly better than previous year and more in line with performance reported prior to this (Table. 6).

Reporting year	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
PI 71 Number of vehicle accidents (CDDFRS-contributory)	16	12	13	9	7

Table. 6 - Number of vehicle accidents (CDDFRS contributory) recorded each year during 2019/20 - 2023/24.

- 4.5. In line with Service policy, H&S Investigations were carried out on all reported vehicle accidents where the intention was to establish the 'immediate', 'root' and 'underlying' causes and where applicable, implement suitable preventive measures to minimise the likelihood of these occurrences in the future.
- 4.6. The H&S team have regular meetings with the Driver Training team which are aimed at identifying problematic areas, A common these across the majority of vehicle accidents during 2023/24 was accessing / egressing restricted area. As a result of this, the H&S continue to collaborate with the representative bodies, Technical Services Centre team and the Driver Training team to ensure a high

importance is placed on effective communication with those involved, shared learning from the event and a commitment to continuous improvement.

- 4.7. The majority of vehicle accidents (CDDFRS-contributory) occurred in a fire appliance with there being equal occurrences with or without blue lights (Chart. 3).

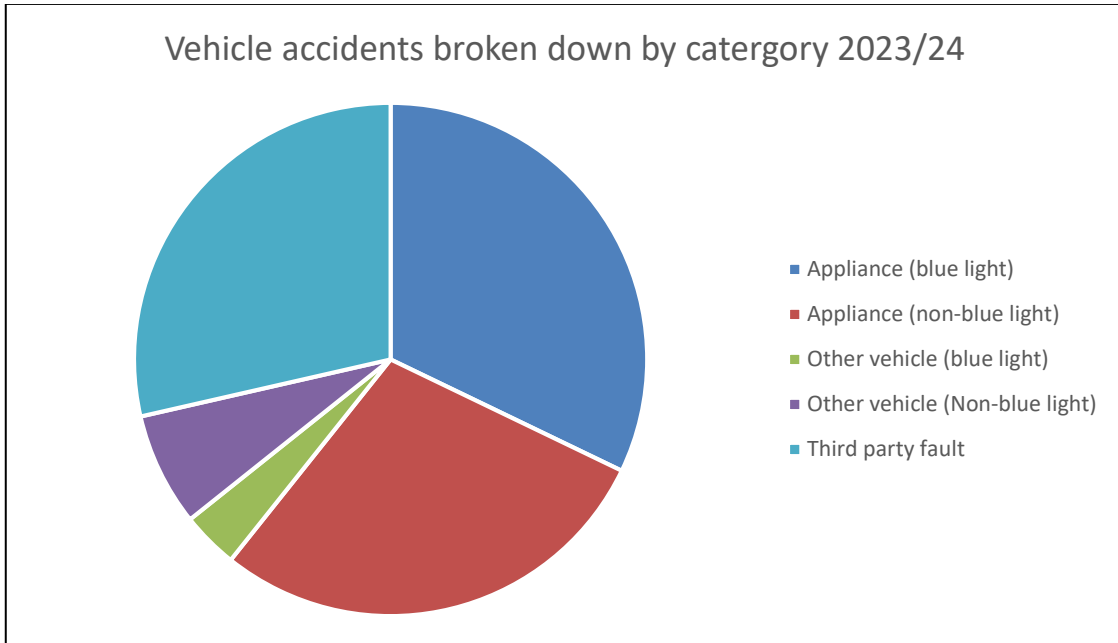


Chart. 3 - Number of vehicle accidents (CDDFRS-contributory) during 2023/24 broken down by category.

5. PI 73 Number of local H&S investigations incomplete after 28 days.

- 5.1. PI 73 is not reported as a total number of local investigations incomplete after 28 days due the fact that an incomplete investigation could span several months and be counted several times as a result.

- 5.2. During 2023/24, 7 of the 12 months recorded either 1 or 2 local H&S investigations which remained incomplete after 28 days (Table. 7).

Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
0	0	2	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	1	2

Table. 7 - Number of local H&S investigations incomplete after 28 days 2023/24.

- 5.3. There are several reasons why local H&S investigations remaining incomplete after 28 days, these can be summarised as:

- Distress to wearer H&S investigations requiring a specialist report to be completed by Draeger which had been delayed.
- Sickness of key witnesses that require to be interviewed as part of the H&S investigation.

- H&S team quality assurance reopening an H&S investigation due to requiring further information and/or evidence.

6. PI 74 Actions overdue their specified completion date

- 6.1. Similarly to PI 73 Number of local H&S investigations incomplete after 28 days, PI 74 is not reported as a total number of actions overdue their specified completion date due the fact that an overdue action could span several months and be counted several times as a result.
- 6.2. During 2023/24, 3 of the 12 months recorded either 1 or 2 actions overdue their specified completion date (Table. 8).

Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0

Table. 8 - Number of actions overdue their specific completion date 2023/24.

- 6.3. The H&S team offer support to the allocated action owners, requesting regular updates and ensuring that any external influences on completion deadlines are noted. The H&S management system generates an automated notification to all action owners upon allocation and further notifications one month prior to the set completion date and every day once the action is overdue.

7. Near Misses, Cause for Concerns and Notifications

- 7.1. The reporting of Near Misses, Cause for Concerns and Notifications are encouraged as part of a positive and proactive health and safety culture.
- 7.2. The reporting of Cause for Concerns and Notifications has remained fairly static compared to previous years which there has been an increase in the number of reported near misses (Table. 9).

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Near Miss	7	9	11	7	16
Cause for Concern	25	17	16	19	17
Notification	61	42	58	51	53

Table. 9 - Near Misses, Cause for Concerns and Notifications 2019/20 - 2023/24

- 7.3. The increase in the number of near misses can be attributed to the ongoing encouragement from the H&S team to reinforce of a positive health and safety culture, but also due to an unexpected spike in problems related to breathing apparatus equipment at our Service Training Centre.
- 7.4. During this year's proactive health and safety visits the reporting of the Near Misses, Cause for Concerns and Notifications will continue to be promoted, along with enforcing the correct reasoning and relevance for these types of health and safety reports.

8. The National Picture

- 8.1. The Home Office reports nationally on Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) statistics for operational adverse health and safety incidents. This allows us to benchmark our performance nationally.
- 8.2. The Home Office categorise all FRS in England as either 'predominantly rural', 'predominantly urban' or 'significantly rural.' CDDFRS is classed as 'predominantly rural', alongside another 13 FRS.
- 8.3. A comparison of CDDFRS against the other 'predominantly rural' for 2023/24 shows that we are performing well for both vehicle accidents (Chart. 4) and personal accidents (Chart. 5).

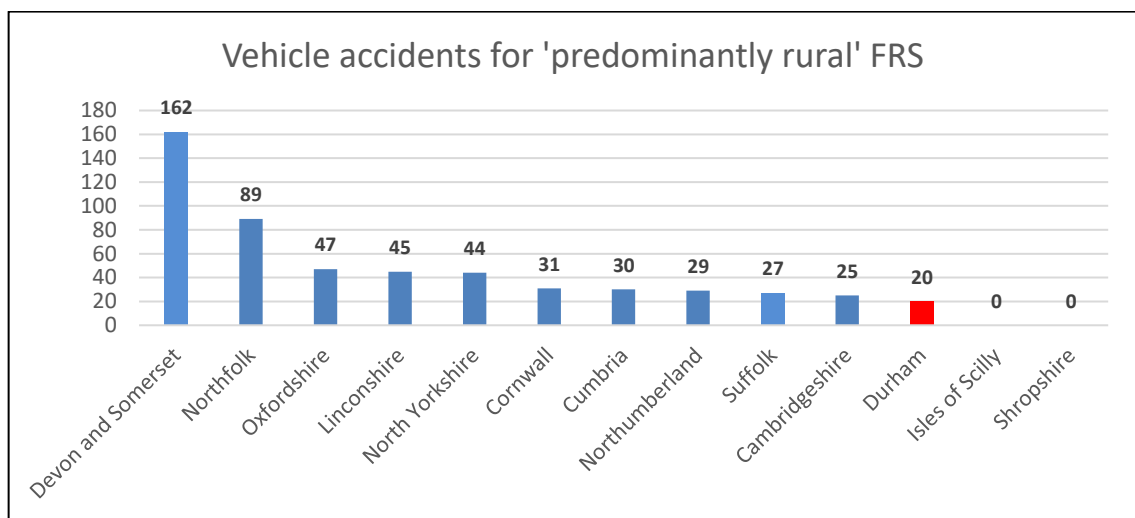


Chart. 4 - Number of vehicle accidents for the FRS classified as predominantly rural recorded during the 2022/23 reporting period against CDDFRS 2023/24 performance.

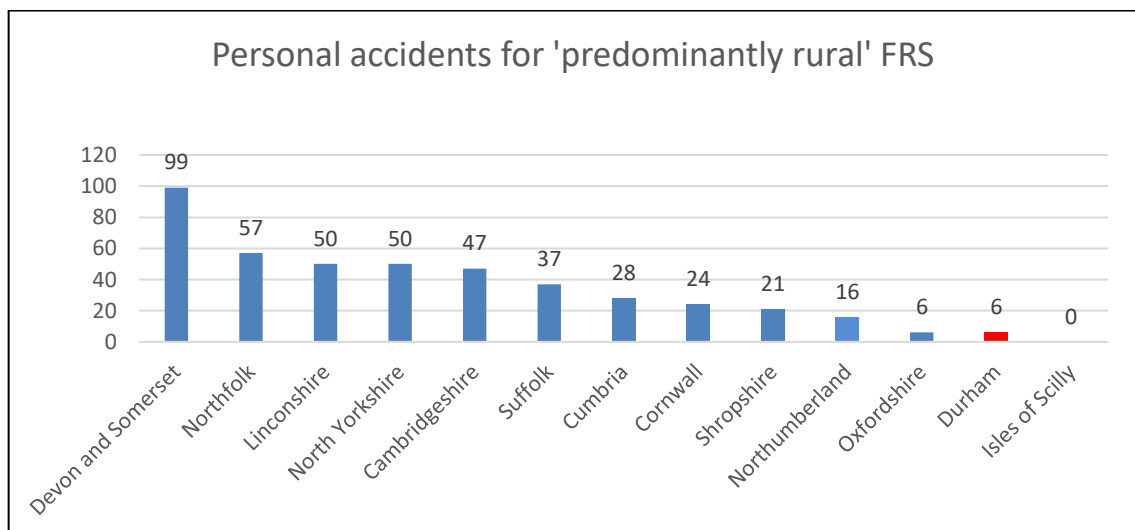


Chart. 5 - Number of personal accidents for the FRS (Operational staff only) classified as predominantly rural recorded during the 2022/23 reporting period against CDDFRS 2023/24 performance.

- 8.4. The Service continues to represent the region at the NFCC Health and Safety Group, relaying all relevant information to the Regional Health, Safety Welfare Group, working collaboratively on several work streams to include:
- Contaminant's initiatives and positive sharing of policy / procedure and best practice.
 - Internal auditing of Health and Safety principles in neighbouring services and alignment to industry standards (HSG 65).

9. Summary

- 9.1. Personal accidents have decreased for this reporting year and were well below the target figure.
- 9.2. The number of vehicle accidents (CDDFRS-contributory) for this reporting year was below the previous period but just exceeded the target figure. Ongoing awareness initiatives to reduce the number of slow speed manoeuvre incidents, which are still the dominant type of vehicle accident, will continue during this coming year's proactive visits.
- 9.3. Reported Cause for Concerns and Notifications are broadly similar to previous periods. The increase in reported Near Misses can be partly attributed to ongoing encouragement of such, from reinforcement of a positive health and safety culture. However, these also include an unexpected spike in problems related to breathing apparatus usage at our Service Training Centre.
- 9.4. There have been two RIDDOR reported personal accidents in 2023/24, all of which were due to over seven-day absences.
- 9.5. The Contaminants Working Group have continued to identify and implement robust control measures to protect firefighters from adverse health effects associated with long-term exposure to combustion effluents. This includes development of a detailed working procedure, including all aspects of pre-during- and post-incident controls, along with ongoing roll-out of fire station zoning to minimise any potential for cross-contamination.
- 9.6. Overall, performance regarding Health and Safety continues to be of a good standard. This is evidenced through considering the current available National data.

10. The next steps

10.1. During 2023/24, it has been agreed that the PI will remain as:

- PI 69 Number of accidents to personnel.
- PI 72 Number of vehicle accidents (CDDFRS contributory).
- PI 73 Number of local H&S investigations incomplete after 28 days.
- PI 74 Number of H&S investigation actions overdue their specified completion date.

10.2. The target setting methodology for PI 69 and PI 72 has been calculated by taking an average the last 5 years performance with a reduction of 15%. This methodology makes the target informed, realistic and achievable, allowing us to continually be marginally better than we were before. The Target setting for PI 73 and PI 74 will remain at 0.

10.3. The 2024/25 strategy action plan has been finalised within ER and the H&S related strategy actions are:

- Implement the delivery of health and safety revalidation training through online/ virtual learning.
- Implement procedures to ensure a positive culture in the Service where contaminants and the effects of contaminants are taken seriously.
- Improve management of Service Health & Safety investigations.
- Develop a H&S training strategy to include regular H&S including:
 - H&S awareness
 - Risk Assessment
 - Incident Investigation
 - Manual Handling
 - A regular annual program of visits to all sections and stations
- Develop a robust performance dashboard for H&S performance.
- Explore alternative IT based solutions/ systems to ensure the way in which the Service captures H&S information and data is robust.

11. Recommendations

11.1. CFA HR Committee members are requested to:

- Consider and comment on the content of this report.
- Continue to support a positive health and safety culture in CDDFRS.

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Safest People, Safest Places

Human Resources Committee

23 May 2024

Additional Health Care Benefit

Report of Director of People and Organisational Development

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Human Resources Committee (HRC) on the implementation of the trial of an additional workforce healthcare benefit, through Benenden Health.

Background

2. A paper was presented to the HRC on the 5 September 2023 outlining the Service's intention to trial the use of Benenden Health care to offer both a cost-effective solution to reduce sickness absence and to support the wellbeing of the workforce.
3. Sickness figures across the Service over recent years have been steadily increasing and are above the target for the number of shifts lost, per person, in a year. The target set by the service is currently 7 shifts per person, and the average over the last three years is 9.5 shifts lost per person.
4. Benenden Services is a not-for-profit healthcare provider which is complementary to the NHS, where NHS waiting times are longer than 5 weeks. It allows for pre-existing conditions (which is contra to private healthcare providers), with services being immediately accessible upon joining where the Service opt for a fully funded provision. The scheme provides for diagnostic treatment up to £2,500 per condition.
5. The Service went live with the Service on 1 January 2024. Of the workforce, 531 have signed up as well as 120 family members.

Services used to date

6. Quarterly reporting is provided to outline which services have been accessed and total corporate usage per period. However, at a recent meeting we were provided with the following data showing usage over the first month (January):

Table 1

Service used	Number of cases
24-hour GP Advice	35
Care Advice	1
Diagnostics and Tests	17
Mental Health Services	11
Physiotherapy	15

Treatment and Surgery	2
Total	81

7. In terms of diagnostics and tests, the data shows the following types are being explored for current staff members:

Table 2

Service used	Number of cases
Orthopaedic Surgery	7
ENT	2
Gastroenterology	1
Gynaecology	1
Rheumatology	1
Urology	1
Total	13

8. Whilst it is too early to see any impact on sickness absence numbers, there has been a reduction in sickness days lost in Q4 in comparison with Q3 data.

Table 3

PI	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
WT & Control	751.5	621.5	910	651.5	2934.5
WT, Control and NU	895.5	715.5	1072.72	819.68	3503.4
All Staff	1332.94	1120.49	1341.59	1266.98	5062

Conclusion

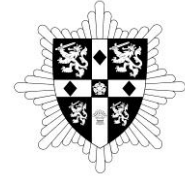
9. A key theme of the People Strategy is Wellbeing and we have committed to ensuring that we create an environment where our People are physically and emotionally sustained to enable them to give their best and to be able to be at work more of the time to better serve our communities. The Benenden Health initiative is one of many which appears to be making a positive difference and a further supportive intervention which will hopefully positively impact on wellbeing indicators in the next staff survey.

Recommendations

10. Members are requested to:

- a) Note the contents of the report and receive further updates in due course.

Katherine Metcalfe, Director of People and Organisational Development, Ext.566



Safest People, Safest Places

Human Resources Committee

23 May 2024

Values and Culture in Fire and Rescue Services Spotlight Report Action Plan Update

Report of Director of People and Organisational Development

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Human Resources Committee (HRC) as to the progress made towards completion of the Action Plan relating to His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Values and Culture Report and the recommendations made.

Background

2. On the 30 March 2023, the HMICFRS released its spotlight report "Values and Culture in Fire and Rescue Services" which was commissioned by The Minister of State for Crime, Policing and Fire.
3. A paper was delivered to members of the HRC at the May 2023 meeting outlining the contents of the report and advising of the current position of CDDFRS as of April 2023. Updates on progress against the action plan outlined in appendix A.

Progress since the previous update

4. A successful amendment to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 means that all Fire and Rescue Authority employees, including volunteers, are now eligible for a standard level of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. A letter has been drafted by the Safeguarding Board to seek support and guidance on when and how information on Common Law Police Disclosure could be passed to the Fire and Rescue Services from their local Police forces. Common Law Police Disclosure provisions can allow on a case-by-case basis for the proactive disclosure of information in circumstances where there is a public protection risk and there is an urgent pressing social need. This could include but not be limited to their arrest (or voluntary interview as a suspect) or being charged for an alleged recordable offence. The Service are currently discussing a process with Durham Constabulary on how this could be instigated.
5. The Dignity at Work procedure has been reviewed following learning from a previous case. This procedure now includes provisions for external investigators.
6. The bespoke 360 feedback process has been further developed and offered to other service managers. This change broadens out the 180-degree feedback process to ensure all line managers in the Service have access to a full 360 process where required or necessary.

This is currently being utilised in the divisional managers team to support team dynamics and self-awareness.

Recommendations

7. Members are requested to:

(a) **note** and **comment** on the content of the report.

Katherine Metcalfe, Director of People and Organisational Development, Ext.5665

HMICFRS Values and Culture in Fire and Rescue Services

No.	Recommendation	Owner	Due Date	Status	Progress
Raising Concerns					
1	By 1 October 2023, chief fire officers should make sure their services provide a confidential way for staff to raise concerns and that staff are aware of whistleblowing processes.	CDDFRS	1 Oct 23	Complete	<p>April 23 Independent complaints service available via DCC (Whistleblowing). Staff can report incidents anonymously with no fear of the repercussions. Independent reporting Service through Safecall Raising a Concern at Work procedure in place</p> <p>May 2024 The reporting line has been renewed for the next 12 months.</p>
2	By 1 October 2023, National Employers, the Local Government Association and the National Fire Chiefs Council should review any current independent arrangements whereby staff can raise concerns outside their FRS. They should then ensure that all FRS staff have access to an independent reporting line that can be used as a confidential way to raise concerns outside their own FRS.	National Employers, LGA, NFCC	1 Jun 23	Not owned by CDDFRS - complete	<p>CDDFRA and CDDFRS will fully engage and support the delivery of this recommendation.</p> <p>All services now have an independent reporting line in place.</p>
3	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should review the support available for those who have raised concerns and take any action needed to make sure these provisions are suitable.	CDDFRS	1 Jun 23	Complete	<p>April 23 Robust Dignity at Work and Fairness at Work Policy and Procedure in place (which are utilised) and allow for staff to move locality or perpetrators to be suspended. Dignity at Work Advisors in place (posters and online) Suicide prevention officers in place (posters and online)</p>

					<p>Mental Health First Aiders in place (posters and online) Welfare officers appointed to both parties as support (details included in correspondence). Access to Employee Assistance is advised through correspondence. Option for external investigation where required. Union support made available for members. Code of Ethics implemented and integrated. EDI training for managers via e-learning and face to face learning included in Leadership Programmes.</p> <p>September 23 CFO satisfied that provisions are suitable</p> <p>May 2024 The Dignity at Work procedure has been reviewed following learning from a previous case. This procedure now includes provisions for external investigators.</p>
4	<p>By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should assure themselves that updates on how concerns are being handled are shared with those who have raised them. The updates should be given in an accessible way that encourages trust and confidence in the service response. Consideration should be given to creating professional standards function to handle conduct concerns in service (or from an external service) to have oversight of cases, to make sure they are conducted in a fair and transparent way and to act as a point of contact for all staff involved.</p>	CDDFRS	1 Jun 23	Complete	<p>April 23 Independent reporting Service through Safecall offers an online platform where concerns are shared, and updates are given both ways. Welfare officers appointed to both parties as support (details included in correspondence). They can be used to gain updates. Both parties are advised who is the IO and so can contact them for updates Dignity at work advisors is available to support either party. External investigations can be undertaken. ER register kept outlining the concern raised and any outcomes / appeal.</p>

					<p>Professional Standards department not deemed as feasible due to ongoing budgetary pressures. Could be re-evaluated if a high number of complaints are made.</p> <p>September 23 CFO satisfied that provisions are suitable.</p>
5	<p>By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should make sure they provide accessible information for all staff and members of the public on how they can raise concerns and access confidential support (including through external agencies). Chief fire officers should also make sure accessible information is provided on how concerns and allegations will be investigated in a way that ensures confidentiality and is independent of the alleged perpetrator.</p>	CDDFRS	1 Jun 23	Complete	<p>April 23</p> <p>External complaints (from public)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear procedure in place (AD/2/11). • Complaints can be made by a range of different methods (social media, online, in writing, telephone). • There is an accessible leaflet available advising how complaints will be treated. • Complaints are all recorded on the web form and the data is stored securely with only designated people having access. • Generally, complains are handled internally however, there are route to externally investigate should the need arise. • There have been no complaints or concerns raised with the professionalism of our staff when undertaking HFSC's. <p>Internal complaints (from Staff)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear procedures for Fairness at Work and Dignity at Work are in place. • Dignity at Work Advisors in place (posters and online)

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suicide prevention officers in place (posters and online) • Mental Health First Aiders in place (posters and online) • Welfare officers appointed to both parties as support (details included in correspondence). • Access to Employee Assistance is advised through correspondence. • Option for external investigation where required. <p>September 23 CFO satisfied that provisions are suitable.</p>
Background Checks					
6	By 1 January 2024, the Home Office, working with the Ministry of Justice, should make sure that the Government incorporates fire and rescue authority employees within the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 so that they are eligible for the appropriate DBS checks.	Home Office	1 May 24	Not Owned by CDDFRS - Complete	<p>CDDFRA and CDDFRS will fully engage and support the delivery of this recommendation.</p> <p>September 23 Changes to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (Exemptions) Order 1975 has enabled Fire and Rescue Services employees to be checked through the DBS at a standard or enhanced level. These were agreed in July 2023 however, this does only allow for standard checks for Firefighters.</p> <p>Procedure for checking has been agreed and published. All staff will be subject to a rechecking process. Staff were advised of this via a written letter. Checking will commence in February 2024.</p>

7	By 1 May 2024, the Home Office, working with the fire and rescue sector, should make sure that the Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) Regulations 2002, or a similar appropriate legislatively enabled solution, makes detailed provisions for fire and rescue services.	Home Office	1 May 24	Not Owned by CDDFRS	CDDFRA and CDDFRS will fully engage and support the delivery of this recommendation
8	By 1 December 2023, the Fire Standards Board, in liaison with the National Fire Chiefs Council, should review the existing relevant standard(s) and underpinning guidance. It should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> clearly state the requirements for background checks undertaken by services. clarify the minimum requirements (including levels of DBS checks) for all roles, particularly roles where staff have access to vulnerable members of the public. define the standards required to embed a culture across fire and rescue services that empowers all members of staff and local communities to report concerns; and be subject to review following any legislative change. 	Fire Standards Board	1 Dec 23	Not Owned by CDDFRS - Complete	CDDFRA and CDDFRS will fully engage and support the delivery of this recommendation. November 2023 The NFCC published guidance around DBS checking and the expectation on all FRSs to recheck the current workforce including a process for rechecking every 3 years. February 2024 The FSB have reviewed the standards around safeguarding, leading the service and leading and developing people which the service is currently working towards. These were published on 8 February 2024. No new standards are to be created.
9	By 1 January 2024, chief fire officers should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> immediately review their current background checks arrangements, and make sure that suitable and sufficient background checks are in place to safeguard their staff and communities they serve; and make sure that appropriate DBS check requests have been submitted for all 	CDDFRS	1 Jan 24	Complete	April 23 Baseline personal security checks are undertaken on all prospective employees to safeguard the Service and the communities it serves. The checks that are undertaken prior to employment with the Service are Identity, Qualification, references (minimum 2 years), medical, DBS (where appropriate), right to work in the United Kingdom.

	existing, new staff, and volunteers, according to their roles as identified by the Fire Standards Board				<p>We undertake a basic DBS check on all prospective staff at the point of entry regardless of role.</p> <p>We undertake enhanced DBS checks for those working in Community safety teams and with our cadets.</p> <p>September 23 Awaiting guidance from FSB to understand if a change of approach is required. Standard checks were implemented as soon as the legislation was passed.</p> <p>December 23 Guidance received which outlines the expectation of all FRSs to check the current workforce through a DBS check. The Service have agreed a procedure and checking will commence in February 24. This is managed through the project governance framework.</p>
10	By 1 September 2023, chief constables should make sure they are appropriately using their Common Law Police Disclosure powers in circumstances involving employees of fire and rescue services.	Police	1 Sep 23	Not Owned by CDDFRS – Complete	<p>CDDFRA and CDDFRS will fully engage and support the delivery of this recommendation.</p> <p>The service has examples where this has happened, and information have been received from the police regarding members of staff.</p> <p>May 2024 A letter has been drafted by the Safeguarding board and shared with CFO's. The letter is a template to send to local police Chief Constables requesting they use their Common Law Police Disclosure powers. The contents have been discussed with local forces and agreements are in place.</p>

11	By 1 December 2023, the Fire Standards Board, in liaison with the National Fire Chiefs Council, should review the existing relevant standard(s) and supporting guidance to clearly state how services should handle staff disclosures, complaints and grievances.	Fire Standards Board	1 Dec 23	Not Owned by CDDFRS – Complete	CDDFRA and CDDFRS will fully engage and support the delivery of this recommendation. February 2024 The FSB have reviewed the standards around safeguarding, leading the service and leading and developing people which the service is currently working towards. These were published on 8 February 2024. There will be no new standards created.
12	By 1 March 2024, chief fire officers should provide assurances to HMICFRS that they have implemented the standard on staff disclosure, complaint and grievance handling.	CDDFRS	1 Mar 24	Complete	April 23 Awaiting Standard to be released Current process for fire standard implementation sits with the Project Board and Project Assurance Manager. Once available, the process for FS implementation will be actioned. All completed standards are agreed by SLT. September 23 Awaiting Fire Standard to be issued. December 23 Whilst the standard has not been issued a number of additional measures have been implemented to assure the HMICFRS we have adequate provision for dealing with complaints. We are awaiting the outcomes of the thematic review although CDDFRS was not one of the 10 services who were chosen to take part. February 2024

					<p>The FSB have reviewed the standards around safeguarding, leading the service and leading and developing people which the service is currently working towards. These were published on 8 February 2024. There will be no new standards created and the service will continue to work towards these three.</p> <p>The huddle has been updated with our latest progress and a discussion around sign off will be had with the SLL on the 12 February.</p>
13	<p>By 1 December 2023, the Fire Standards Board, in liaison with the National Fire Chiefs Council, should review the existing relevant standard(s) and supporting guidance to clearly state how services should handle misconduct and safeguarding-related allegations and outcomes. These should include requirements to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conduct and complete investigations, whether or not the staff member under investigation leaves. • consider whether the incident requires immediate dismissal. • provide training for staff who are carrying out investigations; and <p>ensure the diversity/neutrality of the investigation panel/person.</p>	Fire Standards Board	1 Dec 23	<p>Not Owned by CDDFRS - Complete</p>	<p>CDDFRA and CDDFRS will fully engage and support the delivery of this recommendation.</p> <p>December 23 Whilst the standard has not been issued a number of additional measures have been implemented to assure the HMICFRS we have adequate provision for dealing with misconduct. We are awaiting the outcomes of the thematic review.</p> <p>February 2024 The FSB have reviewed the standards around safeguarding, leading the service and leading and developing people which the service is currently working towards. These were published on 8 February 2024.</p>
14	<p>By 1 March 2024, chief fire officers should provide assurances to HMICFRS that they have implemented the standard on misconduct allegations and outcomes handling.</p>	CDDFRS	1 Mar 24	Complete	<p>April 23 Awaiting standard to be released. Current process for fire standard implementation sits with the Project Board and Project Assurance Manager. Once available, the process for FS implementation will be actioned. All completed standards are agreed by SLT.</p>

					<p>September 23 Awaiting Fire Standard to be issued.</p> <p>December 23 Whilst the standard has not been issues a number of additional measures have been implemented to assurance the HMICFRS we have adequate provision for dealing with misconduct We are awaiting the outcomes of the thematic review.</p> <p>February 2024 The FSB have reviewed the standards around safeguarding, leading the service and leading and developing people which the service is currently working towards. These were published on 8 February 2024. No new standards will be produced. The huddle has been updated with our latest progress and a discussion around sign off will be had with the SLL on the 12 February.</p>
15	By 1 October 2023, the Home Office should work with the National Fire Chiefs Council and fire and rescue service employers to make sure there is a process to handle misconduct allegations against chief fire officers. The Home Office should immediately notify HMICFRS of any allegations and outcomes that it is aware of.	Home Office	1 Oct 23	Not Owned by CDDFRS	<p>CDDFRA and CDDFRS will fully engage and support the delivery of this recommendation.</p> <p>December 23 Awaiting further guidance to be issued</p> <p>May 2024 KFRS shared a document regarding their process for dealing with allegations made against any of the executive team. The Service are looking to produce a similar process.</p>

6	By 1 October 2023, the National Fire Chiefs Council should develop and manage a national barred list that holds details of staff who have been dismissed for gross misconduct (including staff who have already left services). It should ensure that this list is referred to in all appointment processes to prevent those who are barred from re-joining another service. After the College of Fire and Rescue has been established (see recommendation 25), it should take responsibility for managing the list	NFCC	1 Oct 23	Not Owned by CDDFRS	CDDFRA and CDDFRS will fully engage and support the delivery of this recommendation. December 23 Awaiting further guidance to be issued
17	With immediate effect, chief fire officers should notify HMICFRS of any allegations that have the potential to constitute staff gross misconduct that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> involve allegations of a criminal nature that have the potential to affect public confidence in FRSs. are of a serious nature; or relate to assistant chief fire officers or those at equivalent or higher grades	CDDFRS	Immediate	Complete	We will comply with this requirement with immediate effect in providing disclosures in line with the non-identifiable case histories provided previously to HMICFRS. We are seeking clarification from HMICFRS on any more detailed reporting it requires, to enable us to ensure that we are also compliant with our GDPR obligations
18	By 1 August 2023, chief fire officers should provide assurances to HMICFRS that all parties are supported in relation to ongoing investigations	CDDFRS	1 Aug 23	Complete	April 23 As outlined in recommendation 5. September 23 CFO satisfied that provisions are suitable.
19	By 1 July 2023, the Home Office should examine whether any appeal processes for fire and rescue misconduct cases are appropriate.	Home Office	1 Jul 23	Not Owned by CDDFRS	CDDFRA and CDDFRS will fully engage and support the delivery of this recommendation. December 23 Awaiting further guidance to be issued
Leadership					
20	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should have plans in place to ensure they meet the Fire	CDDFRS	1 Jul 23	Complete	April 23

	Standards Board's leading the service standard and its leading and developing people standard.				<p>Current process for fire standard implementation sits with the Project Board and Project Assurance Manager.</p> <p>The Director of POD has been designated as the SPOC for both standards.</p> <p>All completed standards are agreed by SLT.</p> <p>September 23</p> <p>A paper was delivered to SLT on the implementation of the Leadership Fire Standards. Work is currently underway.</p> <p>December 23</p> <p>Work is still ongoing, but progress is being made against this standard.</p>
21	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should make sure there is a full, 360-degree feedback process in place for all senior leaders and managers (assistant chief fire officer equivalent and above) in service.	CDDFRS	1 Jun 23	Complete	<p>April 23</p> <p>A 360 process is part of the current appraisal process for all staff including PO's.</p> <p>As part of wider SLT development / team building plans, a further 360 feedback process will be undertaken utilising the Johari Window tool and linked to i3 and supportive leadership.</p> <p>September 23</p> <p>360 has been undertaken with all of the senior team. Coaching and feedback to commence in September.</p> <p>December 23</p> <p>360 feedback process is complete. Follow up day planned for May 24. The 180- feedback has been broadened to all line managers and included in EOY appraisal cycle.</p> <p>May 2024</p> <p>A further development day was held in May for SLT to review outcomes of the 360 process and consider changes to the current team.</p>

22	By 1 September 2023, chief fire officers should make sure there is a full, 360-degree feedback process in place for all other leaders and managers in service. The process should include gathering feedback from a wide range of sources including colleagues and direct reports.	CDDFRS	1 Sep 23	Complete	<p>April 23 A 360 process is part of the current appraisal process for all staff including PO's. Procedure includes the requirement for peer feedback.</p> <p>December 23 We are considering ways to offer the 360 processes to all staff however, a 180 process is being used currently.</p> <p>May 2024 The bespoke 360 process has been designed and is currently being used across the Divisional Managers team as part of their ongoing development.</p>
23	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should seek regular feedback from staff about values, culture, fairness and diversity, with due regard to the leading and developing people standard. They should show how they act on this feedback.	CDDFRS	1 Jun 23	Complete	<p>April 23 The Service undertake a staff survey which focusses on values, culture, and behaviours. Call it out survey. HMICFRS staff survey Station visits / Manager 121's Station audits / Debriefs. Staff networks Safe Call data Exit interview data.</p> <p>December 23 Staff survey undertaken in September / October 23 with results fed back to staff in November. An action plan is being developed.</p>
24	By 1 October 2023, chief fire officers should put plans in place to monitor, including through the gathering and analysis of staff feedback, watch	CDDFRS	1 Oct 23	Complete	<p>April 23 Station visits / Manager 121's</p>

	and team cultures and provide prompt remedial action for any issues they identify.				<p>Staff Surveys (include locality and line manager/colleague related questions) Watch focus groups. SLT action plans (improvement & strategy) – monitored via CFA. September 23 Staff survey to take place over September and October with results being feedback to staff early November.</p> <p>May 2024 Staff focus groups have taken place over February, March and April with a range of ongoing workshops in Control over May. Feedback was delivered to staff at the leadership forums in April about work which has taken place.</p>
Management and leadership training and development					
25	By 1 January 2025, the Government should establish a College of Fire and Rescue, as proposed by the White Paper Reforming our Fire and Rescue Service. There should be no further delay to its implementation.	Government	1 Jan 25	Not Owned by CDFRS	<p>CDDFRA and CDDFRS will fully engage and support the delivery of this recommendation.</p> <p>December 23 We are awaiting further guidance on this. The white paper supported the CoF implementation.</p>
26	By 1 October 2023, as a precursor to the development of the College of Fire and Rescue, chief fire officers and the National Fire Chiefs Council should work with the Home Office to consider how they can improve the training and support they offer to staff in management and leadership development. This should include authority members in respect of their assurance leadership roles and should ensure that opportunities are offered fairly across all staff groups.	NFCC	1 Oct 23	Not Owned by CDFRS	<p>CDDFRA and CDDFRS will fully engage and support the delivery of this recommendation.</p> <p>December 23 We are awaiting further guidance on this. The service is engaged in the NFCC leadership development pathways and already have a robust structure of qualifications in place.</p>

27	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should make sure their equality impact assessments are fit for purpose and, as a minimum, meet the requirements of the National Fire Chiefs Council equality impact assessment toolkit.	CDDFRS	1 Jun 23	Complete	April 23 A review of CDDFRS process was undertaken in 2022 and aligned to the NFCC toolkit. EqIA's are complete and actions are monitored through the ED&I working group. EqIA's have been complete for all Service premises to ensure inclusivity.
28	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should review how they gather and use equality and diversity data to improve their understanding of their staff demographics, including applying and meeting the requirements of the National Fire Chiefs Council equality, diversity and inclusion data toolkit.	CDDFRS	1 Jun 23	Complete	April 23 Public sector equality duty Gender pays gap. Home office annual returns HMICFRS PowerBi reports Recruitment monitoring September 23 CFO satisfied that provisions are suitable. December 23 The CFO now chairs the EDI working group. Work has been ongoing to complete the maturity model in this area and drive forward work in a new action plan.
29	By 1 December 2023, the Home Office should publish greater detail on the protected characteristic data it collects about FRS staff, including joiners and leavers, by rank and role.	Home Office	1 Dec 23	Not owned by CDDFRS	CDDFRA and CDDFRS will fully engage and support the delivery of this recommendation
30	By 30 December 2024, the Home Office should align the data it collects on protected characteristics with the Office for National Statistics harmonised standard and publish this data.	Home Office	30 Dec 24	Not owned by CDDFRS	CDDFRA and CDDFRS will fully engage and support the delivery of this recommendation

31	By 1 December 2024, the Home Office should collect and publish experimental statistics on public complaints and conduct matters in relation to FRS staff, similar to that which it currently publishes on police forces in England and Wales.	Home Office	1 Dec 24	Not owned by CDDFRS	CDDFRA and CDDFRS will fully engage and support the delivery of this recommendation
Improving Diversity					
32	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should, as a priority, specify in succession plans how they intend to improve diversity across all levels of the service. This should include offering increased direct-entry opportunities.	CDDFRS	1 June 23	Complete	<p>April 23 This is addressed through the People Strategy, ED&I Strategy, Strategic Workforce Plan & Talent Management Strategy. Succession planning arrangements are in place which include Team plans. Direct entry opportunities will be considered at SM level once the current programme provides ROI information and deliverables. Direct entry at CFO level has been facilitated.</p> <p>September 23 Updates to the Talent Management Strategy / SWFP have been made. Positive action initiatives being reviewed. Women's development programme initiative started.</p> <p>December 23 7 WT females have been enrolled onto the female development programme. A WT recruitment campaign is planned for April 24 with a positive action plan to support recruitment of under representative groups.</p>
33	By 1 August 2023, chief fire officers should develop plans to promote progression paths for existing staff in non-operational roles and put plans in place to reduce any inequalities of opportunity.	CDDFRS	1 Aug 23	Complete	<p>April 23 Development plans are available and in place to align green book / non-operational colleagues the same training opportunities as uniformed staff which is relevant to their role</p>

Core Code of Ethics					
34	With immediate effect, chief fire officers should review their implementation of the Core Code of Ethics and make sure it is being applied across their services.	CDDFRS	Immediate	Complete	April 23 Implemented through project. Fire Standard outcomes met.
The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England					
35	By the end of this Parliament, the Government should consider the findings and recommendations in this report when refreshing the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England.	Government	End of this parliament	Not owned by CDDFRS	CDDFRA and CDDFRS will fully engage and support the delivery of this recommendation. December 23 Awaiting further guidance and the revised framework

Dashboard of Recommendations

Total Number of Recommendations	35
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Owner Breakdown

CDDFRS	19
Fire Standards Board	3
Government	2
Home Office	7
National Employers, LGA, NFCC	1
Police	1
NFCC	2

CDDFRS Progress

Complete	17
Ongoing	2
Not Started	0

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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