HMICFRS

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
and Fire & Rescue Services

Fire & Rescue Service
Effectiveness, efficiency and people 2018/19

An inspection of Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service

Contents

About this inspection

This is the first time that HMICFRS has inspected fire and rescue services across England. Our focus is on the service they provide to the public, and the way they use the resources available. The inspection assesses how effectively and efficiently Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service prevents, protects the public against and responds to fires and other emergencies. We also assess how well it looks after the people who work for the service.

In carrying out our inspections of all 45 fire and rescue services in England, we answer three main questions:

1. How effective is the fire and rescue service at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?
2. How efficient is the fire and rescue service at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?
3. How well does the fire and rescue service look after its people?

This report sets out our inspection findings. After taking all the evidence into account, we apply a graded judgment for each of the three questions.

What inspection judgments mean

Our categories of graded judgment are:

* outstanding;
* good;
* requires improvement; and
* inadequate.

Good is our 'expected' graded judgment for all fire and rescue services. It is based on policy, practice or performance that meet pre-defined grading criteria, which are informed by any relevant national operational guidance or standards.

If the service exceeds what we expect for good, we will judge it as **outstanding**.

If we find shortcomings in the service, we will judge it as **requires improvement**.

If we find serious critical failings of policy, practice or performance of the fire and rescue service, we will judge it as **inadequate**.

Service in numbers

Public perceptions

	Staffordshire	England
Perceived effectiveness of service Public perceptions survey (June/July 2018)	89%	86%

Response

	Staffordshire	England
Incidents attended per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 December 2018	8.3	10.4
Home fire risk checks carried out by FRS per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 March 2018	22.4	10.4
Fire safety audits per 100 known premises 12 months to 31 March 2018	1.6	3.0

Incidents attended in the 12 months to 31 December 2018

Total Non-fire incidents 22%

Total Fires 45%

Total
9,301

Total False Alarms 33%
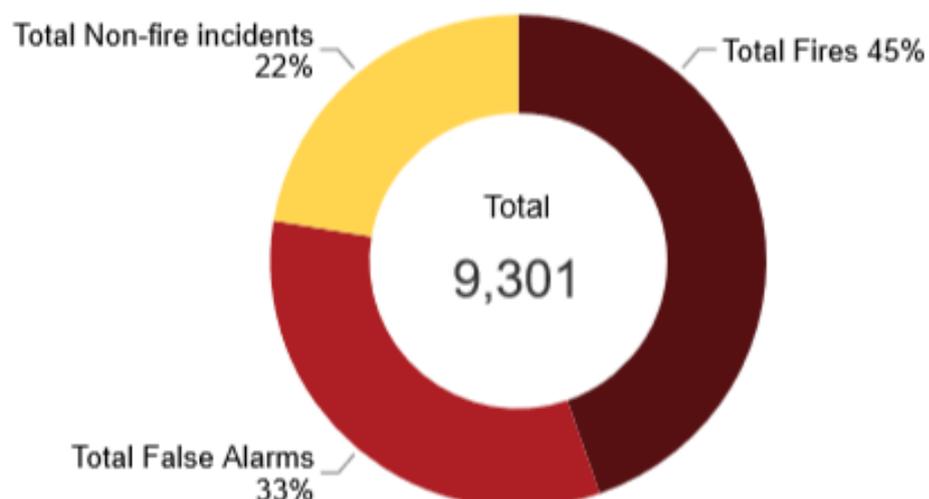
£ Cost

	Staffordshire	England
Firefighter cost per person per year 12 months to 31 March 2018	£18.19	£22.38

Workforce

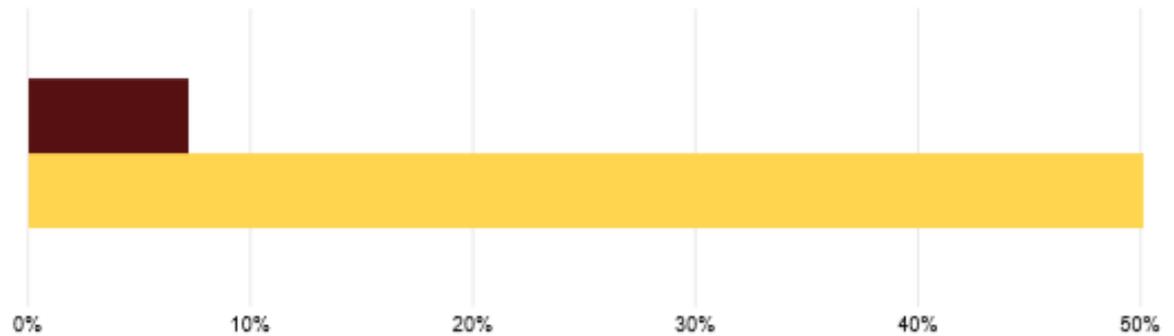|	Staffordshire	England
Number of firefighters per 1,000 population As at 31 March 2018	0.6	0.6
Five-year change in workforce As at 31 March 2013 compared with 31 March 2018	-23%	-14%
Percentage of wholetime firefighters As at 31 March 2018	47%	70%

Percentage of female firefighters as at 31 March 2018

● Female firefighters ● Female residential population

Percentage of black, Asian and minority ethnic firefighters as at 31 March 2018

● BAME Firefighters ● BAME residential population
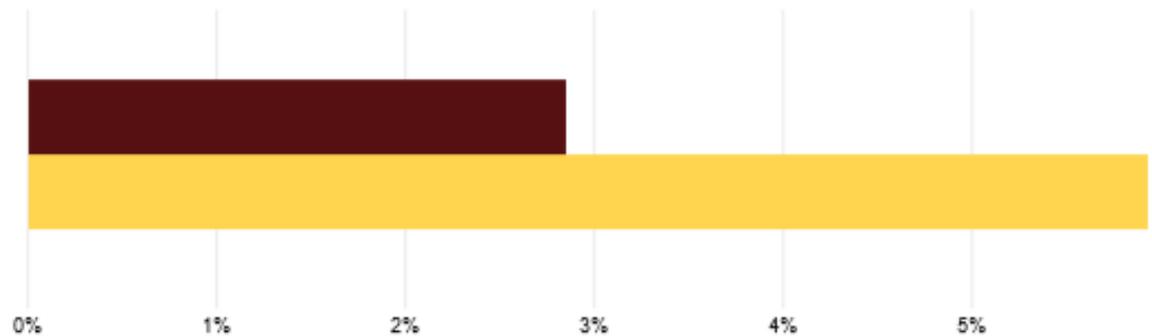
Please refer to annex A for full details on data used.

Overview

⚙ **Effectiveness**	●●●○	**Good**
Understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies	●●●○	Good
Preventing fires and other risks	●●●○	Good
Protecting the public through fire regulation	●●●○	Good
Responding to fires and other emergencies	●●●○	Good
Responding to national risks	●●●○	Good
£ **Efficiency**	●●●○	**Good**
Making best use of resources	●●●○	Good
Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future	●●●○	Good
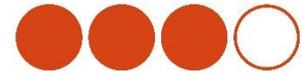
👥 **People**	●●●○ **Good**	
Promoting the right values and culture	●●●● Outstanding	
Getting the right people with the right skills	●●●○ Good	
Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity	●●●○ Good	
Managing performance and developing leaders	●●●○ Good	
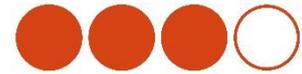
Overall summary of inspection findings

We are very pleased with the performance of Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) in keeping people safe and secure, and, in particular, in how it looks after its people.
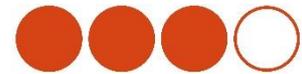
Staffordshire FRS is good at providing an effective service to the public. It is good at:

- understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies;
- preventing fires and other risks;
- protecting the public through fire regulation;
- responding to fires and other emergencies; and
- responding to national risks.

The service is good in the efficiency of its services. We found it to be good at making the best use of resources and also at making its services affordable.

Staffordshire FRS is good at looking after its people. We judged the service to be outstanding at promoting the right values and culture. It is good at:
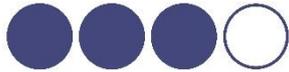
- getting the right people with the right skills;
- managing performance and developing leaders; and
- ensuring fairness and promoting diversity.

Overall, we commend Staffordshire FRS for its performance. We are confident it is well equipped for this to continue.

Effectiveness

How effective is the service at keeping people safe and secure?

●●●○

Good

Summary

An effective fire and rescue service will identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue risks its community faces. It will target its fire prevention and protection activities to those who are at greatest risk from fire. It will make sure businesses comply with fire safety legislation. When the public calls for help, the fire and rescue service should respond promptly with the right skills and equipment to deal with the incident effectively. Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service's overall effectiveness is good.

The service is good at understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies. It has gathered information from many sources so that risks are known and assessed. A risk profile is in place to prevent and mitigate these risks. These plans are known and understood by operational staff.

Safe and well visits are at the heart of the service's good strategy for preventing fires. These are planned and prioritised by a central team and offer advice on identifying and reducing fire risks. The service promotes community safety, running seasonal campaigns to highlight timely messages.

The service is good at protecting the public through fire regulation. Following a review, the service has identified a list of high-risk properties in its area. It has a two-year inspection programme for these properties and should make sure that it has the staff to carry out this work on schedule. The service has acted to cut the number of false alarm calls received.

The service is good at responding to emergencies. Its Firewatch system allows the service to plan to have the right fire engines and crews available to deal with incidents. However, more work is needed to make sure more on-call engines are available to help meet target times for responding to fires. The service is good at learning lessons from operational incidents.

The service is good at responding to national risks. It is well prepared for dealing with major incidents. The service is experienced in working with other agencies and neighbouring fire services in planning for dealing for national risks.

Understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies

Good

All fire and rescue services should identify and assess all foreseeable fire and rescue-related risks. They should also prevent and mitigate these risks.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

Understanding local and community risk

Staffordshire FRS has a good understanding of local and community risk. It produces a corporate safety plan (CSP) to tell the public how it will identify, manage and respond to risks from fires and other emergencies.

The service used data from online surveys, focus groups and interviews with interested parties to develop results for its last CSP. This helped the service to understand the diverse needs of its communities.

The service also uses information from sources such as incident data, the Staffordshire Resilience Forum, local authorities and the National Health Service. Data and intelligence are shared between partner organisations to produce a joined-up approach to providing services.

In developing the CSP, the service also analysed information on other factors including:

- socio-economic profiles;
- building developments, including roads and infrastructure;
- hospital, health and care facilities; and
- other premises which may be occupied overnight by vulnerable persons.

In producing a clear risk profile, the service has agreed data-sharing protocols with other agencies. It uses Exeter data and software such as Mosaic, gathering information about deprivation, age and lifestyles.

Staffordshire FRS is now using Experian data and PORIS, a provision of risk information system, to manage data to establish a schedule of inspections for high-risk properties to ensure they are safe.

The service works with partner organisations and other agencies to identify shared risk. It is part of the Staffordshire Civil Contingencies Unit's (CCU) risk and response assessment group. The group includes many agencies such as emergency responders and local authorities. It meets quarterly to identify new risks, monitor known risks, plan for potential incidents and support joint action when needed.

The service works to understand future risk. It does this by using national information and data, and information from partners such as Staffordshire County Council's Insight team. This team provides strategic infrastructure plans and industrial strategies to help identify emerging risk.

Having an effective risk management plan

Staffordshire FRS's CSP clearly links community risks into its prevention, protection and response work. In August 2018, governance of the service passed to Staffordshire's police, fire and crime commissioner (PFCC), known as the Staffordshire Commissioner. As part of this transfer, the Staffordshire Commissioner is required to produce a fire and rescue plan containing their priorities. At the time of our inspection this was being developed, with an interim fire plan in place.

The CSP meets the requirements, set out in the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, for fire services to assess all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks in their area and set out how these risks will be mitigated.

The service is an important partner in the Staffordshire local resilience forum, which produces a community risk register. This sets out both local and regional risks, including major projects such as HS2 and the Birmingham Commonwealth Games 2022, naturally-occurring risks such as wildfires and flooding, and malicious threats such as terrorism. The service also works with other fire and rescue services nationally to consider wider emerging risks, such as the increase in waste fires.

Station and area plans link to the CSP to ensure local work is aligned to service priorities.

Maintaining risk information

Staffordshire FRS is effective at gathering and sharing accurate risk information about complex buildings and high-risk sites. This helps firefighters deal with incidents effectively and safely.

Staff regularly visit commercial premises and collect information about risks. A review of the system showed that the schedule was up to date. Each fire engine carries the information so that crews can access it at any time. There are systems to share information on risks across the service. A review of the system shows the service has an up-to-date programme where staff regularly collect premises risk information.

For temporary events, such as local festivals, fire crews visit the site to gather risk information when notified about an event by other agencies, such as the CCU. Mobile data terminals (MDTs), carried on all fire engines, hold the risk information, such as temporary access routes.

The service communicates risk information effectively to its staff. As well as MDTs, staff use an internal online tool for sharing information about local risks and 'prevent flashes', which share information about prevention work such as campaigns and local partnerships.

Preventing fires and other risks

Good

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

Prevention strategy

Staffordshire FRS has an effective prevention strategy. A range of initiatives is used to reduce the risks identified to people and communities, and to keep people safe.

Many partner agencies make referrals to the service. These are assessed by a central team that prioritises safe and well visits using a gold, silver, bronze system.

In the year to 31 March 2018, the service carried out 25,206 (and its partner organisations 318) safe and well visits. Although this is a reduction from the 26.8 safe and well visits per 1,000 population the service carried out in the year to March 2016, it still equates to 22.4 visits per 1,000 population, which is over twice the England rate of 10.4. These visits include identifying fire risks and how to reduce them, providing health and wellbeing advice including on slips, trips and falls, and fitting smoke detectors.

People who do not qualify for a safe and well visit are sent a home safety information pack. The central team monitors numbers, which are reported to performance meetings. Dip sampling checks those who did not initially qualify. If circumstances have changed, a visit is arranged.

The service describes itself as a prevention-led organisation. The central team is supported by local area prevention teams, community safety officers and volunteers. Full-time staff across the service are involved in prevention activities. Fire crews are supported by the business intelligence team, who produce demographic data which allows station staff to prioritise their safe and well visits.

Volunteers contact people following a safe and well visit, to evaluate whether it was useful. Activities targeted towards children and young people are also evaluated. The service measures the success of campaigns using on-the-day questionnaires, staff surveys and by evaluating pilot projects. Innovative prevention activities we saw included assessing hospital falls admissions, using hairdressers to target social isolation and holding an annual community wellbeing week involving all staff.

Promoting community safety

The service aligns its prevention activity with national campaigns, such as the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) community safety campaign calendar. Partner organisation referrals and positive outcomes for vulnerable people are among the measures monitored. The service uses some of these as case studies to improve staff understanding of positive outcomes from its prevention activity.

An internal team uses incident and demographic data to create a 12-month campaign plan. This targets seasonal issues such as outdoor fires, or specific groups of people such as smokers, with campaigns on social media and the service's website. The accessibility of this information could be improved for those with a visual impairment.

The central prevention team allocates resources where needed. For example, following two deaths, the service is working with crews and partners to highlight the dangers of entering water to young people, walkers and runners.

The service makes good use of both volunteers and staff from partner organisations to carry out prevention work. 'Olive Branch' training is given to staff from partner organisations to show them how a referral to the fire service can help prevent fires and other incidents.

The service has successfully run a range of Prince's Trust programmes for many years. It aims to engage vulnerable young adults with diverse needs and help them make positive lifestyle choices. Team leaders have built up a partnership network that offers work experience placements.

The service has a comprehensive and easy to follow safeguarding policy. All staff must complete initial and refresher training. This also includes information on radicalisation and modern slavery. An accredited week-long course covering prevention and protection activities includes training in how to identify vulnerability. This course is part of initial firefighter training and is now being rolled out to all operational staff.

Community safety officers run a programme to reduce fire-setting behaviour. The service works closely with partner organisations through multi-agency risk assessment meetings, known as MARACs. It works with Staffordshire Police to reduce the threat of arson by installing arson-reducing letter boxes at properties which may be at risk. An example of partnership working in an area with an increased risk of arson saw the service undertake extra safe and well visits alongside more police and fire visibility. This resulted in an increase in calls to Crimestoppers and fewer reported incidents of anti-social behaviour.

Road safety

The service is an active member of the Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership. It has helped raise funds for an education training co-ordinator. Through the partnership, the service is piloting road safety in safe and well checks to target older drivers, and a young driver hazard perception scheme. Partner organisations told us that the service is a valuable member of the group.

In a new initiative with the police, the service has begun to run a course that highlights dangers and promotes road safety for individuals who have committed minor offences such as not wearing a seat belt.

Safety messages to school children are being promoted through new Safe and Sound interactive pods. The pods use several scenarios to promote home and road safety messages. There are plans to further expand this joint working with the police.

Protecting the public through fire regulation

⬤⬤⬤◯

Good

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service is good at protecting the public through fire regulation. But we found the following area in which it needs to improve:

Areas for improvement

- The service should ensure it allocates enough resources to a prioritised and risk-based inspection programme.

All fire and rescue services should assess fire risks in buildings and, when necessary, require building owners to comply with fire safety legislation. Each service decides how many assessments it does each year. But it must have a locally determined, risk-based inspection programme for enforcing the legislation.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

Risk-based approach

Staffordshire FRS undertakes a range of protection activity to fulfil its statutory and discretionary duties. Its protection strategy demonstrates it is taking a broad approach to identifying and addressing the protection risk it faces.

In the year to 31 March 2018, the service carried out 416 fire safety audits, which equates to 1.6 per 100 known premises. Although this is lower than the England rate of 3.0 over the same period, the number of fire safety audits carried out by the service has been on an upward trend since 2014/15. The rate at which the service finds unsatisfactory premises during its audits is 40.1 percent. This compares to an England rate of 31.5 percent indicating the service may be better at targeting premises in need of inspecting.

In 2018, the service reviewed its definition of a high-risk property. It uses Experian data to provide a list of premises deemed as high risk of having a fire. The list is streamlined to identify premises used for sleeping accommodation. Properties that have been identified as high or very high risk to fire crews following risk inspections are also included. As at 31 March 2019, using this new definition, the service identified 1,770 high-risk premises.

The service told us that in the first quarter of 2019/20 it completed 290 audits. This indicates they will reach their own target of inspecting all high-risk premises over the next two years. The review identified the need for three more fire safety inspectors to ensure the programme of audits remains on track. At the time of inspection, these positions were still awaiting approval. We look forward to seeing the benefits of the revised risk definition, and the impact of the new staff, continuing in the coming months.

Fire safety officers accompany fire safety inspectors every two months to ensure audits are being carried out consistently. The service uses the NFCC audit form to ensure a consistent and robust approach to auditing. Findings are recorded using a system known as the Community Fire Risk Management Information System (CFRMIS). However, we found that recording of time spent on inspections was inconsistent across the service.

In the year to 31 March 2019, the service completed 96 percent of 343 building regulation consultations within the required timeframe, an improvement from 88 percent over the previous year. Reactive work such as complaints and fire safety concerns are prioritised.

Unlike some services, fire crews do not undertake lower-risk fire safety audits. However, fire crews are trained to identify low-level fire safety shortfalls when they are carrying out risk inspections, or at incidents. Qualified fire protection staff are also available out of hours to support fire crews and respond to serious fire safety concerns when needed.

Enforcement

Staffordshire FRS takes a supportive approach to working with businesses and ensuring fire safety compliance. However, it will use its formal enforcement powers where required.

In the year to 31 March 2018, the service issued 162 informal notifications, no alteration notices, 9 enforcement notices and 4 prohibition notices. Data from the Home Office indicated that the service has not used its powers to prosecute in any year since records began in 2010/2011.

Fire safety inspectors receive training to prepare cases for prosecution. Team meetings are used to discuss staff confidence in building cases and maintaining skills. Although no prosecutions have been taken forward recently, we saw cases where evidence has been produced for legal assessment. The Staffordshire Commissioner's office and Derbyshire FRS give legal support.

Protection staff are actively involved with local safety advisory groups, which oversee large and temporary events. The service works with regulatory partner organisations, sharing information and taking joint action to reduce risk. A good example of this is the Waste Management Sites Partnership. The protection team undertakes joint inspections with local housing officers and immigration and environmental health agencies. The service has inspection protocols with other agencies such as environmental health and local prisons. Trading standards have agreed to give the service a list of firework storage sites each summer.

Working with others

Staffordshire FRS is working to reduce the number of calls to false alarms, known as unwanted fire signals. Control room staff provide robust call challenging to assist this process and data supplied by the service shows that, in the last 12 months, 60 percent of these calls were not attended. A review identified that the highest number of false alarms came from domestic properties such as sheltered housing. This led to joint protection and prevention interventions with staff visiting properties to assess both the building and the occupants to maximise safety and reduce false alarm calls.

The service works together with other agencies such as the Chamber of Commerce, Safety Groups UK and the Regulation for Growth steering group for Staffordshire. The supportive approach to fire safety regulation helps businesses via education packages such as ROBUST (business continuity) and fire safety training and education.

Staffordshire FRS gives support nationally to four major businesses via the primary authority scheme and is leading nationally on work to reduce fires at waste sites.

A notable pilot scheme with a local prison to provide fire marshal qualifications to prisoners has, according to service-provided data, cut cell fires by 50 percent. The service has also led on a scheme to fit sprinklers to all residential buildings in Staffordshire with four or more floors to improve safety for occupants.

Responding to fires and other emergencies

Good

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service is good at responding to fires and other emergencies. But we found the following area in which it needs to improve:

> **Areas for improvement**
> • The service should improve the availability of its on-call fire engines.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

Managing assets and resources

Staffordshire FRS's response strategy is based on a thorough assessment of community risk. It sends the most appropriate resource to an incident, taking into account the incident type and the time it would take for a fire engine to arrive.

The service operates a mixture of wholetime and on-call stations, with wholetime stations located where risk is highest. On-call stations are in more rural areas and have part-time crews, known as on-call firefighters. In some areas, on-call firefighters support the full-time crews. All firefighters are equally trained, whether whole or part-time.

The service has a range of fire engines and specialist resources, such as rescue and water safety vehicles, to respond to the full range of emergency incidents.

A system called Firewatch manages crewing. It enables managers to plan for shortfalls a week in advance. On-call firefighters must declare when they are available, and gaps are managed locally when possible. The Firewatch system monitors skills to make sure there are enough firefighters with the right skills available.

Overtime is sometimes used to ensure fire engines are crewed sufficiently. Firefighters are moved around the county to fill gaps. A pilot is assessing the viability of roaming firefighters to reduce gaps in availability across on-call stations.

The service is facing difficulties recruiting on-call firefighters. It is trying to make the role of an on-call firefighter more attractive. It has reduced the minimum commitment from 84 to 50 hours per week and made the training more accessible to candidates who may have another job outside the fire service. Recruitment has increased but some stations are still unable to provide cover at times.

Response

The service has an action plan to implement national operational guidance (NOG). It has worked regionally with other fire and rescue services to align working practices.

A dedicated officer has completed a gap analysis of NOG against service procedures. Progress against the action plan is reported at quarterly performance meetings.

Policy changes are communicated to staff via the intranet, and operational procedures amended. Firefighters use the amended procedures to support training events.

In the year to December 2018, the service attended 8.3 incidents per 1000 population. This compares to the England rate of 10.4 over the same period.

Like many fire and rescue services, the service has too few on-call firefighters. This impacts upon the number of fire engines the service has available. In the year to 31 March 2019, the average on-call fire engine availability was only 68.6 percent. Overall, monthly fire engine availability for the service was 75.7 percent due to wholetime fire engine availability being 99.2 percent. When insufficient firefighters are available, a targeted response vehicle (TRV) can be used instead. These are fire engines crewed by three firefighters that will respond to minor fires where there is no risk to life.

In the year to 31 March 2018, the service's average response time to primary fires was 10 minutes 53 seconds, an increase of 24 seconds from the previous year. This is higher than the average (9 minutes 55 seconds) when compared with other significantly rural services. The service aims to send at least 1 fire engine to any high-risk area within 8 minutes, 87 percent of the time. High-risk incidents include property fires, road traffic collisions and other incidents known as special service calls. In the year to 31 March 2019, the service achieved this target 78 percent of the time and therefore did not meet its own standard.

We found that firefighters could access risk information from MDTs quickly when asked. Staff told us that the system was reliable and updated regularly. Urgent information is sent out as an 'ops flash' and staff must acknowledge they have seen it.

Staff told us that information about incidents is recorded on a form known as an analytical risk assessment (ARA). ARAs are signed off by incident commanders as a record of risks and actions. These are collected by a central team who share any learning points.

Command

Control room staff manage deployment of fire engines. They gather information about incidents and use a tool known as 999eye to help them decide how many fire engines are needed. With 999eye, a caller can upload a picture or video clip of an incident. Staff told us they are supported to make decisions about the number of fire engines needed for an incident, based on information received. Following feedback, a member of control room staff developed a guide to help operators locating incidents on major roads in Staffordshire.

Incident commanders at all levels are well trained. Staff complete scheduled incident command refresher days and scenario-based training and assessment. Assessments are mandatory and are recorded. Higher level command is shared by partner organisations and run by the local CCU.

Keeping the public informed

The service makes extensive use of social media to share safety information and give round-the-clock updates on live incidents. The service website has links to both Twitter and Facebook. A central team provides the bulk of information, with additional station accounts that inform local communities.

The service is good at identifying vulnerability and safeguarding vulnerable people at incidents. All staff undertake mandatory initial and refresher training to support them. Staff told us they felt confident making referrals when necessary.

Control room staff were confident in giving fire survival guidance to the public. They have action cards to support them. Operators demonstrated how they would access and record information.

Evaluating operational performance

Staffordshire FRS has good systems to evaluate operational performance and make operational improvements. Staff told us that operational learning and monitoring was a positive within the service.

Hot debriefs follow every incident. Learning from hot debriefs is recorded on an operational assurance form and sent to a central team. Larger incidents have a structured debrief which will involve representatives from crews, partner agencies and fire control. Debriefs following significant incidents are chaired by the Staffordshire CCU and will cover the principles of joint working, known as JESIP.

The service also sends higher-level commanders, known as TacAds, to incidents to monitor, support and review the actions of crews. The TacAd will complete an operational assurance form, focusing on good practice, learning points or a cause for concern.

A central team collate information from all types of debrief and monitoring. They share learning either with an ops flash, through e-learning, a quarterly operational bulletin or via a weekly newsletter. Structured debrief records and action plans are added to an internal online portal known as LearnPro and are available to all staff. Middle managers attend a quarterly forum and discuss learning from case studies to improve planning and preparation for similar events.

A review of structured debriefs showed thorough content with action plans to support learning and improvement. An example of this was the debrief following the wildfires in 2018, which saw working groups set up to review the suitability of equipment.

Learning from national events is identified by the organisational assurance team. This team will send out information to department leads who will assess how learning can be embedded. Decisions and rationale are recorded. National learning is added to the LearnPro portal.

The service exchanges its own learning via national operational learning. A recent example is an incident at Westport Lake where personal protective equipment was removed.

Responding to national risks

Good

All fire and rescue services must be able to respond effectively to multi-agency and cross-border incidents. This means working with other fire and rescue services (known as intraoperability) and emergency services (known as interoperability).

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

Preparedness

Staffordshire FRS has good arrangements to help in the event of extraordinary need, including support from neighbouring services when needed. The service demonstrated that it can consistently respond to several demanding incidents over many days during the wildfires in summer 2018.

Incident commanders and control room staff told us that they can ask for additional resources using national resilience control systems. This process is tested regularly. Staffordshire CCU plans for extreme events and information is shared with partners on an online portal known as Resilience Direct.

The service has site-specific response plans in place for high-risk premises. Working closely with the CCU, planned training focuses on specific risk premises and themes. Training and exercises at high-risk sites include representatives from other agencies, such as police and local authority.

Working with other services

Staffordshire FRS can demonstrate that it works with other fire and rescue services when needed. The shared control room with West Midlands Fire Service demonstrates that the quickest fire engine to an incident is always sent, regardless of the incident location. The service has sent resources to support other services many times, most recently for the potential dam collapse in Derbyshire in July 2019.

The service is bordered by seven other fire and rescue services. We found that cross-border training and exercising for firefighters was more consistent in the south. Access to cross-border risk information was limited. However, it was good to note that information for high-risk premises in other counties was easy to access, such as the Kingsbury Oil Terminal in Warwickshire.

The service is involved in regional health and safety, and procurement groups to try to improve the compatibility of equipment and procedures.

Working with other agencies

Staffordshire FRS is good at working with other agencies to plan and test arrangements for dealing with large incidents.

In the year to 31 March 2019, 39 multi-agency exercises were carried out. The CCU plans exercises for all partners five years in advance. Each year there are three tactical exercises for operational crews and one strategic exercise for senior commanders. Partners told us that the service always participates fully in planning and preparation.

The service ensures that staff are prepared to deal with major incidents in Staffordshire. It works closely with other emergency services and response partners. The service has resources which can be used to support national incidents, and these are tested regularly.

The service is prepared for a marauding terrorist attack, known as MTAs. Joint training with West Midlands Fire Service takes place to support this. In 2018, a large-scale multi-agency training event to test procedures took place at Alton Towers.

Efficiency

How efficient is the service at keeping people safe and secure?
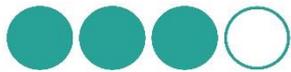
Good

Summary

An efficient fire and rescue service will manage its budget and spend money properly and appropriately. It will align its resources to its risk. It should try to keep costs down without compromising public safety. Future budgets should be based on robust and realistic assumptions. Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service's overall efficiency is good.

The service makes good use of its resources. Drawing on a range of data sources, the service targets its resources on prevention, protection and responding to incidents. The allocation of staff between prevention, protection and response activity is good. The service recognises the difficulty of both recruiting and retaining on-call firefighters in rural areas.

The service is committed to working with partner organisations, both within and beyond the fire service, to make the best use of its resources. Following the change in governance in 2018, the service has started sharing support services with Staffordshire Police. It is important that all its collaborations are kept under review to ensure that they are benefiting the service.

Staffordshire FRS is good at providing an affordable service both now and in the future. The service has reduced its budget in recent years. It has more work to do to keep its budget balanced in the years ahead. Spending is well controlled.

The service has been innovative in finding ways to improve safety for the people it serves. It has established a community interest company (CIC) that works with partner organisations to develop ideas such as the Community Sprinkler Project.

Making best use of resources

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Good

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service is good at making best use of resources. But we found the following area in which it needs to improve:

> **Areas for improvement**
> - The service should ensure it effectively monitors, reviews and evaluates the benefits and outcomes of any collaboration.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

How plans support objectives

The service's CSP is its overarching integrated risk management plan. This identifies risks and how resources will be used to reduce those risks. Plans for providing services align with the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England.

In August 2018, governance of the service transferred to the Staffordshire Commissioner. Work is continuing to ensure that the next CSP aligns with the next four-year plan from the commissioner.

The service uses many data sources to assist with planning, including prediction of future demand. Consultation processes, planning and performance monitoring ensures that resources are spread effectively across prevention, protection and response activities.

We found the service is good at resourcing prevention, protection and response activities. For example, following a review of protection resources in 2018, a business case for three additional inspection officers has been submitted for approval.

Department heads are responsible for developing strategies and local plans which link to the CSP. Departmental strategies include transport, estates and IT. Local station plans are a visual reminder that drives activity. Objectives and outcomes are used in staff performance reviews.

The service has an annual budget of just under £41m, supported by a medium-term financial plan. We found planning assumptions to be reasonable. The plan considers a variety of funding streams outside its control, such as central government grants, nationally-set pay awards and pension contributions. The service told us it is coming to the end of a four-year efficiency plan which identified total savings of £3.5m by April 2020.

Following the change of governance, some support service resources have become shared services with Staffordshire Police. The anticipated savings and impact from this move is not yet known.

Productivity and ways of working

Staffordshire FRS has a good mix of staff working across all departments on full-time and part-time contracts. As at 31 March 2018, it had 355 on-call operational staff, 225 support staff and 313 full-time equivalent (FTE) wholetime operational staff. This includes those carrying out specialist roles such as learning and development. The overall workforce has reduced by 23 percent since 31 March 2013.

In the year to 31 March 2018, the firefighter cost per head of population was £18.19. This compares to the England rate of £22.38.

The service recognises the challenges of recruiting and retaining on-call firefighters. It has introduced flexible contracts and a modular training system to attract more staff. As a result, applications have increased. On-call fire engines can be crewed with fewer people when numbers are low, which keeps them available for low-risk incidents.

The Firewatch system allows working hours to be planned and monitored. It also tells the service the specialist skills of on-duty staff, such as driving and incident command. This enables staff to be moved around the service to cover shortfalls where necessary. Control room staff can see what crews and appliances are available and can move resources around during busy times. Overtime shifts are available only if fire engines cannot be crewed by deploying staff elsewhere.

The service has a dashboard that allows managers to see what work has been completed against performance indicators, such as safe and well checks, and risk information visits. The dashboard overview enables staff across the service to see how they are performing against others. The dashboard also allows on-call stations to check staff availability. This helps managers plan for shortfalls.

Flexible working is supported. There is a core hours system that allows support staff to plan work outside of those hours to support childcare and other personal commitments. Staff can work remotely at any fire station when required.

Collaboration

Staffordshire FRS is committed to exploring areas for collaboration both within and outside of the fire sector.

For some years the service has successfully shared a control room with West Midlands Fire Service which saves it around £0.5m per year. It also shares a transport and equipment facility with Staffordshire Police, known as JETS. A saving of around £1m per year is shared between both services. Other initiatives include regional procurement, Prince's Trust, employment projects and the notable Community Sprinkler Project which, according to the service, has seen 11 out of 42 buildings of 4 or more floors across the county fitted with sprinkler systems. A further 19 are expected to be completed by March 2021.

More recently, with the change of governance to the Staffordshire Commissioner, support services have started to move to join police staff. The impact and benefit of these shared services has yet to be realised. The difficulties experienced in extracting meaningful performance data for the JETS collaboration, caused by differences in ICT systems, should be considered to ensure the service can monitor, evaluate and review shared services.

Continuity arrangements

Staffordshire FRS has clear business continuity plans. Arrangements are managed and tested for ICT, fire control, transport and equipment, and industrial action.

We saw evidence that learning from events such as the wildfires of 2018 is taken into consideration to mitigate the impact of any similar future events. Quarterly testing uses different methods such as discussions, table-top exercises and full implementation.

Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future

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Good

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service is good at making its services affordable now and in the future. But we found the following area in which it needs to improve:

Areas for improvement
- The service must ensure scenario plans for future annual budgets are fully considered, including measuring likely impacts.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

Improving value for money

Staffordshire FRS has an annual budget of £41m. The budget has reduced by £9m since 2012. This has been achieved by reducing the workforce and number of fire engines. The service has also reduced the cost of borrowing by £6.5m since 2012 by using savings and reserves to fund capital expenditure.

The service has previously used budget underspends to boost reserves. As at 31 March 2018, general reserves stood at £1.9m (4.6 percent of overall budget) with earmarked reserves of £8.3m and a further £7m ring-fenced for private finance initiative (PFI) programmes and pensions. However, budget shortfalls have meant that reserve funds are now being used to supplement capital expenditure such as fleet replacement. It is estimated that other reserves will fall to £3m by 2023. The service recognises that the current use of reserves is not sustainable.

We are satisfied that there is sound budget control and management of funds. Non-pay costs are monitored and managed using a 'Dragons' Den'-type exercise where budget holders are challenged to identify savings. These have contributed to the overall savings achieved to date.

The service has two large PFI programmes running. These funded the development of 21 fire stations. The annual charge for these contracts is just under £10m, which is built into financial planning. Of this, £7m is funded through a government grant. Contracts were recently renegotiated, and further savings would be difficult to find. There are several examples of these premises being shared with partners.

The service anticipates a shortfall in budget of around £3m over the next 3 years, mainly due to reduced government grant and increasing pay and pension costs. A significant part of the overall budget is spent on pay, property and the collaborations with Staffordshire Police and West Midlands Fire Service. The service must now give greater consideration as to how it will achieve a balanced budget.

The service is aware of the financial challenges it faces. It is undertaking scenario planning to identify future savings. The service must do further work to evaluate scenario plans to measure impact and avoid budget deficit.

Financial audits are carried out both internally and externally. The new governance structure through the Staffordshire Commissioner includes a robust financial challenge from the ethics, transparency and audit panel (ETAP). ETAP is made up of people from across the county who examine and scrutinise financial reporting.

Innovation

The service has established a CIC. It aims to bring together partner organisations to provide benefits and improvements to the safety of the people of Staffordshire. A firm example of this is the sprinkler project previously mentioned, which has improved safety for residents of high-rise properties. Further benefits include additional funding for prevention and protection staff.

The service has invested in technology and has recently upgraded MDTs on fire engines. Staff told us that IT staff were quick to address issues identified during the changeover.

There are plans in place to move to an upgraded Office 365 cloud-based system. The service told us that a further £0.6m has been put aside to replace various IT such as desktop computers, firewall systems and portable tablets. It has negotiated end of life deals on the external Citrix system and conferencing facilities will be replaced this year.

Future investment and working with others

Staffordshire FRS consistently works with other agencies to improve services to the public. It has a shared fire control, and transport and equipment department. It has established a CIC which is an independent, self-funding and non-profit partnership between public, private and voluntary sector partner organisations.

The primary purpose of the CIC is to improve the health, safety, social and economic wellbeing of the communities of Staffordshire. The company has an annual turnover of £343,000, with £330,000 spent directly on community projects. CIC staff are employed by the Staffordshire Commissioner but funded from external grants.

Following the change of governance to the Staffordshire Commissioner, support staff teams have started moving across to joint police teams as part of a shared services initiative. The service must develop robust mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the shared services, to ensure it maintains value for money both now and in the future.

People
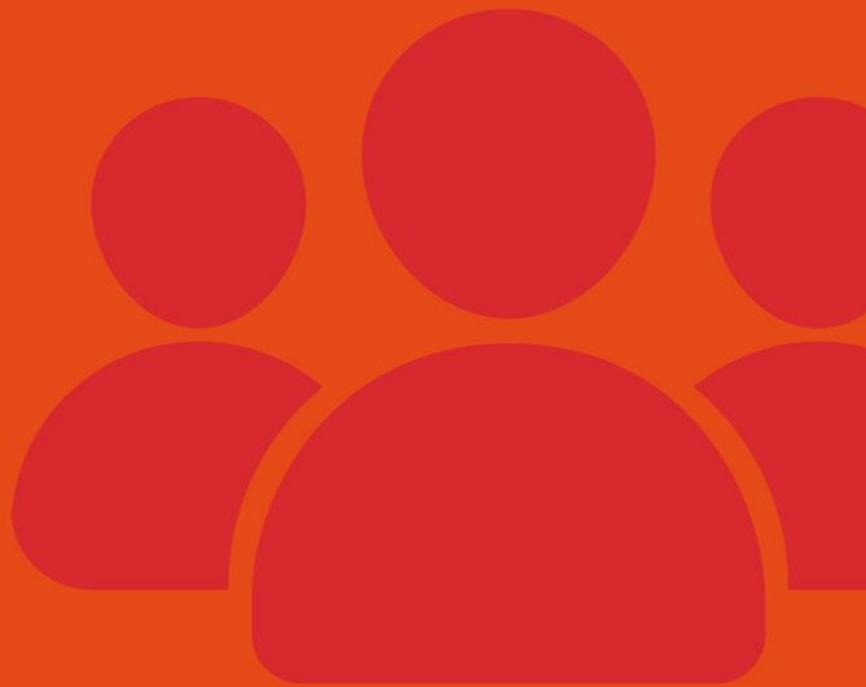
How well does the service look after its people?
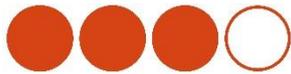
Good

Summary

A fire and rescue service that looks after its people should be able to provide an effective service to its community. It should offer a range of services to make its communities safer. This will include developing and maintaining a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse. The service's leaders should be positive role models, and this should be reflected in the behaviour of the workforce. Overall, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service is good at looking after its people.

The service is outstanding in promoting the right cultures and values. Staff know the values of the service and the standards that are expected of them. They see their leaders putting those high standards into practice. Leaders encourage staff to ask questions and to expect honest answers. They also take time and trouble to support members of staff.

The service is good at getting the right people with the right skills. Staff – whether wholetime or on-call – are trained to the same standards. Training is organised and executed to benefit both the service and staff. The service made changes to training schedules to better suit the needs of on-call staff. As a result, on-call recruitment has improved.

The service is good at ensuring fairness and promoting diversity and inclusion. Staff told us that they feel comfortable raising concerns with their leaders. The service is working to encourage applications from women and black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities. However, the workforce does not currently fully reflect the community that it serves.

The service is good at managing performance and developing leaders. The annual appraisal system works effectively. The promotion pathway is clear for operational staff, and the selection process is open, accessible and robust. However, the service does not have a programme that helps to spot, nurture and support future senior leaders.

Promoting the right values and culture

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Outstanding

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

Workforce wellbeing

Staffordshire FRS understands the wellbeing needs of its staff. They all have access to an employee assistance programme, occupational health and professional support, such as counselling, if needed. The service has a dedicated fitness adviser to support staff health and wellbeing. Systems monitor the working hours of staff.

Staff can access information on wellbeing support through an intranet portal. Following difficult incidents, operational staff are supported by a process known as TRiM to reduce the likelihood of post-traumatic stress. The service runs events throughout the year which focus on both male and female health issues, such as prostate cancer and menopause.

Health and safety

Staffordshire FRS has a good framework in place to promote health and safety in the workplace.

New employees complete an induction package which includes manual handling, hazard spotting and how to use the accident reporting procedure. All staff complete annual e-learning training packages to maintain their understanding. Health and safety information is shared via a safety flash.

The service is part of a regional health and safety practitioners' group. Member services carry out compliance audits on each other. Local workplace safety groups meet quarterly and provide reports on risk assessments, workplace assessments and training.

In our survey of fire and rescue staff (please see Annex A for more details), 95 percent of the 146 staff who responded agreed that their personal safety and welfare was treated seriously.

Culture and values

Staffordshire FRS has a long-established core values and behaviours framework which is clearly presented to staff. This was refreshed, involving all staff, in 2018. We found that staff across the whole organisation consistently demonstrate positive values and behaviours.

The core values are easily accessible on internal systems, displayed at all places of work and reflected in documents and policies. Staff clearly understood the values and think they are reflected within all staff groups across the service. In our survey, 91 percent of the 146 staff who responded agreed that they were treated with dignity and respect at work.

Staff think that leaders demonstrate and maintain service values. They spend time talking to staff at headquarters and carry out station visits, both scheduled and ad hoc, regularly. Staff are encouraged by leaders to ask questions and expect honest replies. This is replicated across all management tiers.

Many staff gave us examples of senior leaders making the time to send cards or call them when they have been off work following a bereavement, or on other occasions.

The service has good working relationships with representative bodies. Staff are confident to raise issues with line managers and are proud of the positive approach the service has for making improvements.

We spoke to a variety of the service's partner organisations during the inspection and they unanimously described their interactions with the service as positive and engaging.

We thought it notable that the service decided some time ago to remove rank markings from day-to-day uniform. Staff across the whole organisation told us that this was a positive move, and that it had helped to remove perceived barriers and build a more inclusive environment where everyone felt equally valued.

Getting the right people with the right skills

Good

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

Workforce planning

The service has a workforce strategy and a plan to replace staff. It identifies known leavers, for example staff due for retirement, and plan for vacancies that may arise. This is cross-mapped to a training needs analysis document which is used to forecast skills gaps and allocate budget. Vacancies are reviewed to ensure currency. The service uses forecasting to enable them to maintain the specialist skills that are critical to its work.

On-call staff can be offered full-time contracts to cover shortfalls. Following a review of the fire protection department, a business case has been submitted to secure funding for three more staff.

Staff are well trained. There are programmes in place to support development and progression. Programmes are managed and monitored via online systems known as LearnPro and PDRPro. Once development is completed, staff move on to a maintenance of competence framework.

Firewatch gives the service an overview of skills and competencies. It will highlight when core skills such as using breathing apparatus, driving and incident command are due to expire. Refresher training ensures that staff skills keep up to date.

On-call staff must complete the same training as full-time firefighters. To make training easier for on-call firefighters, core skills are broken down into modules. Additional training hours are available to on-call staff if needed.

Stations have monthly themed training which they are expected to complete. All stations have the same training plan so that training content is consistent. Specialist staff from a central learning and development team support local managers to ensure consistency.

Staffordshire FRS is an employer-provider for the Trailblazer firefighter apprenticeship scheme. The service has recognised that the role of a firefighter is changing and developed an accredited course which provides in-depth prevention and protection training to new and existing staff. To support operational incident command and reducing staff numbers, they have started to train staff to a higher level of command competence.

Learning and improvement

Staffordshire FRS has established a successful culture of learning and improvement. A central staff team supports operational and themed training events.

As well as using feedback from operational incidents, a central team carries out a rolling programme of station assurance visits to ensure that tasks are completed consistently. This includes a review of training recording systems. Learning from these visits is shared via ops flashes and Stop, Start, Continue bulletins.

A review of on-call firefighter availability showed that the service's training programme was a barrier to recruitment and retention. The service consulted staff and introduced a modular training programme for on-call staff and a shift working system for the central learning and development team. This has enabled them to better support on-call training and development. On-call staff recruitment is higher as a result.

Last year the service undertook a review of its prevention activities, including carrying out safe and well visits. Following staff feedback, the service recognised the need to invest in training. This led to an accredited prevention and protection course being introduced for all staff.

Following feedback from previous promotions, the service identified that staff would benefit from some development and handover prior to taking up new positions. It has recently carried out a promotion process which gives successful staff time to develop new skills before starting new roles. It will use these staff to ascertain whether such an approach will benefit future managers.

Response staff are trained in line with national standards. Staff develop management skills through the Institute of Leadership & Management. Specialist staff such as those in the fire protection department are supported to ensure they are suitably qualified to national standards to carry out their role.

Training and competency are recorded online. Training includes both practical training, job-specific training and e-learning packages for all staff. We sampled competencies of staff across the service and found them to be well managed, both locally and centrally.

Out of the 146 responses to our staff survey, 84 percent agreed that they were satisfied with their current level of learning and development and 84 percent agreed that they received sufficient training to do their job.

Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity

Good

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

Seeking and acting on staff feedback

The service has mechanisms to identify and resolve staff concerns. Leaders have regular meetings with representative bodies, who are also invited to attend management boards. The senior team has an 'open chair' policy at every meeting, which any member of staff can ask to attend.

Staff can access information through a weekly iNews bulletin, The Burning Issue news magazine, a weekly blog from the chief fire officer and a regular vlog by the deputy chief in which he responds to questions and challenges from staff. Staff told us they feel up to date with service information. The communications team monitors how many staff are accessing online news to evaluate its use.

The service has no formal support groups for staff from under-represented groups. Staff told us they felt comfortable to raise issues with managers when necessary and that the culture of the service supported this. Staff are encouraged and supported to attend external events such as those provided by Women in the Fire Service and the Asian Fire Service Association.

The service conducted a leadership message and cultural framework survey in 2018. This was followed up with workshops which were open to all staff. The number of responses was low, but the service did act on feedback, such as changing the images and words they use in literature.

The service has low numbers of grievances, but those it does receive were handled in a timely manner and within policy guidelines. Of the 146 respondents to our staff survey, 13 percent felt bullied and harassed, and 13 percent felt discriminated against during the previous 12 months.

Diversity

Staffordshire FRS's workforce does not fully reflect the communities it serves. Senior leaders are aware of the difficulty in attracting staff from under-represented groups such as women and those from a BAME background. The service currently has 18.5 percent women and 2.9 percent BAME in its overall workforce. In the operational workforce this is much lower: 7.2 percent women and 2.8 percent BAME against a population of 50.2 percent and 5.9 percent, respectively.

The service has carried out positive action initiatives to encourage a more diverse range of applicants, including taster sessions, visits to local gyms and a 'boot camp', but has seen limited success.

Although the service has a record of those who drop out at each stage of recruitment, it has not examined whether the process disproportionately affects any group. The service may wish to consider engagement with unsuccessful candidates to help prepare them for the next recruitment campaign. It is positive to note that the service has provided unconscious bias training for all managers involved in recruitment.

Managing performance and developing leaders

Good

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service is good at managing performance and developing leaders. But we found the following area in which it needs to improve:

> **Areas for improvement**
> - The service should put in place an open and fair process to identify, develop and support high-potential staff and aspiring leaders.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

Managing performance

Staffordshire FRS has a widely understood and accepted performance appraisal system. The system is linked to the values of the organisation, with evidence and objectives closely linked to job roles. All staff are expected to complete yearly appraisals which contribute towards plans and targets and are supplemented by one-to-one meetings throughout the year.

Staff told us the appraisal system was user-friendly and effective. We heard examples of staff working in specialised roles who had identified during a performance appraisal that their operational skills had deteriorated. This resulted in changes to how operational staff in day roles can maintain operational awareness.

The service expects operational staff to complete their appraisal between 1 January and 30 April each year to allow for business planning. In the year ending 31 March 2019, 90 percent of wholetime firefighters and 48 percent of on-call firefighters had completed a performance appraisal. The figure for support staff was much lower for the past 2 years, at 23 percent in the year to 31 March 2018 and 36 percent in the year to 31 March 2019. The service should try to establish why.

The career pathway for operational staff is well defined. A promotion process for operational supervisory staff is carried out yearly. Opportunities for support staff to progress are limited, due to low staff turnover and fewer vacancies. This may be reflected in the staff survey, where 40 percent of the 146 respondents disagree that they have the same opportunities to develop as others in the service.

Developing leaders

There is no formal process in place to identify and develop staff with high potential to be senior leaders of the future. All staff are encouraged to access progression pathways, and processes focus on ability and talent rather than length of service.

Staff are expected to be proactive with their development. This is supported by objectives in performance appraisals and feedback from promotion processes. There are opportunities to shadow other staff in the organisation. Coaching and mentoring opportunities are available to all staff. Supervisory managers must complete modules which include human resource management.

The service has a clear, comprehensive and robust promotion process. Assessment panels are made up of staff from different levels across the organisation to ensure diversity of thought. A review of promotion processes at all levels showed detailed record keeping, and clear scoring and outcomes, where top scorers had been offered jobs.

Annex A – About the data

Data in this report is from a range of sources, including:

- Home Office;
- Office for National Statistics (ONS);
- Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA);
- our public perception survey;
- our inspection fieldwork; and
- data we collected directly from all 45 fire and rescue services (FRSs) in England.

Where we collected data directly from FRSs, we took reasonable steps to agree the design of the data collection with services and with other interested parties, such as the Home Office. This was primarily through our Technical Advisory Group, which brings together representatives from the fire sector and the Home Office to support the inspection's design and development, including data collection.

We give services several opportunities to validate the data we collect to make sure the evidence presented is accurate. For instance, we asked all services to:

- check the data they submitted to us via an online application;
- check the final data used in each service report; and
- correct any errors they identified.

We set out the source of Service in Numbers data below.

Methodology

Use of data in the reports and to form judgments

The data we cite in this report and use to form our judgments is the information that was available at the time of inspection. Due to the nature of data collection, there are often gaps between the timeframe the data covers, when it was collected, and when it becomes available to use.

If more recent data became available after inspection, showing a different trend or context, we have referred to this in the report. However, it was not used to form our judgments.

In a small number of cases, data available at the time of the inspection was later found to be incorrect. For example, a service might have identified an error in its original data return. When this is the case, we have corrected the data and used the more reliable data in the report.

Population

For all uses of population as a denominator in our calculations, unless otherwise noted, we use ONS mid-2017 population estimates. At the time of inspection this was the most recent data available.

2018 survey of public perception of the fire and rescue service

We commissioned BMG to survey attitudes towards FRSs in June and July 2018. This consisted of 17,976 surveys across 44 local FRS areas. This survey didn't include the Isles of Scilly, due to its small population. Most interviews were conducted online, with online research panels.

However, a minority of the interviews (757) were conducted face-to-face with trained interviewers in respondents' homes. A small number of respondents were also interviewed online via postal invitations to the survey. These face-to-face interviews were specifically targeted at groups traditionally under-represented on online panels, and so ensure that survey respondents are as representative as possible of the total adult population of England. The sampling method used isn't a statistical random sample. The sample size in each service area was small, varying between 400 and 446 individuals. So any results provided are only an indication of satisfaction rather than an absolute.

Survey findings are available on BMG's website.

Staff survey

We conducted a staff survey open to all members of FRS workforces across England. We received 3,083 responses between 8 March and 9 August 2019 from across the 15 Tranche 3 services.

We view the staff survey as an important tool in understanding the views of staff who we may not have spoken to, for a variety of reasons, during fieldwork.

However, you should consider several points when interpreting the findings from the staff survey.

The results are not representative of the opinions and attitudes of a service's whole workforce. The survey was self-selecting, and the response rate ranged from 7 percent to 40 percent of a service's workforce. So any findings should be considered alongside the service's overall response rate, which is cited in the report.

To protect respondents' anonymity and allow completion on shared devices, it was not possible to limit responses to one per person. So it is possible that a single person could have completed the survey more than once.

Each service was provided with a unique access code to try to make sure that only those currently working in a service could complete the survey. However, it is possible that the survey and access code could have been shared and completed by people other than its intended respondents.

We have provided percentages when presenting the staff survey findings throughout the report. When a service has a low number of responses (less than 100), these figures should be treated with additional caution. Percentages may sum to more than 100 percent due to rounding.

Due to the limitations set out above, the results from the staff survey should only be used to provide an indicative measure of service performance.

Service in numbers

A dash in this graphic indicates that a service couldn't give data to us or the Home Office.

Perceived effectiveness of service

We took this data from the following question of the 2018 survey of public perceptions of the FRS:

> How confident are you, if at all, that the fire and rescue service in your local area provides an effective service overall?

The figure provided is a sum of respondents who stated they were either 'very confident' or 'fairly confident'. Respondents could have also stated 'not very confident', 'not at all confident' or 'don't know'. The percentage of 'don't know' responses varied between services (ranging from 5 percent to 14 percent).

Due to its small residential population, we didn't include the Isles of Scilly in the survey.

Incidents attended per 1,000 population

We took this data from the Home Office fire statistics, 'Incidents attended by fire and rescue services in England, by incident type and fire and rescue authority' for the period from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2019.

Please consider the following points when interpreting outcomes from this data.

- There are seven worksheets in this file. The 'FIRE0102' worksheet shows the number of incidents attended by type of incident and fire and rescue authority (FRA) for each financial year. The 'FIRE0102 Quarterly' worksheet shows the number of incidents attended by type of incident and FRA for each quarter. The worksheet 'Data' provides the raw data for the two main data tables (from 2009/10). The 'Incidents chart - front page', 'Chart 1' and 'Chart 2' worksheets provide the data for the corresponding charts in the statistical commentary. The 'FRS geographical categories' worksheet shows how FRAs are categorised.

- Fire data, covering all incidents that FRSs attend, is collected by the Incident Recording System (IRS). For several reasons some records take longer than others for services to upload to the IRS. Totals are constantly being amended (by relatively small numbers).

- We took data for Service in Numbers from the August 2019 incident publication. So, figures may not directly match more recent publications due to data updates.

Home fire safety checks per 1,000 population

We took this data from the Home Office fire statistics, 'Home Fire Safety Checks carried out by fire and rescue services and partners, by fire and rescue authority' for the period from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.

Each FRS figure is based on the number of checks it carried out. It doesn't include checks carried out by partners.

Please consider the following points when interpreting outcomes from this data.

- Dorset FRS and Wiltshire FRS merged to form Dorset and Wiltshire FRS on 1 April 2016. All data for Dorset and Wiltshire FRSs before 1 April 2016 is excluded from this report.

- Figures for 'Fire Risk Checks carried out by Elderly (65+)', 'Fire Risk Checks carried out by Disabled' and 'Number of Fire Risk Checks carried out by Partners' don't include imputed figures because a lot of services can't supply these figures.

- The checks included in a home fire safety check can vary between services. You should consider this when making direct comparisons between services.

- Home fire safety checks may also be referred to as home fire risk checks or safe and well visits by services.

- After inspection, East Sussex FRS resubmitted data on its total number of home fire safety checks and the number of checks targeted at the elderly and disabled in the year to 31 March 2018. The latest data changes the percentage of checks that were targeted at the elderly (from 54.1 percent to 54.9 percent) and disabled (from 24.7 percent to 25.4 percent) in England. However, as noted above, in all reports we have used the original figures that were available at the time of inspection.

Fire safety audits per 100 known premises

Fire protection refers to FRSs' statutory role in ensuring public safety in the wider built environment. It involves auditing and, where necessary, enforcing regulatory compliance, primarily but not exclusively in respect of the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO). The number of safety audits in Service in Numbers refers to the number of audits services carried out in known premises. According to the Home Office's definition, "premises known to FRAs are the FRA's knowledge, as far as possible, of all relevant premises; for the enforcing authority to establish a risk profile for premises in its area. These refer to all premises except single private dwellings".

We took this from the Home Office fire statistics, 'Fire safety audits carried out by fire and rescue services, by fire and rescue authority' for the period from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.

Please consider the following points when interpreting outcomes from this data.

- Berkshire FRS didn't provide figures for premises known between 2014/15 and 2017/18.

- Dorset FRS and Wiltshire FRS merged to form Dorset and Wiltshire FRS on 1 April 2016. All data for Dorset and Wiltshire FRSs before 1 April 2016 is excluded from this report.

- Several FRAs report 'Premises known to FRAs' as estimates based on historical data.

Firefighter cost per person per year

We took the data used to calculate firefighter cost per person per year from the annual financial data returns that individual FRSs complete and submit to CIPFA, and [ONS mid-2017 population estimates](#).

You should consider this data alongside the proportion of firefighters who are wholetime and on-call.

Number of firefighters per 1,000 population, five-year change in workforce and percentage of wholetime firefighters

We took this data from the Home Office fire statistics, '[Total staff numbers (full-time equivalent) by role and by fire and rescue authority](#)' as at 31 March 2018.

Table 1102a: Total staff numbers (FTE) by role and fire authority – Wholetime Firefighters and table 1102b: Total staff numbers (FTE) by role and fire authority – Retained Duty System are used to produce the total number of firefighters.

Please consider the following points when interpreting outcomes from this data.

- We calculate these figures using full-time equivalent (FTE) numbers. FTE is a metric that describes a workload unit. One FTE is equivalent to one full-time worker. But one FTE may also be made up of two or more part-time workers whose calculated hours equal that of a full-time worker. This differs from headcount, which is the actual number of the working population regardless if employees work full or part-time.
- Some totals may not aggregate due to rounding.
- Dorset FRS and Wiltshire FRS merged to form Dorset and Wiltshire FRS on 1 April 2016. All data for Dorset and Wiltshire FRSs before 1 April 2016 is excluded from this report.

Percentage of female firefighters and black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) firefighters

We took this data from the Home Office fire statistics, '[Staff headcount by gender, fire and rescue authority and role](#)' and '[Staff headcount by ethnicity, fire and rescue authority and role](#)' as at 31 March 2018.

Please consider the following points when interpreting outcomes from this data.

- We calculate BAME residential population data from ONS 2011 census data. This figure is calculated by dividing the BAME residential population by the total population.
- We calculate female residential population data from ONS mid-2017 population estimates.
- The percentage of BAME firefighters does not include those who opted not to disclose their ethnic origin. There are large variations between services in the number of firefighters who did not state their ethnic origin.

- Dorset FRS and Wiltshire FRS merged to form Dorset and Wiltshire FRS on 1 April 2016. All data for Dorset and Wiltshire FRSs before 1 April 2016 is excluded from this report.

Annex B – Fire and rescue authority governance

These are the different models of fire and rescue authority (FRA) governance in England. Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service is a police, fire and crime commissioner FRA.

Metropolitan FRA

The FRA covers a metropolitan (large urban) area. Each is governed by locally elected councillors appointed from the consitutent councils in that area.

Combined FRA

The FRA covers more than one local authority area. Each is governed by locally elected councillors appointed from the constituent councils in that area.

County FRA

Some county councils are defined as FRAs, with responsibility for fire and rescue service provision in their area.

Unitary authorities

These combine the usually separate council powers and functions for non-metropolitan counties and non-metropolitan districts. In such counties, a separate fire authority runs the fire services. This is made up of councillors from the county council and unitary councils.

London

Day-to-day control of London's fire and rescue service is the responsibility of the London fire commissioner, accountable to the Mayor. A Greater London Authority committee and the Deputy Mayor for Fire scrutinise the commissioner's work. The Mayor may arrange for the Deputy Mayor to exercise his fire and rescue functions.

Mayoral Combined Authority

Only in Greater Manchester. The Combined Authority is responsible for fire and rescue functions but with those functions exercised by the elected Mayor. A fire and rescue committee supports the Mayor in exercising non-strategic fire and rescue functions. This committee is made up of members from the constituent councils.

Police, fire and crime commissioner FRA

The police, fire and rescue commissioner is solely responsible for the service provision of fire & rescue and police functions.

Isles of Scilly

The Council of the Isles of Scilly is the FRA for the Isles of Scilly.