

12 October 2021

West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority

'Making the West Midlands Safer, Stronger and Healthier'

Report by Cllr Charn Singh Padda

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE SERVICE

Making the West Midlands Safer, Stronger and Healthier

wmfs.net @WestMidsFire

Fire Service Headquarters,
99 Vauxhall Road, Birmingham B7 4HW



National Activities during the last quarter

1. Full Inspection

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) have recommenced their full Inspection regime for Round 2. West Midlands has been moved to the final tranche of Services for inspection, at dates to be confirmed for between March and July 2022.

As part of the Inspectorates initial assessment of fire and rescue services, West Midlands Fire Service received its first full inspection in 2018/19.

In general, the Inspectorate found that:

1. The extent to which the service is effective at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks is **good**.
2. The extent to which the service is efficient at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks is **good**.
3. The extent to which the service looks after its people is **good**.

The Authority was particularly proud to find that West Midlands Fire Service was to be the only fire and rescue service to be rated outstanding for how effective the Service was in terms of responding to fires and other emergencies.

The COVID inspection that took place in 2020 found that West Midlands Fire Service was managing well during the pandemic.

2. Firefighters Pay Award

The Firefighters pay award has been agreed by Employers and Representative Bodies at 1.5% increase with immediate effect.

3. White Paper on Fire Reform

As part of the conclusion of Part One of the Police and Crime Commissioner Review, the Home Secretary outlined proposals to reform governance within the fire sector as part of a ministerial statement published in March 2021. As a result of the proposals, the statement included the announcement of the publication of a White Paper which will be used to set out the reform agenda in further detail. The White Paper is due to be published later this year (October onwards)

4. Core Code of Ethics

A Core Code of Ethics has been published for Fire and Rescue Services, following collaboration between the Local Government Association, National Fire Chief Council and Association of Police and Crime Commissioners. The Core Code will help service continuously improve culture and workforce diversity.

5. Helping to battle devastating Greece wildfires

West Midlands firefighters had flown out to Greece to help battle wildfires that devastated the country. Wildfires had swept across the country following the most severe heatwave in 30 years, which had seen temperatures soared to 45 deg (113F).

Budgetary Pressures

Known

- **Pay award = 1.5%**
- £1.1M efficiencies to be made in year 2021/22
- £1.4M efficiencies to be made during 2022/23 in addition to anticipated Government funding reductions

Unknown

- **Future pay awards and Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) reductions**
- Possible 10% CSR reduction over three-year period 2022-2025 (as reasonable worst case scenario), would equate to circa £5M in addition to the current year's unfunded pay award.
- Green book pay award impact
- Council tax and business rate impacts

WMFRA have been lobbying the Government office for increased funding to reflect the work being undertaken.

WMFRA 3 year Rolling Strategy

In February 2021 the Fire Authority approved its 3 year rolling Strategy and the development of Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) proposals. These had been identified from an analysis of foreseeable risk to fire and other related incidents across the West Midlands Conurbation.

These proposals sought to identify how WMFS could maintain and improve its delivery of services to local communities. These proposals continue to be developed and trialled working with all key stakeholders for implementation from April 2022 onwards.

Key Performance data information for Sandwell

For Q1 1 2021/22 ending 30 June 2021. Information is collated from West Midlands Fire Service incident data collected via a digital workbook; the one exception is the Killed or Seriously Injured in Road Traffic Collisions (RTC) which is provided by West Midlands Police.

PREVENTION AND PROTECTION							
Performance Indicator	Actual	Target	3yr avg	Last Year	Performance against target		Difference against Target
Accidental Dwelling Fires	53	54	54.3	52	-1.9%	●	-1
Accidental Non-Domestic Fires	12	15	14.7	14	-20.0%	●	-3
Deaths in Accidental Dwelling Fires	1		0.7		N/A		
Deliberate Derelict Building Fires	8	10	10.0	3	-20.0%	●	-2
Deliberate Dwelling Fires	5	5	5.0	2	0.0%	●	0
Deliberate Non-Domestic Fires	3	5	5.3	2	-40.0%	◆	-2
Deliberate Rubbish Fires	53	54	54.3	48	-1.9%	●	-1
Deliberate Vehicle Fires	18	25	24.7	21	-28.0%	●	-7
False Alarms (Equipment)	128	130	130.0	127	-1.5%	●	-2
Injuries in Accidental Dwelling Fires	2	1	0.7	1	100.0%	◆	+1
Killed or Seriously Injured in RTCs	10	20	20.3	14	-50.0%	◆	-10

RESPONSE					
Risk Category	Avg attendance time	Target	% in target	% in target (High Risk areas)	Avg att time 2nd app
Cat 1 (High Risk)	04:45	05:00	54.4%	58.8%	06:58
Cat 2 (Medium Risk)	05:41	07:00	69.2%	78.9%	07:58
Cat 3 (Low Risk)	05:21	10:00	88.5%	73.3%	07:14
Cat 4 (Secondary Fires that attract a 20 minute-response time)	07:21	20:00	98.7%	100.0%	
Cat 5 (False Alarms)	05:38				

Targets have been met in all areas except in Injuries in Accidental dwelling fires.

Summary of some WMFS activity during 2020/21

1. Fire Control handled **45,027 calls**, in an average of **76 seconds per call**.
2. Attended **25,216 incidents** and they arrived at the most serious in an average of just **4 minutes 32 secs**.
3. Completed **46 large-scale training exercises** – that’s nearly 1 a week!
4. Carried out over **18,422 Safe & Well visits**, of which **8,746** originated from **partner referrals**.
5. Handed out **14,674 pieces of equipment** such as smoke alarms, hearing impaired alarms, mailbox protectors and fire retardent bedding, which has contributed to a **7.7% reduction** in the number of casualties.
6. Recorded **326** accidental fires in non-domestic properties.
7. Attended **5,629** false alarms caused by fire alarm systems

For Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council Consideration

Planning Process should ensure that Fire Regulations are complied with and High rise blocks in Sandwell have water sprinkler system installed as per other West Midlands Local Authorities e.g. Wolverhampton. Mains Electric connected Fire Alarms.

Cllr Charn Singh Padda
 Lead Member WMFRA
 12 October 2021