

TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Item No 6

MEETING: POLICY AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE 22ND FEBRUARY 2021

SUBJECT: NATIONAL FIRE INCIDENT RESPONSE TIMES: 1 APRIL 2019 TO 31 MARCH 2020

JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER/CHIEF EXECUTIVE (THE CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY) THE FINANCE DIRECTOR AND THE PERSONNEL ADVISOR TO THE AUTHORITY

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members with an overview of the latest Home Office 'Fire Incident Response Times' for financial year 2019/20 (1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020).
- 1.2 This report provides a comparison of Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS) performance to other Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) in England, and the other Metropolitan (MET) FRSs in our family group.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In addition to other factors, FRS response times can influence outcomes for casualties/rescues and areas of damage in accordance with the time at which firefighting activities commence.
- 2.2 The Authority's strategy is to respond to emergency incidents as quickly as possible with sufficient weighting of attack, prioritising our response to incidents where there is significant risk to life and property.
- 2.3 Members will recall our previously approved draft 'response standards' which drive our response performance, as set out below:
 - to answer 96 per cent of 999 calls within 7 seconds;
 - to dispatch resources to emergency incidents within an average 1 minute of answering the call;
 - for the first fire engine to arrive within an average of 6 minutes from being dispatched to risk level 1 incidents;
 - for the second fire engine (if required) to arrive within an average of 8 minutes from being dispatched to risk level 1 incidents;

- for the first fire engine to arrive at an incident in Tyne and Wear where there is significant risk to life and property within 8 minutes in more than 90 per cent of occasions; and
- for the first fire engine to arrive at an incident in Tyne and Wear where there is significant risk to life and property within 10 minutes in more than 95 per cent of occasions.

- 2.4 Members will also recall that ‘Pre-Alerting’ technology was introduced in TWFRS on 1 April 2019 with the main aim to provide a quicker attendance to members of the public summoning the assistance of the Fire & Rescue Service. The pre-alert module gives our resources notification of possible incidents at the earliest opportunity in the call handling process. This results in quicker mobilisation of resources.
- 2.5 The Home Office statistical release contains data in relation to response times to primary fires (dwellings, other buildings, road vehicles and other outdoor fires) and secondary fires in England, for the financial year 2019/20.
- 2.6 The ‘total response time’, is the minutes and seconds taken from time of call to time of arrival at the incident by the first vehicle. The data excludes incidents where the response time was over an hour or less than a minute.
- 2.7 The Home Office data includes ‘call handling time’, ‘crew turnout time’ and ‘drive time’ in their statistical release which has been included in the report analysis.
- 2.8 Overall, total response times to fires have increased gradually over the past 20 years within England. However there was a general plateau from 2014/15 to 2017/18 but following increases in 2018/19, the 2019/20 responses times have generally decreased.

3 REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- 3.1 TWFRS’ average total response times are shown in the table below:

Type of Fire	2019/20	Change since 2018/19
Primary	6 minutes 29 seconds	-23 seconds 
Dwelling	5 minutes 55 seconds	-18 seconds 
Other building	6 minutes 43 seconds	-24 seconds 
Road vehicle	6 minutes 34 seconds	-30 seconds 
Other outdoor	8 minutes 40 seconds	-26 seconds 

- 3.2 The Home Office data shows that TWFRS are the top performing FRS in England in response to primary fires, dwelling fires and road vehicle fires. TWFRS are within the top three best performing FRS in England in response to other types of fire.
- 3.3 The average total response time to '**primary fires**' (potentially more serious fires that harm people or cause damage to property) in England in 2019/20 is 8 minutes and 43 seconds, a decrease of 6 seconds since 2018/19. **TWFRS are the fastest FRS in the country in response to primary fires** with an average total response time of 6 minutes 29 seconds, a decrease of 23 seconds from 2018/19. In 2018/19 TWFRS were the 4th fastest FRS in the country in response to primary fires.
- 3.4 The average total response time to '**dwelling fires**' in England in 2019/20 is 7 minutes 45 seconds, a decrease of 2 seconds compared with 2018/19. **TWFRS are the fastest FRS in the country in response to dwelling fires** with an average total response time of 5 minutes 55 seconds, a decrease of 18 seconds from 2018/19.
- 3.5 The average total response time to '**other building fires**' in England in 2019/20 is 8 minutes 37 seconds, an increase of 2 seconds from 2018/19. **TWFRS are the 2nd fastest FRS in the country to other building fires** and 2nd fastest MET (behind Greater London FRS) with an average total response time of 6 minutes 43 seconds, a decrease of 24 seconds from 2018/19. In 2018/19 TWFRS were the 4th fastest FRS in the country in response to other building fires and the 3rd fastest MET.
- 3.6 The average total response time to '**road vehicle fires**' in England in 2019/20 is 9 minutes 40 seconds, a decrease of 3 seconds from 2018/19. **TWFRS are the fastest FRS in England in response to road vehicle fires** with an average total response time of 6 minutes 34 seconds, a decrease of 30 seconds from 2018/19.
- 3.7 The average total response time to '**other outdoor fires**' in England in 2019/20 is 11 minutes 6 seconds, a decrease of 28 seconds from 2018/19. **TWFRS are the 3rd fastest responding FRS in the country to 'other outdoor fires' and 3rd fastest MET** (behind Greater London FRS and West Midlands FRS) with an average total response time of 8 minutes 40 seconds, a decrease of 26 seconds from 2018/19. In 2018/19 TWFRS were the 4th fastest responding FRS in the country in response to other outdoor fires and the 3rd fastest MET.

4 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 There are no risk management issues in respect of this report.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications in respect of this report.



6 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no equality and fairness implications in respect of this report.

7 HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no health and safety implications in respect of this report.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 The Authority is recommended to:

- a) Note the contents of this report
- b) Receive further reports as appropriate.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The under mentioned Background Papers refer to the subject matter of the above report:

- Incident Response Standards – Quarter 3 Pilot Update – February 2020
- Pre-Alerting 12 Months Live – 6 July 2020