

Annual Report and Statement of Assurance

2020/21

Our Purpose

At Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service, our purpose is:








**SAFER
PEOPLE
SAFER
PLACES**

This document provides a summary of our performance between April 2020 - March 2021 in pursuit of our purpose.

It highlights our key achievements against each of the our five strategies which are detailed in our corporate planning document 'Our Plan'.

2020-2021 was heavily influenced by the Covid 19 pandemic. National and local lockdowns resulted in the Service taking an innovative and creative approach to undertaking some traditional activities, whilst also taking the opportunity to engage in other community based and partner agency initiatives. Despite some staff having to self-isolate during the year, the Service continued to provide prevention, protection and response services to the communities of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

Our Strategies

-  **Response Strategy**
-  **Safer Communities Strategy**
-  **Finance and Resources Strategy**
-  **People Strategy**
-  **Governance Strategy**

! Response

Aim – Respond effectively to incidents

In 2020/21, we attended a total of **7,625** emergency incidents which included:

 **1,958** fires

 **568** road traffic collisions

 **2,759** fire alarms

 **2,340** non-fire incidents

We rescued a total of **968** members of the public from incidents. Unfortunately, there were **6** fire related deaths.



The total average response times to life threatening incidents was **10 minutes 15 seconds**

Fire engines used flexibly on **1,088** occasions by moving them from their usual base to another location when other fire engines were committed to incidents, undertaking training events or community engagements, to provide an operational response.

Utilised On-Call staff on **303** occasions to provide cover at wholtime stations where there were crewing deficiencies, for reasons such as; sickness, training events or Covid 19 partnership working.

693 community safety activities totalling **over 4,000** hours of time engaging with members of the public.



88.39% fire engine availability
99.14% wholetime and **76.90%**
 On-Call



Wholetime crews responded to incidents on a total of **9229 occasions**. The average response time to mobilise was **1 minute and 36 seconds**



On-Call crews mobilised on a total of **1,442 occasions**. The average response time to mobilise was **5 minutes and 46 seconds**

236 After the Incident questionnaires received of which:

100% were satisfied with the initial contact

99.6% rated the service received as 'satisfactory' or better.

99.6% said the first fire engine arrived as 'expected' or 'quicker than expected'





We received a total of **16,635** 999 calls



94.1% of 999 calls were answered within 7 seconds



4.36 seconds average time for 999 calls to be answered



2 minutes 6 seconds average time to send a fire engine to life risk incidents



Out of the 16,635 calls we received, **183** were hoax calls. **83** of the hoax calls were attended

The first 'virtual' station open day held at Loughborough Fire and Rescue Station. This was delivered through Facebook social media and achieved a "reach" of over **250,000** interactions.

125 training exercises that included 3 fire engines or more. These included 'cross border' with other fire and rescue services, multi-agency (Police and Ambulance), at risk locations and specialist exercises, such as Urban Search and Rescue.

Completion of the On-Call review project which has seen: training

reduced from **24 months to 10 months**, an increased number of recruitment campaigns and new contracts of employment allowing a flexible approach to hours of availability.

Union Representatives working with Service managers to find a suitable alternative to the Day Crewing Plus shift pattern.

Rutland Shoe Box Appeal, delivering **400** shoe boxes containing food and gifts to vulnerable individuals and families

8,867

Successful Home Safety Check (HSC) visits of which:

- 1,222 full visits,
- 1,196 in person and
- 26 on video call

5,738

advice given via a variety of methods:

- 2247 on the doorstep
- 3413 on the telephone
- 2 text/emails
- 76 via website presentation

1,506

follow-up visits

- 273 in person
- 1220 telephone
- 13 text/email

267

HSCs as part of our Vulnerable Person intervention

- 89 in person
- 59 on the doorstep
- 119 telephone

134

carried out by our partners (Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council & Charnwood Borough Council)

2,322

'extra mile' visits, offering practical support to resolve non-fire related problems

1,614

home safety check questionnaires

99.9%

were satisfied with the service provided



Safer Communities

Aim – Fewer incidents with lower impact



1,167 smoke alarms supplied and fitted. (1,105 standard alarms and 62 deaf alarms)



40 carbon monoxide detectors



35 primary school visits engaging with over **2,077** children



20 road safety events engaging with over **3,000** people

Fire safety and road safety videos created for schools to replace physical events and presentations

10,037 routine fire hydrant inspections

146 water riser inspections completed at high rise buildings

272 vulnerable person referrals received, of which:

- **23** FireCare (juvenile fire-setters) engagements
- **246** vulnerable adult and 3 child referrals
- **493** active vulnerable cases as of 1/4/2020
- **1300** interventions completed
- **129** cases closed

18 of the 46 Grenfell Phase 1 inquiry recommendations have been completed and closed. The Building Risk Review Programme is an outcome of the Phase 1 Grenfell Tower Inquiry. This has identified 115 tall buildings in LLR. All Responsible Persons for the identified tall buildings have been contacted and offered guidance with regards to the recommendations contained in the Phase 1 report. 78 of the premises have been fully triaged so far.

We carried out:

366 fire safety advice requests

420 fire safety concerns

681 building regulations inspections

703 fire safety audits. 90 of these were conducted remotely due to Covid

 **183** licensing consultations

 **155** specific inspections

 **125** desk-based inspections

All of this work resulted in the following being served:

- 56** action plans
- 15** interim measures
- 8** prohibition notices
- 23** formal enforcement notices
- 128** deficiency notices
- 7** alteration notices





We had a total of
55,320
followers on our corporate
and fire station Facebook
accounts

1,054
posts offering advice
and safety tips,

157,455
engagements from
followers who either
liked, shared or
commented on our
corporate posts, reaching
over **2.5 million** people



27,822
twitter followers,
748 tweets reaching
over **1.3 million** people

29,318
engagements from
followers who either liked,
retweeted or commented
on our corporate posts

21 Twitter posts related to Wholetime recruitment, reached over **33,000** people with **1,820** engagements and **21** Facebook posts reached over **218,000 people**, receiving **13,484** engagements.

77 Twitter posts were published to cover celebrations including: Diwali, Halloween, bonfire night and Christmas reaching nearly **100,000** people, generating **1,571** engagements. On Facebook, a total of **88** posts were published reaching **241,023** people, and engaging with **2,231** people.

We've recently started using Instagram and have **557** followers to date.

We delivered:



4 replacement fire engines

21 replacement fleet vehicles

The replacement High Reach appliance design specification has been produced, the procurement process is underway



Zoom conferencing implemented to facilitate home working during the pandemic



Fire station building improvements following condition surveys



New Personal Protective Equipment provided to all firefighters

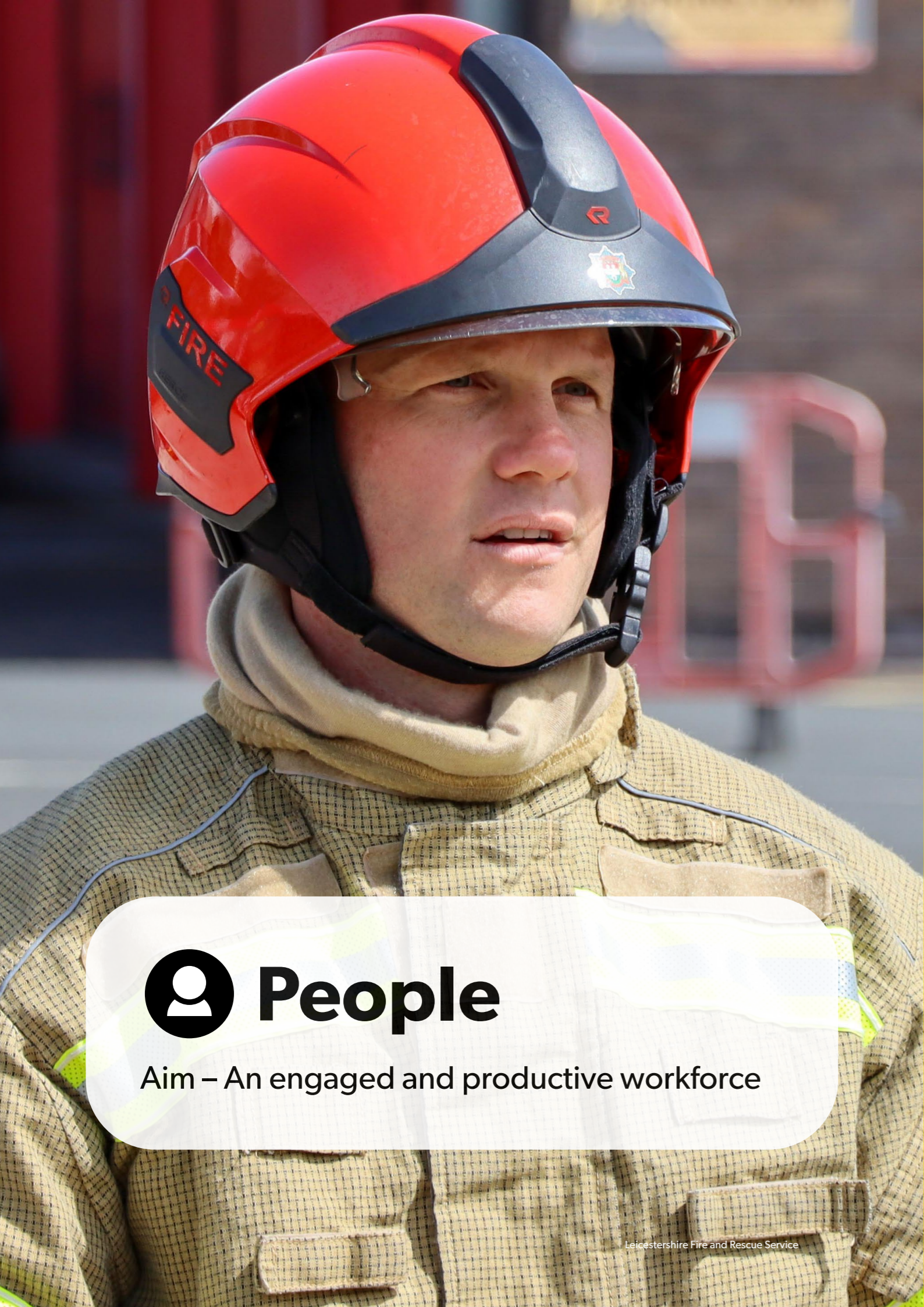


New smoke hoods purchased and available on all fire engines to assist safe evacuation from building fires



Finance and Resources

Aim – Deliver value for money quality services



People

Aim – An engaged and productive workforce



59

new staff (filling vacant positions, replacing leavers and retirements)



12

wholtime firefighters



16

On-Call firefighters



31

Support Staff

1,396

applications received for 61 vacancies, including:

- **385** applications for wholtime firefighter roles
- **144** internal transfer requests

124

applications for firefighter promotions to internal 'talent pools'

Over 25,000

new users registered on the recruitment site

Over 300,000

page views of the site, 81% of people looking for the first time

394

firefighter fitness tests completed.

4.60

average firefighter sickness days/shifts lost per person (7.90 including Covid sickness)

4.86

average support staff sickness days/shifts lost per person (7.21 including Covid sickness)

The first stage of Learning Management System launched, providing on-line learning material including safeguarding and mental health and wellbeing.

Numerous communications sent out and presentations delivered Service-wide throughout the lockdown period, covering a range of topics, including: home schooling, mental health, diet and exercise and managing stress.

Wellbeing support network contacts made available to all staff who were feeling isolated or required assistance during the pandemic.

Following an inspection in November 2018 by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS), which focussed on three areas – effectiveness, efficiency and people, the Service was graded as 'Requires Improvement'.

24 'Areas for Improvement' were identified and the Service found 20 other comments or observations contained within the report which required consideration. Of the 88 actions on the improvement plan,

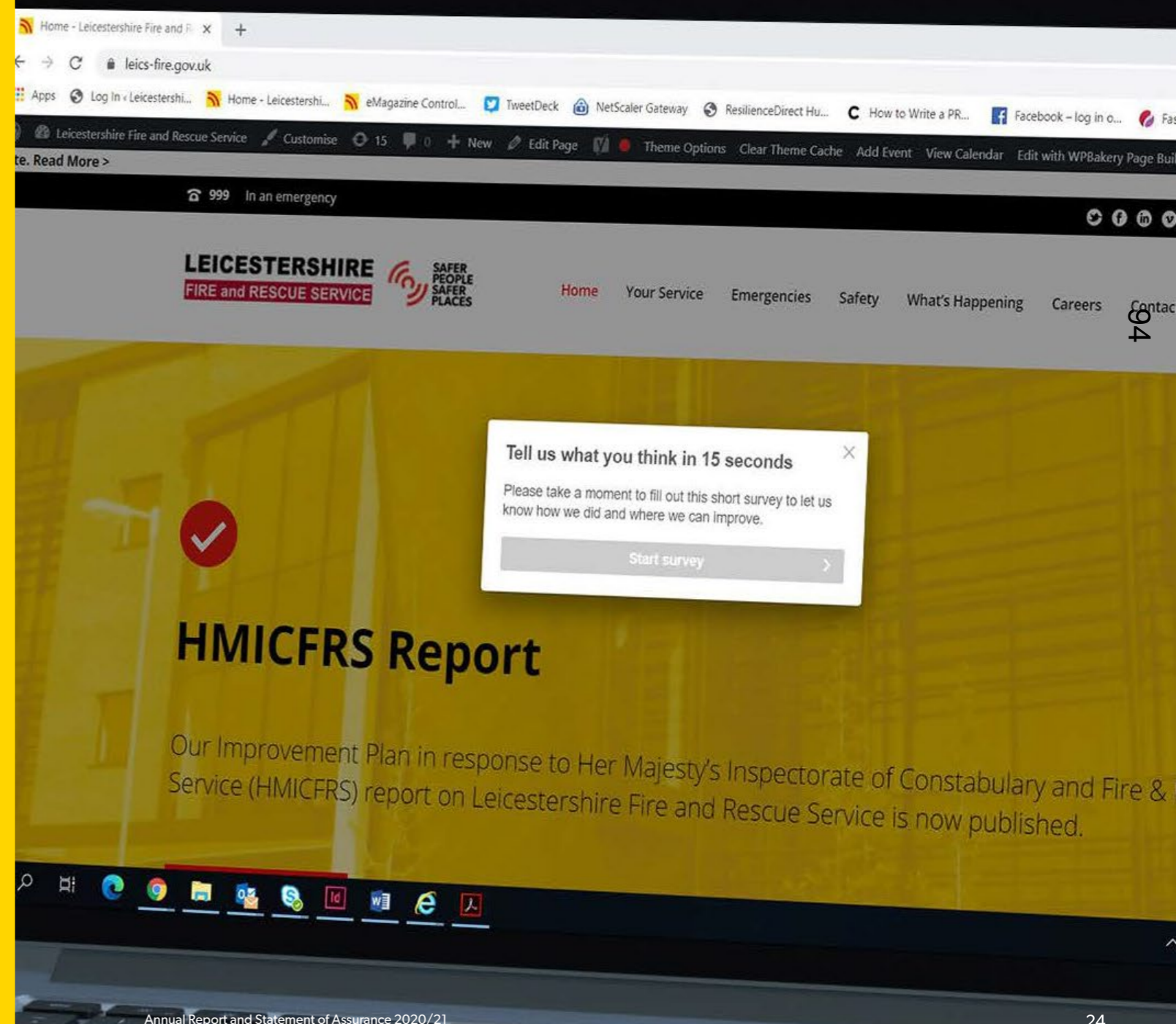
47 are now complete with work continuing on the outstanding actions. The next HMICFRS inspection of LFRS is due to take place in Spring/Summer 2022.

Research undertaken with the University of Leicester has identified ways for improving engagement with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. The recommendations involve building trust and creating a visual strategy for a person-centred approach to fire safety and the creation and delivery of a training package for community engagement. Both of these are being progressed.

- The 2020 staff survey was completed and the results shared with staff.
- Creation of an improved performance reporting system, using dashboards to better present and make available key Service statistics to assist in decision making.
- Data Protection Officer's Report provided a strong statement of assurance in relation to our data protection compliance status.
- **80% of our staff** have now completed their data protection 2-year refresher training.

Governance

Aim – Provide assurance



The screenshot shows the website for Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for Home, Your Service, Emergencies, Safety, What's Happening, Careers, and Contact Us. Below the navigation is a large banner for the HMICFRS Report. The banner features a red checkmark icon and the text: "HMICFRS Report. Our Improvement Plan in response to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service (HMICFRS) report on Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service is now published." A pop-up survey window is overlaid on the banner, asking for feedback in 15 seconds. The survey window contains the text: "Tell us what you think in 15 seconds. Please take a moment to fill out this short survey to let us know how we did and where we can improve." and a "Start survey" button. The website is viewed on a laptop, with the Windows taskbar visible at the bottom.

HMICFRS Covid 19 Inspection

The HMICFRS were commissioned by the Home Secretary to inspect how fire and rescue services in England responded to the Covid 19 pandemic. LFRS were inspected between 26 October and 6 November 2020.

The HMICFRS were grateful for the positive contribution the Service has made to communities across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland during the pandemic.

Importantly, HMICFRS praised that LFRS was well prepared for the pandemic and has continued to provide its core statutory functions throughout, continuing to respond to calls from the public and respond to emergencies.

The full HMICFRS response can be viewed [here](#)

How we have supported our communities during COVID-19



Provided staff to East Midlands Ambulance Service as Urgent Care patient transport workers



Helped to deliver prescriptions and controlled drugs to vulnerable people



Tested the face masks of local care workers, to ensure the safety of staff and service users



Delivered and stored Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)



Gave fire safety advice to care homes



Checked the COVID compliance of hotels and guest houses in Leicester



Made and delivered visors for the health and care sector

Delivered food parcels to households and food banks



Carried out home safety checks in new ways - via social distancing or telephone



Set up a waste referral scheme to remove waste that could be harmful



Statement of Assurance

Operational Assurance

The Combined Fire Authority (CFA) maintains key responsibilities that they are bound to carry out. These are primarily found within:

-  [The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004](#)
-  [The Civil Contingencies Act 2004](#)
-  [The Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#)
-  [The Fire and Rescue Services \(Emergencies\) \(England\) Order 2007](#)
-  [The Localism Act 2011](#)
-  [The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England](#)

This section provides assurance that our service is delivered in line with our statutory responsibilities.

To meet the requirements of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, we publish an [Integrated Risk Management Plan \(IRMP\)](#) that identifies and assesses all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks.

Our risk identification and monitoring processes take into account historical incident data and trends, demographic data and local development strategies. We have a Community Risk Model (CRM) that suggests where a serious incident is more likely to occur relative to other locations within our area. We also have regard to our local resilience forum [community risk register](#) as well as national risks, and the arrangements we have in place with our neighbouring services for mutual assistance in response and fire investigation. All of this information is used to help make decisions on where our resources are best placed according to risk, helping us to make proposals.

By combining the IRMP and the corporate plan, we have one plan for responding to all of the risks and challenges facing our local communities, as well as to the organisation itself.

All of our corporate and IRMP objectives can be found in Our Plan which is updated each year. Our five priorities (response, safer communities, finance and resource and people and governance) each have a strategy that provides details on how we will achieve their aims. They underpin our planning framework and will guide us until 2024.

Financial Assurance

As a public service we are responsible for ensuring that public money is properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively. As part of financial assurance, our key financial systems are audited every year.

In line with the [Accounts and Audits \(England\) Regulations 2015](#), we publish our [statement of accounts](#) annually. This document sets out the costs of providing our service for the financial year 2020/21. It includes information on income and expenditure, a balance sheet, cash flow statement and a pension fund statement.

Our draft statement for 2020/21 will be published in September 2021. Regulations state that the final audited accounts must be published with the audit opinion and certificate and be approved by the CFA by 31 July each year.

In February 2021, we published our [budget strategy, capital programme](#) and [revenue budget](#), setting out our spending plans for 2020/22. This is effectively our Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). The budget strategy links with the planned actions from our corporate plan and IRMP.

The statutory requirement to publish the [Gender Pay Gap](#) information was achieved prior to April 2021.

Assurance

In line with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015, we published an [Annual Governance Statement \(AGS\)](#). This document is produced in accordance with the CIPFA/SOLACE framework and provides a self-assessment of the CFA's performance, along with a review of the effectiveness of our system of internal control and overall corporate governance arrangements.

Our AGS for 2020/21 is signed by the Chair of the CFA and the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer and is due to be approved by the CFA at its meeting in July 2021.

We are committed to being open and transparent to the public. Part of this includes meeting the [Local Governance Transparency Code 2015](#) where we are required to publish specific information on a regular basis. All of the transparency information can be accessed via one link on our website, found by visiting leics-fire.gov.uk/transparency.

Health and Safety

The Health, Safety and Welfare Committees have been constituted under Section 2 (7) of the Health and Safety at Work Act etc. 1974, and the

Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977. The committees enable communications between staff and management supporting the health, safety and welfare of staff at work. We acknowledge our legal duty and seek to embrace this joint working approach. This process helps our managers liaise with the workforce and ensures that chief officers have a thorough picture of the management of health, safety and welfare within the Service through leadership of the committee structure.

The organisational structure of the main consultative committees is: Under these committees we evaluate risks, and proactively plan for:

-  Health, Safety, Welfare and Corporate Risk Committee
-  Infrastructure Risk Committee
-  Operational Risk Committee
-  Road Risk Committee

the management of hazards and risks. This improves our ability to predict the likelihood of emerging risks and therefore aim to prevent them from occurring in the first place.

Assurance Declaration

This statement of assurance informs and assures our communities and other relevant stakeholders



Callum Faint
Chief Fire and Rescue Officer

that we are meeting national operational, financial and governance expectations; and declares that we are meeting the requirements set out in the [Fire and Rescue National Framework for England](#).

We are committed to continuing to provide an excellent level of service to you, our communities, whilst continuing to meet our statutory requirements and keeping you informed.



Nicholas Rushton
Chair of the Combined Fire Authority



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FIRE and RESCUE SERVICE