



**SAFER
PEOPLE
SAFER
PLACES**

Annual Report

**Statement
of Assurance**

2018/19

**LEICESTERSHIRE
FIRE and RESCUE SERVICE**

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Introduction

Welcome to our Annual Report 2018/19. This document is split into two parts and has been published to do the following:

- 1. Provide you with a review of what we did in 2018/19 as well as showing how we have performed against the performance targets we set ourselves;
- 2. In accordance with our legal and statutory responsibilities, it provides a statement of assurance of how we are delivering our financial, governance and operational services efficiently and effectively

If you have any comments, or would like any more information on anything in this document, please contact us via one of the methods below.

If you wish to find out more about us, the work we do, or the authority itself, our website provides everything you need to know:

leics-fire.gov.uk



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Performance and Achievements in 2018/19

All of our priorities and aims were set out in our 'Our Plan - Corporate and Integrated Risk Management Plan'. This section of the Annual Report provides a summary of our performance against that 2018-2021 plan.





Appendix 1 of the report details our performance against all of our corporate performance indicators, which we used to monitor in-year performance against that of previous years' and benchmark ourselves against other fire and rescue services.

Community Safety

During 2018/19, we continued our commitment towards improving community safety by targeting vulnerable people in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

We carried out 6,746 Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSC), our partners (the British Legion, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council and Charnwood Neighbourhood) completed 417 of these. In total, we fitted 4,790 smoke alarms. Feedback from these HFSC visits indicate that 97% of people who received one are satisfied with the service and advice that they received from us.

We led or took part in 1,068 community safety events and engaged with 19,093 people in relation to road safety. The majority of these were at schools or youth group events, 407 were at motor cycle groups and our 'Biker Down' courses. We also increased our activities with our blue light partners, with 3,653 individuals being educated with the use of our virtual reality road safety presentation and interactive sessions.

-  6,746 Home Fire Safety Checks
-  4,790 smoke alarms fitted
-  1,068 community safety events
-  19,093 people engaged in road safety

Our Community Educators (CEs) visited 278 primary schools to deliver fire safety education to 22,593 Year 1 and 5 children.

We maintained our Fire Cadet groups, which were attended by a total of 104 cadets, aged 13 -17 years.

We also continued with our FireSkills programme which involved seven courses, comprising of 53 contact sessions totalling 186 hours of engagement. These courses are for the same age group and include similar activities to the Fire Cadets, but are targeted at young people who may be deemed as vulnerable and/or are at risk of fire setting.







The FireCare programme for juvenile fire-setters had 110 children (of any age) referred to us because they were setting fires or playing with fire.

Our Fire Protection team aims to reduce the risk of fire in businesses and other non-domestic properties. In order to deliver our statutory duties in accordance with fire safety legislation, we carry out inspections, give advice and where necessary serve enforcement notices to ensure that buildings are as safe as they should be. In 2018/19 the group completed:

-  444 fire safety audits
-  924 building regulations inspections
-  550 fire safety concerns
-  161 specific inspections
-  53 desk-based inspections
-  226 licensing consultations
-  421 fire safety advice requests



All of this work resulted in the following being served upon businesses or building owners:

-  20 prohibition notices
-  34 enforcement (formal) notices
-  98 action plans
-  108 deficiency notices
-  4 alteration notices
-  29 interim measures

Social media provides Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service with instant communication to a large volume of people, and is seen as a cost effective and easy way of communicating safety messages to our communities. It is used to share experiences for others to learn from, including sharing photographs from incidents and behind-the-scenes footage of the Service, which our communities would not otherwise see. Additionally, it is used to support recruitment and generating interest in the Service.

Between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019, 438 posts were issued on Facebook, reaching over 1.8 million people (1,849,755), with 133,875 engagements, from followers who either liked, shared, or commented on our posts.

On Twitter 1,109 tweets were posted, reaching nearly 3.5 million people (3,474,600 impressions), and engaging 188,656 people.

In August 2018, we shared a video of a fire whirl on our twitter account. This brought unexpected worldwide coverage and interaction due to the rarity of something like this happening here in the UK. The post reached over 1.2 million people (1,237,295 impressions) and received 128,967 engagements from followers who liked, retweeted or commented on the post.

Twitter followers and Facebook likes have continued to grow month on month. Twitter followers have increased by 1,337 and Facebook likes have increased by 2,034 during this period.

 **Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service has also received recognition for their social media use by CrowdControlHQ, a social media management software company. In their blog, which focused on fire and rescue services' use of social media, they describe our Tweet as 'super eye-catching'. The Tweet relates to a weekly round-up of incidents, and one that is 'helping to communicate a really important message'.** 

We will continue to use social media and look for new and engaging ways to spread our safety messages amongst our communities, further contributing to safer people, safer places.

Reach: The number of people who had your Page's post enter their screen. Posts include statuses, photos, links, videos and more. (Unique Users)

Engagements: The number of unique people who engaged in certain ways with your Page post, for example by commenting on, liking, sharing, or clicking upon particular elements of the post. (Unique Users)

Impressions: Number of times users saw the tweet on Twitter.



We completed our Braunstone Blues project – our partnership aimed at managing demand on public services within the Braunstone Park area of Leicester. This initiative has now been developed further by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner with the creation of People Zones. People Zones involves working in partnership to create a collaborative multi-agency approach to build a stronger, safer community.

We also invested significant time and effort during 2018/19 in preparation for the UK leaving the European Union. Arrangements were put in place in collaboration with the Local Resilience Forum to ensure we could still operate effectively in the event of a ‘no deal BREXIT’ or if Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland were affected by civil unrest, the loss of key infrastructure or fuel shortages. These plans will be reviewed regularly and maintained in preparation for the revised leaving date.

One of the priorities for Community Safety during 2019 has been the delivery of our ‘maximising capacity’ initiative, which is an enhancement in the delivery of community safety activities. We’ve provided additional training to over 267 operational firefighters on how to spot the signs of vulnerability and how to deal with it more effectively. This will see an increase in referrals to partner agencies to ensure that the most vulnerable in our communities are being well supported.

During 2019, we progressed the delivery of fire protection training with Leicestershire County Council and Blaby District Council. This training is around ‘hazard spotting’ to teams such as Care Quality Commission Team, Environmental Health and Adult Social Care Team. This collaboration will aid us in developing an ‘intelligence led’ approach with targeted inspections taking place as soon as a premises risk is identified.

A number of Community Safety Awareness Sessions have also taken place during 2019. These events have been for partner agencies to receive input and advice from organisations such as Fire Angel, Air Liquide and Carbon Monoxide awareness to ensure they can identify any potential risks and refer these to us.






We have also delivered multi-agency training focused on hazard spotting and reducing risk in the homes of vulnerable people. The training was attended by 28 people from 12 different agencies within Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.









Response

We continued to maintain 20 fire and rescue stations and 29 firefighting appliances. There are:

-  7 Wholtime stations
-  7 Wholtime stations with On-Call
-  6 On-Call stations
-  24 traditional fire engines
-  5 Tactical Response Vehicles (TRVs)

In 2018/19, we received 19,156 emergency 999 calls and attended a total of 8,666 emergency incidents. This represents a 7% increase in operational activity when compared to what we did in 2017/18, but is a 13% reduction compared to ten years ago.

Whilst fire related incidents, Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) and false alarms are lower than ten years ago, we continue to see a significant increase in the number of life risk rescue incidents we attend. These are included in the 'special service' category and include; gaining entry, assisting others services and responding to medical incidents.

	 Fires	 Road Traffic Collisions	 False Alarms	 Special Services	Total Incidents
What we did in 2018/19	2,569	762	3,020	2,315	8,666
What we did in 2017/18	2,271	669	2,937	2,235	8,112
What we did in 2008/09	3,757	782	4,318	1,065	9,922
% difference between 2017/18 to 2018/19	+13%	+14%	+3%	+4%	+7%
% difference between 2008/09 to 2018/19	-32%	-3%	-30%	+117%	-13%

In 2018/19, we rescued a total of 771 members of the public from emergency incidents. These include; people trapped in building fires, vehicles, water and confined spaces and supporting or carrying people for the ambulance service. In addition to this, we gave evacuation assistance to people at 95 serious fires.

We attended:

- 95.5% of life threatening incidents within 10 minutes
- 99.4% of non-life threatening incidents within 20 minutes.

Public satisfaction with our emergency incident response was very high, with 99% of the 314 respondents to our 'After the Incident' survey rating the service they received as 'satisfactory' or better.

Targeted education and Fire Control staff challenging potential hoax callers continued to reduce both hoax calls and false alarm calls from Automatic Fire Alarms (AFAs), improving our efficiency and not wasting time responding to unnecessary call outs. The success of this has meant that we did not send fire appliances to 226 (70%) of the 322 hoax calls that we received.

We never set a target for deaths from fire. Unfortunately, there were 12 deaths which were tragically caused by fire and other fire related incidents during 2018/19. The number of injuries that were sustained as a consequence of primary fires remained similar to 2018/19 with 34 people affected.

We successfully completed a number of projects which will improve the effectiveness of our firefighters at incidents.

We have purchased new and improved thermal image cameras across the Service and we now carry and can administer the pain relief gas Entonox from all of our Wholetime station based fire engines.

We have completed a purpose built Urban Search and Rescue training facility based at our Southern Station where we can recreate and train in a collapsed building environment.

Further projects have been initiated, with delivery of these continuing through 2019/2020.

These include:

- Implementation of a new vulnerable persons module for our risk management system
- Continued implementation of the National Operational Guidance procedures, which standardises best practice across all neighbouring fire and rescue services
- A dedicated project to improve the recruitment and retention of On-Call firefighters
- We have developed the specification for four new fire engines and have purchased two additional Tactical Responses Vehicles (TRVs). The new fire engines will replace older vehicles as part of our Fleet Replacement Plan. The TRVs will add to the flexibility we have in increasing our appliance availability at some of our On-Call stations.
- Provision of a replacement high reach appliance was also scheduled for last year, however it has been agreed that procurement of a replacement should be included as a proposal in the 2020-2024 IRMP. The decision will be based on the outcome of the public consultation which will take place between September and December 2019.

We have revised our After the Incident survey with advice and assistance from Leicestershire County Council's Business Intelligence Team. This survey will help us to better understand our customer's experience of our operational response across the full range of incidents that we attend.



£ Finance and Resources

In the year ending 31 March 2019, we made a budget surplus of £609,000, achieved due to continued sound financial management. The 2019/20 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) provides growth to enhance operational capacity and resilience and resources to meet the increased cost of running ICT.

An opinion from the auditor on the 2018/19 financial statements is not currently available due to national issues concerning the material accounting treatment of an ongoing legal pensions related case.

We remain one of the cheapest fire and rescue service in England. [Our Council Tax Information leaflet](#) details our income and how we spend it.

In 2018/19, we improved our performance against a key financial measure by processing and paying 96.5% of undisputed invoices within 30 working days.

We have delivered a new fleet monitoring system to allow better management of service vehicles and are installing a new Skype for Business solution to improve communications and reduce telephony costs across the service.

Cyber security remains a significant risk to any organisation. We are actively investing in preventing cyber-attacks. Our network protection has effectively blocked over 60,000 malware attempts and spam and virus emails in the period January to February 2019.

We have successfully completed the first two years of tasks generated from the recently commissioned building condition survey and have also completed installation of electric charging points at a number of stations to support the electric vehicles used by our Community Educators. We have also finished the building works at Lutterworth and Wigston Fire stations following the changes in duty systems and made minor alterations at Coalville to better accommodate the police numbers in our 'blue light hub'.





People

In 2018/19, the number of sickness absences for our operational staff reduced from 2017/18, the average number of days/shifts lost to sickness was 5.84 compared to 6.50 last year. There was also an improvement for our non-operational sickness, with the days lost reducing from 11.36 to 8.83.

We continued to record health and safety incidents in 2018/19. The number of reported injuries was 58, an increase of three when compared to 2017/18. The number of reported near misses was 50, which was an increase of nine from 2017/18.

We completed a recruitment campaign during 2018 to employ new full-time firefighters. Our aim was focused on increasing representation from women and black and minority ethnic (BAME) communities as we work towards establishing a workforce that better reflects the make-up of our local communities.

Our On-Call recruitment activities also paid particular attention to diversifying the workforce. 'Have a Go' days and campaigns were targeted towards minority groups and female applicants.

We successfully recruited 44 new members of staff – 42 were male and two female. One of the new recruits had mixed ethnicity with the remaining 15 preferring not to say.

We continued to provide our staff with the training and skills to carry out their roles, to assist with this we restructured our Learning and Development Department to better meet the needs of an ever evolving organisation.

We are actively improving the wellbeing of our staff, particularly in the mental health arena. We now have 177 employees trained as mental health first aiders and we ran multiple well-being sessions throughout the year which were attended by many of our staff.

A supplier has been chosen to assist in the delivery of our new learning management system, implementation will be towards the end of 2019. We are in the second year of becoming an accredited Skills for Justice Learning and Development Centre, developing our programmes for accreditation and exploring opportunities for commercial development.

Governance

A significant amount of resource and effort was directed towards assisting with the inspection process undertaken by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

To support the inspection in excess of 1,000 pieces of numerical data were provided and over 50 documents (policies, procedures, meeting minutes) submitted.

In total the HMICFRS engaged with 127 employees (18% of our staff) and with police, East Midlands Ambulance Service and local partners.

The result of the inspection was published by the HMICFRS on 20 June 2019. Their initial assessment was that Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service 'requires improvement'. The detail of the report is being reviewed. This will be followed by the creation of action plans to deliver any recommendations or improvements highlighted.

As previously mentioned in this report, our external auditors issued an unqualified opinion on our [Statement of Accounts for 2017/18](#).

In addition, the internal audit report from the Head of Internal Audit Services concluded that there is reasonable assurance that the Combined Fire Authority (CFA's) control environment is both adequate and effective.

We've improved the management of our internal audit commitments. Substantial assurance opinions were received following our Pensions 2018 and our declaration of interests, gifts and hospitality audits. Full assurance was received for our pension scheme calculation audit. Substantial assurance was also received in the two follow up audits for firefighter pensions roles and responsibilities and performance monitoring audits.

Our Combined Fire Authority Head of Internal Audit Service Annual Report 2018/19 can be found on our website.

Initiation of the 2020-2024 IRMP commenced towards the end of 2018, the data and information analysis has since been completed. The proposals for the next IRMP were approved by the Combined Fire Authority in June 2019.

We continued to review and monitor our adherence to the Transparency Code. The second of the two six monthly audits was undertaken in September 2018. No significant breaches were identified. The small number of items requiring attention were referred to the relevant department leads, with the required production of information now featuring on their local department plans.

We have implemented organisational and technical measures that ensure the Service is compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018. We have a registered Data Protection Officer and over 95% of our staff have completed GDPR training.

Last year, we implemented new ways of working to ensure compliance with Freedom of Information legislation for disclosure of non-personal information. We acknowledged 100% of our Freedom of Information requests within the statutory 20 working days.

We reviewed many policies including: Whistleblowing, Code of Conduct for Directors, Managers and Employees, Provided Vehicles, Service Continuity Policy and reviewed processes including, Gifts and Hospitality, Motor Insurance Claims, Legal Services, Incident Recording System. We also reviewed continuity plans including; Industrial Action – Operational Staff

We continue to extract and provide data and information to the Government and communities on our performance to increase public awareness and allow us to be benchmarked by the Home Office against the other fire and rescue services in the UK.

Our Data Management Team implemented a commercial Incident Recording System and software to collect additional data removing the dependency on the unstable solution offered by the Government.

Work will continue next year on our project to improve our business intelligence capability. This is the use of dashboard technology to allow us to analyse and better present our performance data.



2018/19 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 National Framework, 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) to show where in our area there is a higher likelihood of incidents occurring. We also have regard to our local resilience forum [community risk register](#) as well as national risks. Arrangements are in place with our neighbouring services for mutual assistance in response, intervention and fire investigation. All of this information is used to help make decisions on where our resources are best placed according to risk, and to make proposals for any changes.

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, and performance targets can be found in the plan appendices and will be updated each year.

Our five priorities (safer communities, response, finance and resources, people and governance) each have an updated strategy that provides more detail on our approach and how we will achieve each of our aims. They underpin our planning framework and will guide us until 2022.



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 2018/19. It includes information on income and expenditure, a balance sheet and cash flow statement and pension fund statement.

Our draft statement for 2018/19 was published on 31 May 2019. 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 2019 we published our [capital programme](#) and [revenue budget](#), setting out our spending plans for this year. This is effectively our Medium Term Financial Plan. The strategy clearly links with, and costs out our planned actions from, our corporate plan and IRMP.

We have addressed the new statutory requirement to publish [Gender Pay Gap](#) information by publishing the detail before the required date of April 2019.



Assurance

In line with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015, we publish 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 2018/19 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 2019.

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 certain information on a regular basis. All of the transparency information can be accessed via one link on our website, here.





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 permanent communications between staff and management to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of staff within the Service.

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 the Director of Health and Safety's leadership of the committee structure.

The organisational structure of the main consultative committees is

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

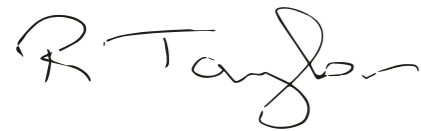
Under these committees we evaluate risks, and proactively plan for the management of hazards and risks. This improves our ability to predict the likelihood of emerging risks and therefore aim to prevent them from occurring in the first place.



Assurance Declaration

This statement of assurance informs and assures our communities and other relevant stakeholders that we are meeting national operational, financial and governance requirements; 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.



Rick Taylor

Chief Fire and Rescue Officer



Nicholas Rushton

Chair of the Combined Fire Authority

Appendix 1



Performance Update: April 2018 to March 2019

Key	Over 10%	Outside target range (positive)	10% within target	Within target range	Over 10%	Outside target range (negative)
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Key	Improvement in performance	No change in performance	Decline in performance
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Ref	Key Corporate Indicator	Actual	Compared to target	Compared to same period last year	Compared to same period average over three years
KCI 1	The number of emergency incidents				
1.1	Number of primary fires	1249	-44 (1293)	-23 (1272)	-44 (1293)
1.2	Number of secondary fires	1320	+345 (975)	+324 (996)	+345 (975)
1.3	Number of Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) attended	762	+87 (675)	+89 (673)	+87 (675)
1.4	Number of other emergency special services attended (excluding fires and RTCs)	2315	+308 (2007)	+92 (2223)	+296 (2019)
1.5	Number of false alarm calls from AFAs attended (domestic and non-domestic)	1713	-8 (1721)	-10 (1723)	-8 (1721)
1.6	Number of deliberate primary fires	373	-64 (437)	-42 (415)	-64 (437)
1.7	Number of deliberate secondary fires	563	+68 (495)	+72 (491)	+68 (495)
1.8	Number of accidental dwelling fires	377	-14 (391)	+6 (371)	-14 (391)
1.9	Number of medical incident – co-responder incidents	372	-179 (551)	-140 (512)	-179 (551)
5.4	Number of hoax calls received	322	-59 (381)	-21 (343)	-59 (381)
	• Number of malicious false alarm calls we did not respond to	226	-36 (262)	0 (226)	-36 (262)
	• Number of malicious false alarm calls we did respond to	96	-23 (119)	-21 (117)	-23 (119)

Ref	Key Corporate Indicator	Actual	Compared to target	Compared to same period last year	Compared to same period average over three years
KCI 2	The number of deaths and injuries resultant from fires and road traffic incidents				
2.1	Number of deaths from primary fires	12	No Target	+2 (10)	+5 (7)
2.2	Number of non-fatal casualties from primary fires	34	-3 (37)	-2 (36)	-3 (37)
3.1a	Number of people killed (in RTCs) during the calendar year (Jan to Dec 2018)	35	0 (35)	+15 (20)	0 (35)
3.1b	Number of people seriously injured (in RTCs) during the calendar year (Jan to Dec 2018)	306	+50 (256)	+30 (276)	+53 (253)
KCI 3	The level of emergency response service provision				
4.1	The % of life threatening emergency incidents attended within a maximum of 10 minutes	95.5%	+0.5% (95.0%)	-0.4% (95.9%)	-0.4% (95.9%)
4.2	The % of non-life threatening incidents attended within a maximum of 20 minutes	99.4%	+0.4% (99.0%)	+0.1% (99.3%)	0.0% (99.4%)
5.14	The % availability of On-Call fire appliances	56.7%	-8.3% (65.0%)	-4.0% (60.7%)	-6.0% (62.7%)
5.15	The % availability of Wholetime fire appliances	98.9%	-0.1% (99.0%)	-0.3% (99.2%)	-0.1% (99.0%)
FPI 3	The % of fire safety audits that result in action plans and enforcement notices	28.6%	-1.4% (30.0%)	-7.3% (35.9%)	+0.5% (28.1%)
8.3	The % of respondents to the After the Incident Survey who rate the service received as satisfactory or better	98.4%	+0.4% (98.0%)	+1.9% (96.5%)	+0.6% (97.8%)
KCI 4	Capacity, staff and availability				
9.6	Average number of days/shifts lost to sickness by operational staff	5.84	+0.54 (5.30)	-0.66 (6.50)	+0.54 (5.30)
9.7	Average number of days/shifts lost to sickness by support staff	8.83	-0.97 (9.80)	-2.53 (11.36)	-0.97 (9.80)

Please note figures are subject to change as outstanding fire reports may be completed after this report has been issued. Also note target index column for 3.1a and 3.1b (Police data) is performance against previous quarter.



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