

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	COMMUNITY SAFETY AND PROTECTION COMMITTEE		
DATE:	4 SEPTEMBER 2025	REPORT NO:	CFO/09/2526
PRESENTING OFFICER	CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, NICK SEARLE		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE, DEB APPLETON	REPORT AUTHOR:	CIRMP OFFICER, JACKIE SUTTON
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM (SLT)		
TITLE OF REPORT:	SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN 2025-26 APRIL TO JUNE UPDATE		

APPENDICES:	APPENDIX A: KPI/LPI Q1 UPDATE APPENDIX B: CRMP 2025-27 APR-JUN 25 UPDATE APPENDIX C: HMI 2023 ACTIONS UPDATE APPENDIX D: PREPAREDNESS FP 25-26 Q1 UPDATE APPENDIX E: RESPONSE FP 25-26 Q1 UPDATE APPENDIX F: PREVENTION FP 25-26 Q1 UPDATE APPENDIX G: PROTECTION FP 25-26 Q1 UPDATE APPENDIX H: NATIONAL RESILIENCE FP 25-26 Q1 UPDATE APPENDIX I: POD FP 25-26 Q1 UPDATE APPENDIX J: STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE FP 25-26 Q1 UPDATE APPENDIX K: FINANCE FP 25-26 Q1 UPDATE APPENDIX L: LEGAL FP 25-26 Q1 UPDATE
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Purpose of Report

1. To request that Members scrutinise the performance of Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service ('the Service') against the objectives and the performance targets/outcomes as set out in the Service Delivery Plan 2025/26 for the period April to June 2025 (Q1).

Recommendation

2. It is recommended that Members approve the attached Service Delivery Plan reports (Appendices A-L) for publication on the website.

Introduction and Background

3. The 2025-26 planning process began in November 2024. The process considered organisational risk, legislation, financial constraints and consultation outcomes to create innovative and value for money initiatives in order to deliver against the Community Risk Management Plan and inform the and Service Delivery Plan.
4. The April to June (Q1) Service Delivery Plan Performance Report for 2025/26 is the document that reports and updates on the Functional Plan action points and Key/Benchmark Performance Indicators against the targets that were approved by Members in March 2025.
5. Reporting is provided on a regular basis to Members through the Authority's Committees.

Performance Indicators

6. In January to March 2025, a full annual review of performance indicators and their relevance was carried out. It was agreed that performance measures would continue to be grouped in the following way:
 - Summary Indicators – key summary performance indicators to measure how MFRA is performing.
 - A number of these indicators are Service Plan outcomes - Key Performance Indicators
 - Tier 1 – Outputs – contributory outcomes and Local Performance Indicators
 - Tier 2 – Output – Local Performance Indicators
7. Performance indicators ('PI') have been grouped according to incident type:
 - Dwelling fire
 - Non domestic property fire
 - Anti-social behaviour and other fire
 - Road traffic collisions
 - Special service
 - Fire alarms
 - Staff welfare, risks and competency
 - Energy and the environment
8. The Key Performance Indicator TC05 Special Service Calls attended does not have a target and is for quality assurance only. This is because the Service would not want to discourage many of the calls received, nor are we able to influence performance in some areas such as assisting partner agencies. Areas the Service could influence such as road traffic collisions attended and water rescue incidents, while still included in this indicator are also recorded separately as RC11 and RC24.
9. For the same reasons as above, FC13 Total False Alarms Attended, discounting False Alarm Good Intent and FC24 Total Number of False Alarm Good Intent attended including Non-Alarm Receiving Centre Domestic Incidents, do not have targets but are recorded for quality assurance. We do not want to discourage people

calling the fire and rescue service when they hear a fire alarm, so do not seek to reduce these calls.

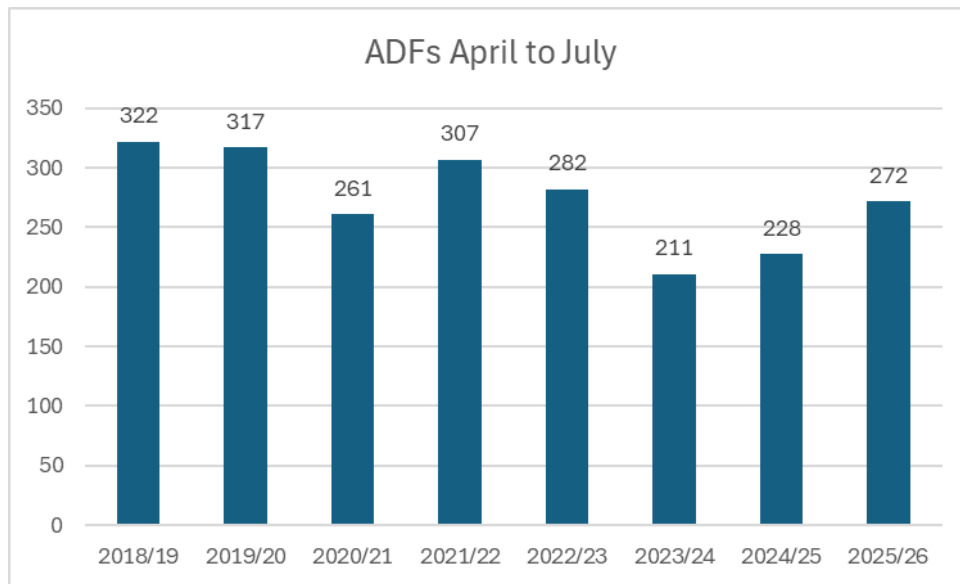
10. This report focuses on the Benchmark Performance Indicators underpinned by the key and local performance indicators to illustrate and inform as required (Appendix A).
11. The format has been designed to give a clear illustration of how the Service is performing against Key Performance Indicators which are grouped together e.g. dwelling fire related indicators are influenced by the community risk management measures we put in place so this group includes measurement of the number of Home Fire Safety Checks and Safe and Well visits we deliver, especially to those most at risk, which we have recognised are the over 65's and people living in areas of deprivation.
12. The Key Performance Indicators are monitored and scrutinised each month through the Performance Management Group which is an internal meeting of relevant managers and the Strategic Leadership Team Strategy and Performance Board. Exceptions and areas of poor performance are highlighted and action plans put into place as appropriate.
13. All performance for April to June 2025 is covered in detail in the appendices to this report.

Areas of lower-than-expected performance

14. There are some performance indicators (see Appendix A) where the Service is not performing as well as expected. Even though we are currently only reporting on quarter one of the Service Delivery Plan and there is therefore, room for improvement during the rest of the year, the Service continually reviews areas of underperformance, and some updates are provided below for Members to consider:

Accidental fires in the home

15. In summary, the increase seen in quarter one has been influenced by the periods of warm, dry weather that have been seen over recent months, and this has led to more outdoor living, e.g. cooking, drinking and smoking in the garden with the dry weather increasing the risk of fire spreading. The specific increase in dwelling fires has resulted from fires that originated outside a property (e.g. from a barbecue or fire pit) spreading to the house e.g. drainpipe, windows.
16. In general, 48% of our fires originate in the kitchen and are related to cooking. Fires relating to smoking materials have increased this year (53 to date this year compared to 32 in 2024/5 and 18 in 2023/4). Some of these smoking related fires are also connected to the fires starting external to a property. Prevention will use this information to target areas of high risk in the future. It is worth noting however, that in the last 8 years, this is the 4th lowest number of accidental dwelling fires and is still below pre-Covid levels.



17. On a more positive note, injuries are lower when compared to the previous year and benchmarking data for quarter one across the Metropolitan fire and rescue service group suggests all services have seen increases in Accidental Dwelling Fires.

Accidental small fires (secondary fires)

18. Since the start of financial year 2025-26, the Service has seen an increase in the number of secondary fire incidents the increase has been steady since February and is reflective of a significant reduction in annual rainfall levels, the period between February – May being 65.4% lower than the previous year.
19. The lack of rainfall has also coincided with unseasonably high temperatures, occasionally exceeding 30 degrees Celsius. The Service noted a sharp decrease from June 2025 down to 324 secondary fires (previous month 746) which coincided with a sharp increase in rainfall but as Members will be aware there have been periods of dry weather and high temperatures since then which are likely to be reflected in the performance for quarter two.
20. As Members would expect, prevention activity is taking place to help reduce incidents and mitigate the impact of those that do occur, such as liaising with partners to reduce fly-tipping and secure derelict buildings. Business fire safety initiatives are also employed to reduce the risk of accidental or deliberate secondary fires on commercial premises.

Deliberate Secondary Fires (anti-social behaviour fires):

21. Deliberate secondary fires have also seen a significant increase during the financial year 2025-26 to levels only exceeded during the post-Covid period 2022-23. The decreased rainfall in combination with unseasonably high temperatures has seen an increase in overall outdoor activity which is often accompanied by an increase in the setting of fires outdoors. Areas where such fires frequently occur include Bidston Hill, Wirral, Gaskell Park, St Helens, Dovecot Park, Liverpool and coastal areas.

22. Spikes have occurred during school holidays and developed as older school pupils left school following exams. A six-week approach has been developed when areas of Merseyside present trends for arson.
23. In addition to this, there is information to suggest that organised crime groups are currently using fire as a weapon, which has led to some more serious arson incidents. To help prevent this and mitigate the impact, target hardening activity has been increased. This is where the Service works with the potential and actual victims of arson to help them keep themselves and their property and families safe.
24. Other preventative measures within local authority areas include multi-agency interventions, targeted arson reduction campaigns and reallocation of our Street Intervention Teams (SIT) to higher risk areas. Through weekly Threat/Harm/Risk meetings we can identify emerging trends and work with partners to reduce incidents of arson.

Sickness absence

25. Sickness absence figures remain stubbornly high, particularly for Grey Book (operational) staff and the Service is working hard to understand the drivers for this and implement measures to reduce sickness and help staff return to work.
26. Performance is managed by the Performance Management Group and Strategic Boards and analysis and research has shown that there has been an increase in NHS waiting lists in recent years that impacts on sickness levels. In addition, the Service is seeing increases in staff being absent for mental ill health reasons related to the health and wellbeing of someone else in their family. The Service also sees periods of increased gastrointestinal and respiratory complaints which can have significant seasonal impacts on performance against the sickness target of 4%.
27. The Service has an approach to sickness absence that balances health and well-being support from line managers and the occupational health team with capability management and the Service is considering a number of actions to help improve performance.

Community Risk Management Plan 2024-27 updates

28. Following publication of the Community Risk Management Plan 2024-27 in October 2024, the report attached at Appendix B covers updates against proposals for the period April to June 2025, previous updates are greyed out.

HMICFRS 2023 Action Plan updates

29. Following the His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services ('HMICFRS') Inspection in 2023 a number of Areas of Improvement were identified. Appendix C is an update on our response to these areas for the period April to June 2025.

Functional Plan updates

30. The Service uses the following process for monitoring performance against Functional Plan objectives with a revised Blue, Red, Amber, Green, Grey (BRAGG) colour coding approach and dashboard being used to indicate progress:

Action completed	Action is unlikely to be delivered within the current functional delivery plan	Action may not be delivered by the designated deadline within the functional plan	Action will be delivered by the designated deadline within the functional plan	Action not yet started
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Equality and Diversity Implications

31. Actions in the Community Risk Management Plan and Service Delivery Plan have been equality impact assessed.

Staff Implications

32. There are no direct staffing implications contained within this report. Performance is discussed with a number of staff during the planning process and reporting periods, and those staff provide updates and put in place strategies and plans for performance improvement where required.
33. Stations and station staff have been involved in the station planning process.

Legal Implications

34. There no direct legal implications contained within this report

Financial Implications & Value for Money

35. It is the aim of the majority of objectives to provide the same or an improved level of service for the same or a reduced cost
36. Initiatives where there are cost implications have been approved by the Authority and built into the budget, and they are monitored closely through the project management process.

Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications

37. Consideration of health and safety, and successful risk management is paramount in project managing all of the Community Risk Management Plan and Service Delivery Plan actions.

Environmental Implications

38. Consideration of environmental risk management and opportunities is an important part of project when managing all of the Community Risk Management Plan and Service Delivery Plan actions. The achievement of Net Zero is a specific action which is ongoing until 2040.

Contribution to Our Vision: *To be the best Fire & Rescue Service in the UK.*

Our Purpose: *Here to serve, Here to protect, Here to keep you safe.*

39. The Service Delivery Plan is the primary method by which the Authority delivers its objectives in order to achieve its Vision and Purpose.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

N/A

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

MFRS **M**erseyside **F**ire and **R**escue **S**ervice