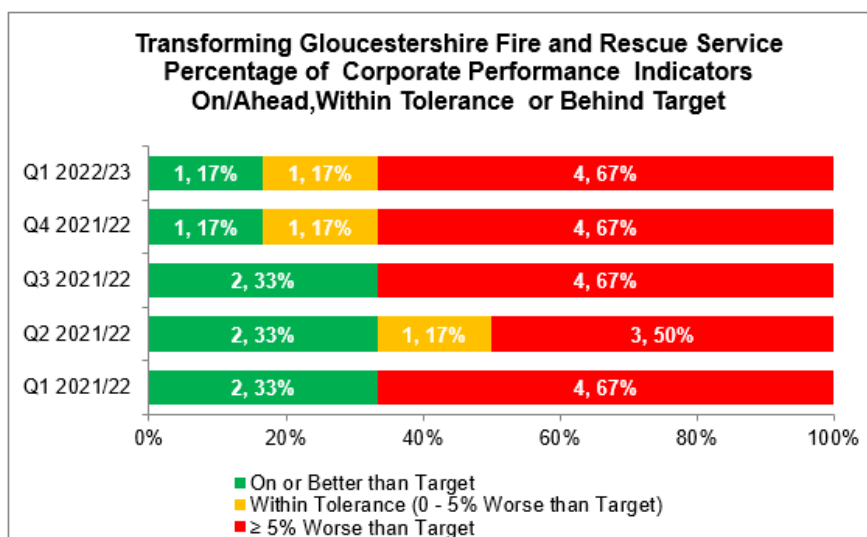


Scrutiny Meeting

Performance Report Quarter 1 2022/23

Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service (GFRS)



Note: there are two new measures included in the corporate performance data set for the Fire and Rescue Service in 2022/23. This provides greater sight across the areas of Prevention, Protection and Response. Historic trend data has been included in the performance scorecard in order to understand performance over time across the revised data set. Some further development of new measures is required at which time targets will be reviewed to ensure they remain appropriate.

1. One third of measures were better than or within tolerance of target in Quarter 1 (2 of 6 indicators). Performance against target for all measures remains the same as in Quarter 4.
2. The rate of Safe and Well visits remains worse than target, although there has been a slight improvement compared with previous quarters; up from 0.89 to 0.94 per 1,000 population (601 visits). The number of Safe and Well visits was anticipated to improve due to firefighter crews returning to normal service following the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions. However, impact on performance has so far been marginal. The average number of Safe and Well visits carried out quarterly by crews over the past 12 months has been 457 (excludes visits by Community Safety Advisors); Quarter 1 performance remains in line with this at 455 visits. Safe and Well visits by firefighter crews equate to 76% of the visits undertaken in Quarter 1). The Prevention team provide data to the Station Managers each month to hold watches to account and to offer any explanation for low delivery, however it is currently unclear why there is a delay in recovering to pre-pandemic output. A time in motion study will commence in July to provide insights into how individual watches manage their workload. In the meantime, watches continue to be expected to carry out 15 Safe and Well visits per month. Performance remains below target (2.35) and the comparator group average (1.50).

There were 86 Safe and Well visits which hadn't been undertaken in more than 28 days following referral at the end of June; this is an improvement on last quarter down 89% from 141. Of these, 4 people had been awaiting a visit for more than 3 months, again, this is a significant reduction from previous quarters.

3. The service continues its positive work to reach the most vulnerable people in our community, with 80% of Safe and Well visits undertaken being to people in vulnerable groups. Performance remains better than target (75%) and our comparator group average (74%). The referrals being received are reported to be of increasing complexity and vulnerability. Partner agencies also shared their concerns about the increase in vulnerability that they are seeing at the recent Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board Fire Safety Development sub-group.

The complexity of the referrals being received means that the length of time to complete visits is increasing, with time taken to carry out some visits more than doubling from around 20-30 minutes to an hour. The time in motion study will help us to understand how much this is a factor impacting the number of visits watches are able to complete.

Historic trends indicate a potential correlation between high cost of living and an increase in unsafe behaviours relating to heating and cooking. The ongoing cost of living crisis is therefore of concern and the Prevention team are working with partners to ensure that anyone visiting homes in the County is more alert to potential issues that might result in an increase in fire incidents.

4. There have been 265 accidental dwelling fires over the last 12 months. This is better than the annual average over the past 3 years (275). During the first year of the pandemic the number of accidental dwelling fires were particularly low (246). This impacted the target that was set, which is based on achieving a 14% reduction on the rolling 3-year incident level, this has meant that in Quarter 1 performance is worse than target, however performance is better than the same time last year (68 incidents compared with 75 in Quarter 1 2021/22).

During Quarter 1, there have been community engagement events increasing firefighter visibility, as well as clear messages on social media and in the press/radio which have a strong focus on reducing accidental dwelling fires. These focus on cooking, electrical safety and good fire safety routines. The Community Safety Team have been attending events in the local community regularly throughout the quarter to reach higher risk groups, with the aim of improving fire safety knowledge and reducing dwelling fires. A number of smoke alarms have been fitted, as well as heat alarms in the kitchens of people with high fire risk factors. CO alarms have also been fitted as part of a pilot with Wales and West. Quality Audits of fire safety reports are also being introduced. This will support improved analysis of the seriousness of fires and identify causal trends.

5. Timeliness of responding to all attended accidental dwelling fires (National definition) was 9 minutes 17 seconds for Quarter 1, an increase of 3 seconds from last quarter and still within tolerance of target. Where it was clear during the initial emergency call that the fire related to a dwelling, the average response time improved to 9 minutes 00 seconds.
6. Two measures relating to the inspection of premises have been introduced into the corporate performance dataset. Further development will take place as part of our ongoing work to improve performance reporting. This will incorporate the new Risk Based Inspection program (RBIP).

In Quarter 1, half of high-risk premises inspected were within timescale. Performance has followed a declining trend reducing from 94.7% of inspections within timescale at the same time last year. This was an area for improvement highlighted by HMIC during the inspection in Autumn 2021 and the decline in performance remains a significant concern. Quarter 2 reporting will aim to include the new RBIP which will provide better sight of all high-risk premises and into this area of performance.

7. Inspections of premises are undertaken to gather information to support firefighters in the event that they need to attend in response to an incident. Of the premises receiving a (7.2 d) inspection in Quarter 1, 93% were within required frequency. This is an increase compared with last quarter (89%); however, it should be noted that the number of inspections completed was small. The time and motion study will provide insights into why volume of inspections is low. Performance remains worse than target.
8. The overall assessment of risk relating to business continuity arrangements is unchanged this quarter **Moderate (12)**. Work continues to take place to ensure that all service areas have an up-to-date business continuity plan in place. In line with best practice, business impact analyses (BIAs) need to be conducted before business continuity plans (BCPs) are developed / updated. BIA sessions therefore continue to be rolled out to plan owners with a revised target date of BIA completion by end June 2022 (and BCPs by end of December 2022). The end of June deadline has not been met by plan owners although reasonable progress has been made: two-thirds of BIAs and almost half of BCPs have been completed (65% up from 52% and 46% up from 26% respectively).

Non-compliance with business continuity policy and options for escalation will be discussed at the next corporate BCM Assurance Board. Work to update the Corporate Recovery Plan, the final strand of planned activity, has commenced but will require BIAs to be materially completed.

9. Turnover in the Community Safety Service is following the same increasing trend as seen across the organisation and is at a similar level as the Council overall (13.6% in the 12 months to the end of June 2022 up from a low of 8.6% in March 2021). Within the Fire and Rescue Service, turnover is slightly higher at 14.1%. The Operational Development Team are looking at ways to improve the completion of exit interviews and analysing exit interview data to identify any trends.

The risk relating to *Insufficient workforce capacity and/or instability adversely impacting on pace and sustainability of improvement and contributing to increase to firefighter safety or capability to deliver emergency services to the community* **remains rated as Moderate 12**. Recruitment and selection processes have been carried out to backfill substantive posts and although there has been success in recruiting to grey book posts we continue to struggle to fill and retain green book posts. Additional funding will help to provide the additional resources and training needed, however effects of this will only be seen once posts are filled. It is still recognised that there are many work pressures on staff, particularly now that the service has been moved into Enhanced Monitoring by HMICFRS at the start of Quarter 2.